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Councillor Michael Hutchison, Chair; Councillor Alan Turner, Vice Chair; Councillor Dawn Black, Councillor John Cox, Councillor Isobel Davidson, Councillor Sandra Macdonald, Councillor Miranda Radley and Councillor Ian Yuill; and Colin Allanach, Gerry Donald, Kieran Morton and Ian Ross.

Aberdeen City Council Substitute Members:- Councillors Christian Allard, Kate Blake, Martin Greig and Alexander McLellan.

Aberdeenshire Council Substitute Members:- Councillors Laurie Carnie, George Carr, Doreen Mair and Stephen Smith.

Please note that a substitute member may only participate in the meeting when a substantive member is absent.

Should you require further information regarding the agenda, please contact Paul Finch 01224 067834

North East of Scotland Transport Partnership

Meeting of the Board

Committee Room 2 - Town House

Wednesday, 11 November 2026 at 2.00 pm

This meeting will be held in person with the option of joining remotely for those that cannot attend. A recording of the meeting will be available on the Nestrans website as soon as is practical.

AGENDA

1 Housekeeping

1.1 Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

1.2 Minute of Previous Board Meeting of 16 September 2026 (Pages 3 - 14)

1.3 Outstanding Business Report (Pages 15 - 16)

2 Presentations - Not Taken Up

3 Budget Matters

3.1 2026/27 Budget Matters (Pages 17 - 26)

3.2 Financial Regulations Update (Pages 27 - 52)

4 Strategy

4.1 Director's Report (Pages 53 - 68)

4.2 Draft Annual Report 2025/26 (Pages 69 - 102)

4.3 Information Publication 2025/26 (Pages 103 - 130)

4.4 Regional Bus Policy Update (Pages 131 - 134)

5 Projects

5.1 People and Place Programme 2026/27 Update (Pages 135 - 140)

5.2 Transport to Employment (Pages 141 - 156)

6 Action Plans

6.1 Car Reduction Evidence (Pages 157 - 168)

7 Progress Report (Pages 169 - 216)

8 Publications and Consultations - Not Taken Up

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Mark Masson, email mmasson@aberdeencity.gov.uk, or telephone 01224 067556

Minute of Meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership Board

Aberdeen, Wednesday, 16 September 2026

Present: Councillor Michael Hutchison (Chairperson); Councillor Alan Turner (Vice Chair); Councillor John Cox, Councillor Isobel Davidson, Councillor Sandra Macdonald, Councillor Miranda Radley, Councillor Stephen Smith (as substitute for Councillor Dawn Black) and Councillor Ian Yuill; and Colin Allanach, Gerry Donald, Kieran Morton and Ian Ross.

In Attendance: Paul Finch, Caroline Hood, Adam Kench, Jenny Anderson, Claudia Stuerck, Lucy Johnston and Tricia Howden (Nestrans); Ewan Wallace, Martin Hall and Tina Wight (Aberdeenshire Council); Kirsty Chalmers, Vicki Johnstone and Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Angela Pieri (Grant Thornton UK); and Craig Latto and Alberto Faggiani (ARUP)

Apologies: Councillor Dawn Black and David Dunne.

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.

VALEDICTORY

1. The Chairperson wished to pay tribute to Peter Cockhead, following his recent passing on 21 June 2026.

The Chair advised that Peter was the first Director of Nestrans when it was set up as a voluntary partnership in 2001 between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. He was amongst a select group of partnership leaders who worked collaboratively to establish the current network of seven RTPs on a statutory footing in 2006, prior to retiring from the post in 2007.

The Chair explained that prior to his involvement in Nestrans, Peter was a Director of Planning and Strategic Development at Aberdeen City Council and was fondly remembered by all those who worked alongside him when he was in post. His professional knowledge, enthusiasm, and experience in strategic planning and transportation mattered. Across the RTP network, he received warm tributes from those who knew him, particularly from the time of the formal RTPs being established.

He indicated that what was clear from all the conversations was an appreciation for the work of Peter during his period at Nestrans and the enduring legacy of his leadership. Colleagues also noted his continued active interest in the work of Nestrans, and his warmth and encouragement to those who had the benefit of continuing in this work.

The Chair intimated that on behalf of Nestrans, he had written to Peter's family sending condolences.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest or transparency statements in respect of the items on today's agenda, thereafter the following was intimated:-

(1) Colin Allanach advised that he had a connection in relation to item 5.1 (People and Place Programme Update) by virtue of him being a member of Ythan Cycle Club, a group that had received money from the People and Place project. He considered that the nature of his interest would not require him to leave the meeting prior to consideration of the item;

(2) Councillor Radley advised that she had a connection in relation to item 5.3 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Update – Strategic Transport Studies), by virtue of her being a Council appointed member of Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee. She considered that the nature of her interest would not require her to leave the meeting prior to consideration of the item; and

(3) Councillor Yuill advised that he had a connection in relation to item 5.3 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Update – Strategic Transport Studies), by virtue of him being a Council appointed member of Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee. He considered that the nature of his interest would not require him to leave the meeting prior to consideration of the item.

MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING OF 24 JUNE 2026

3. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 24 June 2026, for approval.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the minute as a correct record.

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING DATES 2027

4. The Board had before it a report which proposed dates for Nestrans Board meetings in 2027, for Board approval.

The proposed dates with all meeting to commence at 2pm, were as follows:-

- Wednesday, 17 February 2027;
- Wednesday, 28 April 2027;
- Thursday, 24 June 2027;
- Wednesday, 22 September 2027; and
- Wednesday, 24 November 2027.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) consider the above and agree the proposed dates; and
(b) request that appointments be issued to members following this meeting.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS REPORT

5. The Board had before it a note of the outstanding items from previous meetings.

The following item was identified as being completed:-

- Ballater Mobility Hub and Coach Parking - Request to bring back further report on the scheme - Work on outline business case for mobility hub substantially completed. Work on coach parking progressing. Included on agenda.

The Board resolved:-
to note the updates in relation to Outstanding Business.

EXEMPT BUSINESS

6. The Chairperson proposed that the Board consider item 10 (Nestrans Office Accommodation – Exempt Appendix), with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

The Board resolved:-
in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the above item so as to avoid disclosure of information of the classes described in paragraph 9 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act. Article 20 of this minute refers.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Turner advised that he had a connection to the following item by virtue of him being a Ward Councillor for Stonehaven and Lower Deeside, which had been mentioned in the presentation. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of this item.

PRESENTATION: STONEHAVEN, MEARNS, AND SOUTH ANGUS CONNECTIVITY STUDY (CRAIG LATTO, ALBERTO POLTZ FAGGIANI; ARUP)

7. The Board received a presentation from Craig Latto and Alberto Faggiani in relation to Stonehaven, Mearns and South Angus Connectivity Study.

Alberto and Craig (1) explained that the study was commissioned by Nestrans funded through the Aberdeen City Region Deal and supported by Tactran, Aberdeenshire Council and Angus Council; (2) advised that the principal objective was to understand how residents could access education, employment, healthcare and community life without always requiring use of a car; (3) indicated that the study area crossed different boundaries and was very rural, noting that towns were serving as service centres whilst many communities relied on a limited number of strategic corridors; (4) explained that the study identified an ageing population, more complex lifestyles, lengthy journeys to services and weaker evening and weekend bus provision as factors increased the need for better connectivity, allowing multiple activities to be combined in one journey; and (5) intimated that the methodology and consultation approach remained flexible and that the study was expected to conclude in October 2026, having allowed additional consultation responses to be incorporated.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- that winter weather conditions and dark evenings were covered within wider travel-resilience work, including transfer disruption and that rural differences could be explored further;
- that better timetable coordination, timed transfers, reliable services and clearer information would be supportive measures, noting that young people's use of free bus travel may support wider cultural change, however the focus of the study was for those without access to a car;
- that responses were being tested against personas, observed trip patterns, age groups, destinations and travel data. Reasons would be investigated where evidence and engagement differed; and
- that gender was embedded in the assessment, noting that women may face greater transport barriers due to trips for childcare, shopping and work, especially in one-car households, and linked darkness, winter travel and safety concerns to gender and other vulnerable groups.

The Board resolved:-
to thank Craig Latto and Alberto Faggiani for their presentation.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Yuill advised that he had a connection to the following item by virtue of him being a Council appointed member on NHS Grampian Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of this item.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2025/26 AND THE REPORT ON THE 2025/26 AUDIT BY THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

8. The Board had before it a report which sought approval of the audited Annual Accounts for 2025/26 and presented for information, the external auditor's report on the audit.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) approve for signature the audited Annual Accounts for 2025/26 as per Appendix 1;
(b) consider the External Auditor's Report as per Appendix 2; and
(c) note that the Accounts can be accessed and downloaded free of charge from the Nestrans website.

Tina Wight provided a summary of the report and Angela Pieri highlighted the key information from the external auditors' report on the audit.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

2026/27 BUDGET MATTERS

9. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on the Partnership's 2026/27 financial monitoring to end July 2026 and forecast outturn position and to consider 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) note the monitoring position and forecast for the 2026/27 People & Place projects presented in Appendix 2;
(c) note the additional grant funding for the 2026/27 Active Travel People and Place Programme; and
(d) note the additional grant funding for the 2026/27 Travel to Employment Programme.

Jenny Anderson outlined the key information from the report.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

10. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on strategic issues not otherwise covered on the agenda, including liaison with Transport Scotland (TS), other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), and regional partners.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note the ongoing strategic liaison arrangements with Transport Scotland, other Regional Transport Partnerships, and regional partners;
(b) note Minutes of the Bus Alliance Board contained in Appendix A to this report;
(c) note recent and planned attendance at Conferences and Events as detailed in Appendix B; and
(d) note recent Nestrans' Communications and Press Articles as detailed in Appendix C.

The Board heard from the Director, who made reference to the following:-
- the RTP Chairs Meeting held on 2 September in Lerwick, noting that the next meeting will be held in Aberdeen on 2 December;
- the Bus Alliance Board meeting held on 27 August;
- a visit by the Director and the Head of Development and Regional Transport Planning (Transport Scotland) to Gray and Adams (Fraserburgh) for an HGV cab ride to experience first hand road conditions from an HGV drivers' perspective on the A952 and A90;
- that the Health and Transport Action Plan (Steering Group) would next meet on 17 September; and
- that the partnership continued to maintain and develop working relationships with the two local universities and the wider research/innovation community.

The Board resolved:-
(i) to note that the Director would liaise with Transport Scotland colleagues to determine whether there was an update on speeding penalties, specifically whether there was any progress on the introduction of driver training instead of penalty points on licences, following which, he would circulate details to members in this regard; and
(ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Yuill advised that he had a connection to the following item by virtue of him being a Council appointed member on NHS Grampian Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of this item.

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

11. The Board had before it a report which (1) provided details on the recent publication of the Programme for Government (2026 – 2031); and (2) outlined the implications, opportunities and alignment for Nestrans in the context of wider Public Sector Reform agenda.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note the publication of the Programme for Government 2027-2032;
(b) note that there is now intended to be a 3 month consultation exercise on many of the more significant proposals across the wider public sector and their representative bodies; and
(c) instruct the Director to develop a short position paper on the proposals in order to support anticipated consultation and liaison, and partner discussions.

The Director provided an overview of the report, outlining the relevant policy proposals, which intersect with the strategic objectives and activities of Nestrans; the legislative proposals for the coming year; and the next steps for Nestrans.

During discussion, there was a request by Councillor Radley that consideration be given to update the previous letter and re-issue it to the new Cabinet Secretary, requesting the rollout of the £2 fare bus cap in the North East.

It was acknowledged that in relation to the 3 month consultation exercise, a special meeting of the Board could be arranged if deemed necessary, to consider Nestrans' response to the Programme for Government publication.

The Board resolved:-
(i) to approve the recommendations; and
(ii) that a letter be sent to the new Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport requesting that consideration be given to the rollout of the £2 fare bus cap in the North East.

BUS POLICY AND PROJECTS

12. The Board had before it a report which provided an update on recent national bus policy developments, and set out proposals for regional bus infrastructure funding for this financial year following confirmation of national grant awards.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note roll out of £2 Bus Fare Cap to Strathclyde Area;

(b) note outcomes of recent national discussion with Bus Stakeholders and Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport;
(c) note outcomes of the Special Meeting and progression of a Bus Services Improvement Partnership (BSIP);
(d) note that BSIP guidance has been shared with officers and there will be a coordinated response submitted by the north east public transport authorities;
(e) note allocation to North East Councils of Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 1 Funding;
(f) approve proposals for Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 2 allocations, following North East Bus Alliance endorsement; and
(g) approve proposed allocations of Nestrans Bus Action Plan funding.

The Board heard from the Director who outlined the key information from the report, advising that bus policy and associated interventions had emerged as a key area of priority for the new Scottish Government and making reference to the rollout of a £2 bus fare cap; his attendance at the Bus Stakeholder Roundtable event on 26 August, in Edinburgh, hosted by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport; the special meeting of the North East Bus Alliance held on 27 August in the Aberdeen Art Gallery; details pertaining to Transport Scotland's announcement of £55m funding for the Bus Infrastructure Fund for 2026/27 Financial Year; and proposals for allocating an additional £70,000 funding by the Bus Infrastructure Fund.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations with the addition that a small bus operator representative be sought on the North East Bus Alliance Board.

PEOPLE AND PLACE PROGRAMME UPDATE

13. With reference to article 13 of the minute of the previous meeting of 24 June 2026, the Board had before it a report which presented the final position on the 2025/26 People and Place Programme and provided an update on the 2026/27 Programme and associated activities.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) approve the Nestrans People and Place 2025/26 Evaluation report and its publication on the Nestrans website;
(b) note the ongoing work and preliminary impacts of the 2026/27 programme;
(c) note the upcoming People and Place stakeholder event on 6th October 2026 at Pittodrie Stadium, Aberdeen; and
(d) note the written response received from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport to the letter issued on behalf of the Board regarding People and Place funding issues.

Caroline Hood provided a summary of the report and specifically requested that members advise the Nestrans Team if they will be attending the People and Place stakeholder event on 6 October 2026 at Pittodrie Stadium, Aberdeen.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

TRANSPORT TO EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

14. With reference to article 14 of the minute of the previous meeting of 24 June 2026, the Board had before it a report which provided an update on additional funding, progress and planned delivery for the Nestrans' Transport to Employment 2026/27 programme.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note that Nestrans has received an additional allocation of £80,380 resource funding from Transport Scotland for the 2026/27 Transport to Employment programme;
(b) note the updated programme (Appendix A) that will maximise the impact across the North East of Scotland, making best used of the revised funding allocation; and
(c) note the progress made during Quarter 2 and the continued integrated and coordinated approach to programme delivery across the local authorities.

Caroline Hood outlined the key information from the report.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL UPDATE - STRATEGIC TRANSPORT STUDIES

15. With reference to article 15 of the minute of the previous meeting of 24 June 2026, the Board had before it a report which (1) provided an update on the Strategic Transport Appraisal (STA) element of the Aberdeen City Region Deal, including the approval of two material change requests by the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Board and Joint Committee; and (2) indicated that the approved changes would maximise value from the remaining programme budget and support the delivery of key outputs during the final year of the Aberdeen City Region Deal programme.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note the progress of the Strategic Transport Appraisal programme;
(b) note the proposed reallocation of £98,000 of procurement savings within the Aberdeenshire Council funded element of the programme to support additional design development work at Cortes Junction on the A90(N)/A952 corridor;
(c) note the proposed reallocation of £63,500 of available Government-funded Strategic Transport Appraisal budget to commission a Concluding Investment Proposals Report; and
(d) authorise officers to procure and appoint suitably qualified consultants to prepare the Strategic Transport Appraisal Concluding Investment Proposals Report, in accordance with Nestrans' procurement procedures and within the approved budget allocation of £63,500.

Claudia Stuerck provided a summary of the report, outlining two corrections as follows:
- the report referred to £63,500 in a number of places; the correct figure was £65,000; and
- that paragraph 4.3 should be amended to reflect the additional £1,500 arising from a forecast underspend associated with the Battery Electric Vehicle Feasibility Study originally approved by the Joint Committee on 15 November 2024.

In addition, following advice from Legal Services, Claudia proposed alternative wording for recommendation (d) as follows:- "Subject to Scottish and UK Government approval of the reallocation of £65,000 of available Government-funded Strategic Transport

Appraisal budget to commission a Concluding Investment Proposals Report, authorise the Nestrans' Director to procure and appoint suitably qualified consultants to prepare the Strategic Transport Appraisal Concluding Investment Proposals Report, in accordance with Nestrans' procurement procedures and within the approved budget allocation of £65,000."

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations, subject to (1) amending recommendation (c) to read that the allocation figure should be £65,000; and (2) amending recommendation (d) with the alternative wording outlined above.

BALLATER MOBILITY HUB AND COACH PARKING UPDATE

16. The Board had before it a report which (1) provided an update on the development of proposals for a Ballater Mobility Hub and associated coach parking facility, commissioned through the Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Appraisal (STA) Programme; and (2) summarised progress to date, emerging findings from the business case and design development work and the proposed next steps to progress both projects towards delivery.

The report recommended:-
that the Board –
(a) note progress to date in the development of the Ballater Mobility Hub and associated coach parking facility;
(b) note the proposed programme of further design, appraisal and stakeholder engagement work; and
(c) note that a final Outline Business Case package, and associated recommendations for future funding opportunities and project management, will be reported to the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee in February 2027.

The Board heard Claudia Stuerck highlight the key details from the report.

The Director confirmed that communication on progress of the projects would be undertaken within communities, including the Community Council.

The Board resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Yuill advised that he had a connection to the following item by virtue of him being a Council appointed member on NHS Grampian Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of this item.

PROGRESS REPORT

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

Colin Allanach sought an update on the implications for the delay in relation to the A92 Murcar to Blackdog project, particularly questioning whether the RAG status should be red instead of yellow.

In response, Kirsty Chalmers advised that progress had been slow as resources had been allocated to assist with other projects, although that was now concluded and the Roads Team were hoping that the preliminary design work would recommence within the next week or two.

The Board resolved:-

(i) that a progress report in relation to the A92 Murcar to Blackdog project, be submitted to a future meeting of the Board; and

(ii) to otherwise note the progress report.

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

18. The Board had before it a report which provided information on recent publications and consultations and sought views or comments on draft responses where appropriate.

The report recommended:-

that the Board –

(a) note the publications contained within this report; and

(b) note the submission to the Scottish Parliament's Public Sector Reform Committee Call for Evidence in Appendix A.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

NESTRANS OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

19. The Board had before it a report which (1) provided information relating to the current office accommodation and options and proposals for a proposed relocation; (2) responded to an option set out in Nestrans annual Business Plan; and (3) contained details of the current breakdown of costs and commercial offers from the Councils' estates teams.

The report recommended:-

that the Board instruct the Director to finalise negotiations for a relocation of office accommodation to Aberdeen City Council's office at Marischal College on an annual lease arrangement.

The Board resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

In accordance with the decision taken at Article 6 of this minute, the following item was considered with the press and public excluded.

NESTRANS OFFICE ACCOMMODATION - EXEMPT APPENDIX

20. The Board had before it an exempt appendix relating to the Nestrans Office Accommodation report. (Article 19 of this minute refers)

The Board resolved:-

to note the information contained within the exempt appendices.

- COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HUTCHISON, Chairperson

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OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

AS AT MEETING ON 11 November 2026

No	Item Title	Reference	Outstanding Action	Update	Action Due / Complete
1	Director's Report – Benchmarking of Arbroath Cycle Project	Item 4, 18th February 2026	To note that following the monitoring and evaluation process of the project, that a report would be submitted to the Board, which would include comparable information with schemes undertaken in the North East, any lessons learned and community feedback.	Awaiting publication of WWCT evaluation report. Discussion with Head of Capital, Aberdeen City Council on the benchmarking approach. City Roads colleagues undertook visit to Arbroath scheme during October.	Due to delay with WWCT report will be taken at February 2027 meeting.
2	Director's Report – Query on Alternatives to Prosecution – Driver Awareness Training	Item 10, 16th September 2026	Query from Cllr Davidson on current progress in Scotland to offer driver training courses as an alternative to prosecution for road traffic offences.	Email distributed to Board Members 07th October 2026	Complete
3	Programme for Government and Public Sector Reform	Item 11, 16th September 2026	Director to develop a short position paper.	CoSLA position outlined 30/10/26, local engagement anticipated November 2026.	Scheduled for February 2027
4	Programme for Government and Public Sector Reform	Item 11, 16th September 2026	Write to Cabinet Secretary regarding the rollout of the £2 bus fare cap.	Appended to Director's Report Item 4.1	Complete
5	A92 Murcar to Blackdog	Item 17, 16th September 2026	Prepare a progress report for future meeting of the Board.		Scheduled for February 2027

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NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 11 November 2026

3.1 - 2026/27 Budget Matters

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide the Board with an update on the Partnership's 2026/27 financial monitoring to end September 2026 and forecast outturn position and to consider any budget or monitoring issues that may arise.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the monitoring position and forecast presented in **Appendix 1**;.
2. Note the monitoring position and forecast for the 2026/27 People & Place projects presented in **Appendix 2**;
3. Note the reduced grant funding for the 2026/27 Travel to Employment Programme;
4. Note the monitoring position and forecast for the 2026/27 Travel to Employment Programme presented in **Appendix 3**; and
5. Approve the virements set out in **Appendix 4**

3. Background

3.1 The Board has requested that a general budget report be submitted to each meeting, monitoring expenditure, identifying any potential budget issues, and reporting on any particular expenditure requests. The reports are prepared jointly by Nestrans officers and Finance officers from Aberdeenshire Council.

4. 2026/27 Budget

4.1 **Appendix 1** to this report sets out a summary budget monitoring statement of expenditure. Work programmes are progressing and this shows expenditure of £1,449,750 to 30 September 2026. The spend for the year forecasts have been updated to reflect some variances that have been advised and virements are suggested below to address the resultant indicated underspend.

5. Grant Funding

<u>People & Place Programme</u>

5.1 Nestrans originally received a People & Place grant of £1,729,261 for 2026/27. The claim for the second quarter has been submitted to Transport Scotland. The income along with the spend to date and forecast out turn for each project are shown in **Appendix 2**. Further updates on the projects are summarised within the progress report and this is also the subject of a separate report on the agenda**.**

5.2 As noted at the previous Board meeting, a further grant allocation of £55,712 revenue was received in September. Discussions have commenced with existing delivery partners as to usage of this further funding and this will be presented at a future meeting once confirmed,

however there is every confidence that this additional grant can be allocated and used by end March 2027.

Transport to Employment Programme

5.2 As advised previously, Nestrans received an offer of grant on 20 May 2026 for up to £905,429 to deliver a Transport to Employment Programme this financial year. An additional grant allocation offer of £80,380 was received on 23 July 2026 and accepted, bringing the overall offer of grant for 2026/27 up to £985,809 resource funding. Further information is given in a separate report on the agenda, but a revised programme has now been agreed with Transport Scotland which anticiaptes a total spend of £500,000. Accordingly, Transport Scotland have been informed that £485,809 will not be taken up. Although there had been no spend incurred by end of September, this is shown along with the forecasts for each project in **Appendix 3**. Further updates on the individual projects are summarised within the progress report.

6. Virements

6.1 Due to some project specific variances that have been confirmed, a number of virements are proposed for consideration in **Appendix 4** to maximise delivery through the 2026/27 budget where possible.

Mary Beattie
Treasurer

Report prepared by Jennifer Anderson, Transport Executive (Programmes & Delivery)
30 October 2026

nestrans

Appendix 1

SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Description	Revised Budget	Actual to Sep-26	2026/27 Forecast	Forecast (Under)/ Over Budget
Expenditure				
Core Costs				
Partnership Office	733,990	319,494	733,990	-
Support Costs	97,500	37,969	97,500	-
Board Members Expenses	500	-	500	-
Other Associated Costs	15,000	12,477	15,000	-
	846,990	**369,940**	**846,990**	**-**
Regional Transport Strategy				
Active Travel Action Plan	10,000	672	10,000	-
Rail Action Plan	20,000	9,956	20,000	-
Bus Action Plan	101,428	705	101,428	-
Freight Action Plan	17,375	5,348	17,375	-
Transport Network Resilience	20,000	-	20,000	-
Managing Demand	32,000	10,000	32,000	-
Behaviour Change	115,808	32,720	115,808	-
General	10,000	-	10,000	-
Road Safety	10,000	-	10,000	-
Health & Transport Action Plan	59,950	-	59,950	-
Contingency	5,000	-	5,000	-
Non Core Rechargeable	-	76,178	76,178	76,178
	401,561	**135,579**	**477,739**	**76,178**
Coordination & Project Development	**1,248,551**	**505,519**	**1,324,729**	**76,178**
Active Travel	2,716,262	4,891	1,783,147	(933,115)
Rail Network	100,000	-	100,000	-
Bus Network	197,263	-	22,463	(174,800)
Park & Ride	59,479	-	39,479	(20,000)
Road Safety	623,574	12,100	623,574	-
Places for People	-	-	-	-
Strategic Investment Programme	**3,696,578**	**16,991**	**2,568,663**	**(1,127,915)**
People & Places Grant - Revenue	295,650	130,505	295,650	-
People & Places Grant - Capital	1,433,611	513,997	1,433,611	-
People & Places Grant	**1,729,261**	**644,501**	**1,729,261**	**-**
Transport to Employment Grant	500,000	-	500,000	-
Transport to Employement Grant	**500,000**	**-**	**500,000**	**-**
Aberdeen Rapid Transit	-	1,306	1,306	1,306
City Region Deal	-	281,433	281,433	281,433
Total Expenditure	**7,174,390**	**1,449,750**	**6,405,391**	**(768,999)**
Income				
Partner Contributions				
Aberdeen City Council	(134,400)	(67,200)	(134,400)	-
Aberdeenshire Council	(134,400)	(67,200)	(134,400)	-
Scottish Government - Core costs	(742,900)	(390,000)	(742,900)	-
Transport Scotland - People & Places Grant - Revenue	(295,650)	(130,505)	(295,650)	-
Transport Scotland - People & Places Grant - Capital	(1,433,611)	(513,997)	(1,433,611)	-
Transport Scotland - Transport to Employment Grant	(500,000)	-	(500,000)	-
Capital Grant	(2,172,000)	(1,086,000)	(2,172,000)	-
Investment Interest	(150,000)	(54,794)	(150,000)	-
Other Income	-	(76,178)	(76,178)	(76,178)
Aberdeen Rapid Transit	-	(1,306)	(1,306)	(1,306)
City Region Deal	-	(281,433)	(281,433)	(281,433)
Total Income	**(5,562,961)**	**(2,668,611)**	**(5,921,877)**	**(358,916)**
Net Operating (Surplus) / Deficit before Reserves	**1,611,429**	**(1,218,861)**	**483,514**	**(1,127,915)**
Transfer to / (from) Reserves	**(1,611,429)**	**-**	**(483,514)**	**1,127,915**
Operating (Surplus) / Deficit	**-**	**(1,218,861)**	**-**	**-**

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Appendix 2

SUMMARY OF PEOPLE & PLACES GRANT

Description	Revised Budget	Actual to Sep-26	2026/27 Forecast	Forecast (Under)/ Over Budget
The Bikery	30,265	22,699	30,265	-
Recycled Bikes for All	41,955	24,474	41,955	-
Connecting Communities Aberdeen	25,000	15,862	25,000	-
Grampian Inclusive Cycle Bothies	34,052	3,609	34,052	-
Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr (Adv. Abdn)	9,520	2,405	9,520	-
Cycle Amenities	20,000	-	20,000	-
Huntly Travel Hub – Going Places!	41,046	13,682	41,046	-
Move It	19,500	11,861	19,500	-
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Sport Aberdeen)	13,850	4,726	13,850	-
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Ythan CC)	13,550	4,556	13,550	-
Cycle Storage	7,250	4,350	7,250	-
Hospital Volunteer Driving Scheme/Weekly Community Bus	25,000	12,750	25,000	-
THInC in the city – Continuation	10,000	7,357	10,000	-
Marketing	4,662	2,174	4,662	-
TOTAL REVENUE PROJECTS COSTS	**295,650**	**130,505**	**295,650**	**-**
The Bikery	142,351	106,763	142,351	-
Recycled Bikes for All	134,573	78,501	134,573	-
Connecting Communities Aberdeen	84,645	47,120	84,645	-
Aberdeenshire Bothy	142,439	68,947	142,439	-
Aberdeen School Streets Pilot	49,600	-	49,600	-
Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities	150,000	-	150,000	-
School Active Travel Infrastructure	20,000	-	20,000	-
Public Realm Cycle Parking	60,000	-	60,000	-
Grampian Inclusive Cycle Bothies	70,892	37,965	70,892	-
Learn to Bike, Bikability Level 1, Bike Dr (Adv.Abdn)	72,640	18,320	72,640	
Supporting Cycling: Storage, Maintenance and Promotion	127,000	-	127,000	-
Supporting Children Cycling	2,000	-	2,000	-
Huntly Travel Hub – Going Places!	54,677	18,226	54,677	-
Move It	130,513	84,466	130,513	-
East End Bicycle Shelter - Foresterhill	5,000	-	5,000	-
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Sport Aberdeen)	68,472	33,955	68,472	-
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Ythan CC)	39,805	13,179	39,805	-
Cycle Storage	65,000	6,554	65,000	-
Hospital Volunteer Driving Scheme/Weekly Community Bus	500	-	500	-
Marketing	5,000	-	5,000	-
Monitoring	8,505	-	8,505	-
TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECTS COSTS	**1,433,611**	**513,997**	**1,433,611**	**-**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**1,729,261**	**644,501**	**1,729,261**	**-**
Income				
Transport Scotland - People & Places Grant - Revenue	(295,650)	(130,505)	(295,650)	-
Transport Scotland - People & Places Grant - Capital	(1,433,611)	(513,997)	(1,433,611)	-
TOTAL FUNDING	**(1,729,261)**	**(644,501)**	**(1,729,261)**	**-**
TOTAL	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

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Appendix 3

SUMMARY OF TRANSPORT TO EMPLOYMENT GRANT

Description	Revised Budget	Actual to Sep-26	2026/27 Forecast	Forecast (Under)/ Over Budget
Rapid Review (research and data model)	30,000	-	30,000	-
Analysis to inform delivery	10,000	-	10,000	-
Supporting DRT Priority Actions	30,000	-	30,000	-
Training + Support (Empowering Sustainable Travel)	80,000	-	80,000	-
Promotion	100,000	-	100,000	-
Fares Intervention Pilot	200,000	-	200,000	-
Monitoring + Evaluation + Scheme Admin	50,000	-	50,000	-
TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS	**500,000**	**-**	**500,000**	**-**
Income				
Transport Scotland - Transport to Employment Grant	(500,000)	-	(500,000)	-
TOTAL FUNDING	**(500,000)**	**-**	**(500,000)**	**-**
Operating (Surplus)/Deficit	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

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Appendix 4

Nestrans 2026/27
Proposed Virements as at 3 November 2026

Project	Current Budget	Proposed Virement	Revised Budget	Comments
Strategic Investment Programme				
Active Travel (AT)				
A90 Ellon / Foveran / Newburgh path	75,000	(45,000)	30,000	No Tier 2 funding received so forecast spend by end of financial year reduced to cover ongoing land discussions.
F&B Way Access Point Improvements	134,049	180,000	314,049	Additional works between Peterhead and Inverugie to be added to the Peterhead to Maud upgrades that were originally planned.
Deeside Way Improvements	148,839	36,000	184,839	Funding to upgrade a further section of the Deeside Way (west and north of the A93, Aboyne).
Pedestrian Crossings	66,680	10,694	77,374	Increased costs for civils works and signals for the completed pedestrian crossing at Balmoor Terrace Peterhead.
River Deveron Active Travel Bridge	450,000	200,000	650,000	Additional allocation to bring the detailed design to a full tender package stage.
F&B Way realignment north of Ellon	483,867	(180,000)	303,867	Project now completed with underspend.
Portlethen to Marywell	150,000	(100,000)	50,000	Only phase 1 Portlethen improvements to be constructed this financial year with phase 2 Marywell improvements only being taken to design stage this year.
Torphins - Lumphanan Path	135,000	(56,894)	78,106	AC has received Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF) Tier 2 funding for this project and will use it to deliver phase 1, with Nestrans funding reduced and used towards development of phase 2 design and land discussions to tender stage.
A92 Murcar to Blackdog	254,239	(229,239)	25,000	Full budget allocations are no longer forecast to be able to be used this financial year on these projects due to resource constraints in the ACC Roads Projects Team.
Marywell Cycle Route	193,123	(143,123)	50,000	
A96 Dyce Cycle Track	158,859	(118,859)	40,000	
F&B Way rail bridge scour study	45,000	27,000	72,000	Additional budget requested due to tender costs being greater than expected

Project	Current Budget	Proposed Virement	Revised Budget	Comments
Multi-modal corridor study outcomes review	75,000	(60,000)	15,000	AC has received ATIF Tier 2 funding and majority of the Nestrans allocation is no longer required. The remaining budget will be used for traffic counts in the new year.
Bus Network				
RTPI E-paper Major Component Replacements	36,000	(36,000)	0	AC has received Bus Infrastructure Fund grant monies that will be used to deliver these projects this financial year and Nestrans funding no longer required.
RTPI e-paper battery powered bus stop flags/displays	50,000	(50,000)	0	
Installation of Bus Stops in Rural Areas	88,800	(88,800)	0	
Ellon Park & Ride / Peterhead Bus Station improvements	20,000	(20,000)	0	
Road Safety				
Shielhill junction improvement	623,574	176,426	800,000	Additional funding now contract let for construction of this project and works have started on site.
Peterhead, Cairntrodlie Access Improvements	0	150,000	150,000	Traffic calming and road safety improvements south of Clerkhill School. Includes raised crossing.
Places for People				
CCMP Central Union Street	0	347,795	347,795	Contribution towards completion of Union Street Central and road junction changes.
		0	overall virements net to zero	

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 11th November 2026

3.2 Financial Regulations Update

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek Board approval for a small number of amendments to the revised Financial Regulations that were adopted in June 2026.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is recommended to:
1) Approve the amendments to the Financial Regulations highlighted in **Appendix 1**.

3. Background

3.1 The Board's remit includes approving policies for the regulation and management of the finances of the Partnership and to review from time to time such regulations as may be necessary for the proper administration of the Partnership's financial affairs. The Partnership's current Financial Regulations were approved by the Board on 24 June 2026.

4. Proposed Amendments

4.1 Nestrans' officers have had the benefit of "road testing" the revised Financial Regulations since their adoption in June 2026. A number of clauses were provided in the previous version of the regulations, that provided specific guidance on approvals required for different values of procurement, and special urgency etc. These clauses had been removed to simplify this aspect of the financial regulations, and due to the fact that guidance was available within other procurement advice.

4.2 However, in terms of the practical usage of the Financial Regulations, it was found that the guidance provided by these clauses did provide specific value to officers in terms of clarity. At the request of Nestrans officers, and following consideration by the authors of the Financial Regulations, it is proposed to reinstate these clauses. Changes are highlighted within the text.

4.3 The proposed amendments substantially reinstate provisions contained in the superseded Financial Regulations published in April 2019 updated where necessary to reflect the revised structure and references to Procurement Legislation. They do not change the underlying policy intent or operational practice. As they amend the Financial Regulations approved in June 2026, formal Board approval is sought to reinstate them.

Mary Beattie
Treasurer

Report prepared by Tina Wight, Finance Business Partner (Aberdeenshire Council)
20 October 2026

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FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Partnership has Financial Regulations to ensure that all decisions are made within agreed budgets and in the correct manner enabling proper, transparent and efficient financial management of the Partnership.

Financial regulations provide the framework for managing the Partnership's financial affairs and apply to every member and employee of the Partnership or anyone acting on its behalf.

1. SCOPE AND OBSERVANCE

1.1 The Treasurer, as the "Proper Officer", in terms of Section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, shall be the adviser on financial matters to the Partnership and shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Partnership's financial affairs.

1.2 All members and employees have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, properly authorised, and provides value for money.

1.3 It shall be the responsibility of the Partnership Director to ensure that members of their staff are aware of and comply with the requirements contained in the Partnership's Financial Regulations.

1.4 These Financial Regulations shall not be altered or suspended except upon a resolution to that effect passed following consideration of a report from the Treasurer. Action contrary to the approved Financial Regulation should not be taken prior to this consideration.

1.5 The Partnership Director shall consult the Treasurer in respect of any matter which is liable to materially affect the finances of the Partnership before any provisional or other commitment is incurred or before reporting thereon to the Partnership Board. Such consultations must be in writing, allowing at least five clear working days for consultation.

1.6 A register of breaches of Financial Regulations will be maintained by the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA). All breaches identified shall be notified to the CIA and entered in the register. Monitoring of the register will be undertaken by the Partnership Director and the Board on an annual basis. This would take the form of a Board report by Aberdeenshire's Chief Internal Auditor, and also form part of the Annual Governance Statement, which is part of the Partnership's Annual Accounts.

1.7 These Financial Regulations may only be materially varied or revoked by the

Board and any variation or revocations will be effective from the first working day after the conclusion of the Board meeting at which it was approved. The Treasurer has delegated authority to make minor changes. The Partnership Director would be notified of such changes.

1.8 Any matters requiring legal interpretation will be referred to the Aberdeen City Council Legal Service following consultation with the Treasurer.

2. FINANCIAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The Partnership needs to plan effectively and develop systems to enable scarce resources to be allocated in accordance with carefully weighted priorities. The Partnership's Budgets are the financial expression of the Partnership's plans and policies.

Budget management ensures that once the budget has been approved by the Partnership, resources allocated and procured are used for their intended purpose and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is a continuous process, enabling the Partnership to review and adjust its budget targets during the financial year. It also provides the mechanism that calls to account managers responsible for defined elements of the budget.

2.1 Budget Preparation

2.1.1 A preliminary budget meeting shall be arranged annually by the Partnership Director where Officers from both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils attend along with the Treasurer, to agree a list of proposed projects to be included in the budget for the following financial year.

2.1.2 Estimates of income and expenditure shall be prepared by the Treasurer in conjunction with The Partnership Director. These estimates shall be submitted to the Partnership Board, and when approved shall constitute the Budget for the relevant financial year.

2.1.3 The responsibility for providing the services included in the Budget shall lie with the Partnership Director subject to any decisions made by the Board.

2.2 Budget Monitoring and Management

2.2.1 The Treasurer will periodically and on request provide information to the Partnership Director on actual expenditure and income compared with the approved Budget. The Treasurer shall be entitled to receive any clarification deemed necessary on any item of expenditure or income and the Partnership Director shall correspondingly provide the Treasurer with such information as he or she will require from them.

2.2.2 The Treasurer will report periodically to the Partnership Board on comparisons of forecast figures with budget throughout the year. The Partnership Board shall be

entitled to seek explanations for any figures in the cost comparison which it deems require special attention.

2.2.3 The responsibility for ensuring that Budget provisions are not exceeded shall rest with the Partnership Director except that this responsibility shall not extend to estimates for insurance premiums which are the responsibility of the Treasurer.

2.2.4 If it appears that the amount of any Budget Grouping may be exceeded, or the amount of any budget grouping of approved income may not be reached, and the excess expenditure or shortfall in income cannot be met by the Partnership Director, exercising his or her powers of virement in terms of Financial Regulation 2.3 below, it shall be the duty of the Partnership Director after consultation with the Treasurer, to report fully to the Partnership Board.

2.2.5 Any proposal to the Partnership Board, which would involve the incurring of additional expenditure not allowed for in the approved Budget, shall be accompanied by a report prepared by the Partnership Director, in consultation with the Treasurer, indicating that there is insufficient provision in the Budget, or making proposals for virement as required by Financial Regulation 2.3 below. Should virement not be possible, authorisation shall only be given after consideration of the expenditure involved by the Partnership Board.

2.3 Scheme of Virement

The scheme of virement is intended to enable the Partnership, Partnership Director and Treasurer to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall policy framework determined by the Partnership, and therefore to optimise the use of resources. The term "virement" refers to the switching of budgetary provision from one budget to another.

Definitions:-

"Budget Head" means one of the main headings as listed in the Budget Summary page, i.e. Core Costs, Regional Transport Strategy, Strategic Investment Programme, Partner Contributions, Investment Interest and Other Income.

"Budget Theme" means any heading under a Budget Head, e.g. Partnership Office, Health & Transport Action Plan, Strategic Roads – Safety etc.

"Budget Theme Detail" means any single line in the detail section of the Partnership's approved Budget (e.g. Salaries, Personnel Support costs) and specific named projects within the Regional Transport Strategy Budget Themes and the Strategic Investment Programme Budget Themes.

2.3.1 Subject to the following limitations, virement may be exercised by the Partnership Director for approval by the Partnership Board., as follows:

- The Partnership Director may vire between Budget Theme Details (e.g. Partnership Office, Support Costs) within a Budget Theme, but not between

Budget Themes.

- The Partnership Board may vire between Budget Themes and Budget Heads.

2.3.2 Virements shall not be used for the following purposes

- Recurring items of expenditure cannot replace non-recurring savings.
- Virement cannot be used to reinstate an item deleted by the Partnership Board during Budget consideration.

2.3.3 When the Partnership Director intends to vire, or to submit a report to the Partnership Board suggesting virement, the proposals shall first be notified to the Treasurer.

2.4 Budget Carry Forward Flexibility

Budget flexibility is a facility intended to support the integration of service delivery and continuity of service across financial years. In justified circumstances, it allows for the carry forward of unspent budget from one financial year to the next, enabling projects to retain a portion of underspend to support specific activity in the following year. Carry forwards are not automatic and will only be considered where there is a clear and evidenced case that aligns with Partnership Priorities.

2.4.1 All overspends in budgets for a financial year will require to be met in full in that financial year and as such will be the first call on any underspends relating to that year's financial position. If a net underspend is predicted in a financial year, then carry forwards up to the value of the net underspend may be considered by the Partnership Director for recommendation to the Partnership Board for approval.

2.4.2 An underspend generated within any budget may be considered for carry forward to the next financial year, subject to the following:

- It must be used within the same budget and must be used to deliver Partnership Priorities.
- The Partnership under budget position will be the net position, i.e. after any over budget positions have been addressed.
- Must be considered to be appropriate by the Partnership Director for submission to the Partnership Board for approval.

2.5 Accounting Policies and Abstract of Accounts

The Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the Partnership's Statement of Accounts, in accordance with proper practices and as set out in the format required by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA/LASAAC), for each financial year ending 31 March. The Partnership has a statutory responsibility to prepare its accounts to present fairly its operations during the year.

2.5.1 In view of the above, it shall be the Treasurer's responsibility to select suitable accounting policies and to ensure that they are consistently applied to the accounts relating to each financial year. It shall be the duty of the Partnership

Director to maintain proper financial and accounting records to demonstrate the adequate stewardship of public resources.

2.5.2 The Annual Accounts for the preceding financial year shall be prepared and submitted in draft to the Partnership's appointed External Auditors by the 30 June of the following financial year, or by such date as may be specified by Scottish Ministers in regulations made under Section 105 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.The draft must also be considered by the Partnership Board by 31 August.

2.5.3 Following completion of the Audit, the audited accounts will be submitted to the Partnership Board for approval and signature by the statutory deadline of 30 September, along with the External Auditor's report. Thereafter, the audited accounts and the auditor's annual report are to be published on the Partnership's website by the 31 October.

2.5.4 The Partnership Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the staff in his or her Service, affords to the Treasurer such assistance as is necessary to ensure that the deadlines agreed with the Treasurer for the completion of the Annual Accounts are complied with.

2.6 External Funding

2.6.1 External funding is potentially a very important source of income to the Partnership, but the conditions attached need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the Partnership.

2.6.2 The Partnership Director must ensure that the project or purpose for which the funding is being sought has already received Partnership Board approval or that it sits within the delegated authority in terms of service provision. No application should be made that will result in increased budgetary costs that have not been approved as part of the project at Partnership Board.

2.7 Sponsorship

2.7.1 Sponsorship is defined as "The act of supporting an event, activity, person or organisation, or premises by way of a financial contribution or through the provision of products or services".

2.7.2 Sponsorship arrangements must comply with the Policy and Procedures on Commercial Sponsorship in the Public Sector, being those of Aberdeenshire Council, which the Partnership has adopted.

2.7.3 Sponsorship will be co-ordinated by the Partnership Director, who will maintain a register of all commercial sponsorship agreements.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES

All organisations face risks to people, property and continued operations. Risk is the chance or possibility of loss, damage, injury or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event.

Risk management is the planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk. Its objectives are to secure the assets of the organisation and to ensure its continued financial and organisational well-being.

3.1 Internal Control

Internal controls are the mechanisms put in place by management to: manage and monitor progress towards the Partnership's objectives; ensure compliance with legislation, regulations and policies; ensure that operations are efficient and effective; ensure that financial information and reporting is reliable; and to protect the organisations assets and resources.

3.1.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to assist the Partnership to put in place an appropriate control environment and effective internal controls which provide reasonable assurance of effective and efficient operations, financial stewardship, probity and compliance with laws and regulations.

3.1.2 It shall be the Partnership Director's responsibility to ensure that the established controls are being adhered to, to seek guidance from the Treasurer when it is identified that controls require change and to advise of identified failures to comply with established controls.

3.1.3 Internal controls will vary depending on activity, size, volume of transactions and geographical distribution. However, three types of internal control will apply as a minimum requirement:

- Separation of duties
- Internal checks
- Management review, with approval of expenditure through the Partnership Director

3.1.4 It shall be the Partnership Director's responsibility to ensure an annual review of the code of governance is carried out, and that the results of this review are considered by the Partnership before approving this in the annual governance statement in the Annual Accounts for Nestrans.

3.2 Prevention of Fraud and Corruption

3.2.1 The Partnership will not tolerate fraud or corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside the organisation. The Partnership's expectation of propriety and accountability is that members and officers at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices.

3.2.2 Whenever any matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve, irregularities concerning cash, stores, equipment or other property of the Partnership or any suspected irregularity in the exercise of the functions of the Partnership, the Partnership Director will immediately notify the Treasurer and the Chief Internal Auditor, as appropriate, who shall take such steps as may be considered necessary by way of investigation and report.

3.2.3 All members and employees will be expected to comply with the Partnership's Strategy for the Prevention and Detection of Fraud and Corruption.

3.3 Insurances, Indemnities and Guarantees

An integral aspect of risk management is obtaining suitable insurance cover. This minimises potential financial strain from loss.

3.3.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to effect all insurance cover and negotiate all claims in consultation with other officers where necessary.

3.3.2 The Partnership Director shall give prompt notification to the Treasurer of new or increased insurable risks, properties, equipment or other vehicles and new/changes to services impacting current insurance coverage.

3.3.3 The Partnership Director must promptly report in writing to the Treasurer any loss, liability or damage or potentially claim triggering event. If criminal activity is suspected, the police should be informed.

3.3.4 If contemplating a direct compensation payment instead of an insurance claim the Partnership Director must obtain written approval from the Treasurer prior to payment, adhering to the limits set out in Partnership's scheme of delegation.

3.3.5 The Treasurer shall annually, or at such other period as may be considered necessary, review all insurances in consultation with the Partnership Director as appropriate, and may report thereon to the Partnership Board if changes are required.

3.3.6 The Partnership Director will consult the Treasurer and the Partnership's legal consultants respecting the terms of any indemnity and guarantees which the Partnership is requested to give. All such guarantees must be referred to the Partnership Board.

3.4 Hospitality

3.4.1 The Partnership Director shall be entitled to extend hospitality, subject to adequate Revenue Budget provision up to £300 (excluding VAT) per occasion.

3.4.2 When hospitality is estimated to cost in excess of £300, but not more than £1,500 (exclusive of VAT) per occasion, written approval shall first be obtained from the following two Members: the Chair and one of the Vice Chairs of the Partnership Board.

3.4.3 Hospitality estimated to cost in excess of £1,500 (exclusive of VAT) per occasion shall require the prior approval of the Partnership Board.

3.4.4 Reasonable hospitality extended to Partnership employees by current or prospective clients, customers or suppliers, is an accepted practice, but the acceptance of excessive hospitality or gifts, other than mere tokens, goes beyond what is proper for a public official, regardless of whether such gifts

actually do, or are intended to, influence him or her in an official capacity. Any hospitality or gifts must be recorded in a register held and maintained by the Partnership.

3.4.5 Gifts may only be accepted by employees provided they fall within the terms of the specific Inland Revenue exemption (ITEPA 2003, s 324) for gifts from third parties. This effectively limits the value of gifts to £250 including of VAT.

3.4.6 Hospitality or gifts received by the Partnership Board Members must be dealt with in accordance with the Councillors' Code of Conduct and must be recorded in a register kept for the purpose by the Partnership Director.

3.5 Internal Audit

The requirement for an internal audit function is regarded as a matter of good practice, ensuring that arrangements are made for the proper administration of financial affairs and that the Treasurer has responsibility for those affairs.

3.5.1 A periodic internal audit, under the independent control and direction of the Treasurer, shall be arranged to carry out a review and appraisal of the internal controls of the Partnership and prepare such reports on these as may be required or appropriate. Work will be planned to provide reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance and shall be undertaken in accordance with Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS). Such Internal Audit work shall not absolve management of the responsibility to ensure that all financial transactions are undertaken in accordance with the Partnership's Financial Regulations and that adequate systems of internal control exist to safeguard assets and secure the accuracy and reliability of records.

3.5.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Partnership Board from time to time to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of its internal auditing, in accordance with applicable standards and practices. The Partnership's internal auditor is the Chief Internal Auditor of Aberdeenshire Council. As the Partnership uses the financial systems of Aberdeenshire Council it should also consider the sufficiency of assurance that Nestrans draws from the auditors work on Aberdeenshire Council's systems generally.

3.5.3 Internal Audit shall have authority to:–

(i) Enter at all reasonable times any Partnership premises.

(ii) Have access to all records, documents and correspondence relating to any financial and other transactions of the Partnership.

(iii) Request and receive such explanations as are necessary concerning any matter under examination.

(iv) Require any employee of the Partnership to produce cash, stores, equipment or any other Partnership property under his or her control.

3.5.4 It shall be the responsibility of the Partnership Director to ensure that access and explanations requested by Internal Audit are provided in a timely manner on all

occasions.

3.5.5 The Chief Internal Auditor has the right to report direct to the Partnership Board in any instance where he or she deems it inappropriate to report direct to the Partnership Director.

3.5.6 Upon receipt of a report by the Chief Internal Auditor, the Partnership Director shall respond fully within one calendar month.

3.5.7 Where recommendations resulting from Internal Audit work are agreed, the Partnership Director will ensure that these are implemented within the agreed timescale. Regular progress reports will be sought by Internal Audit, and it is the responsibility of the Partnership Director to ensure that these are provided when requested along with explanations of any recommendations not implemented within the agreed timescale.

3.6 Retention and Disposal of Financial Documents

The retention and disposal of financial documents must be carried out in accordance with the Partnership's Records Management Plan, approved by the Keeper of the Records Scotland.

HM Revenue and Customs

3.6.1 HM Revenue and Customs generally require all accounting records to be kept for a minimum period of 6 years plus current year. The Partnership Director is responsible for ensuring that records are retained in accordance with the requirements of HMRC.

External Audit

3.6.2 A number of documents must be retained to enable external auditors to verify the Partnership's Annual Accounts. Other documents required by External Audit, which do not need to be kept for an extended period due to statutory or other requirements, should only be retained until the audit is completed, as agreed upon with External Audit.

3.6.3 Annual Accounts and any associated working files should be retained in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

3.6.4 All documentations relating to grant claims should be retained, in terms of the award made.

Storage and Disposal

3.6.5 All current and historical financial documents must be stored securely.

3.6.6 Both prior and current years' records must be retained on file with access only available to authorised persons.

3.6.7 Time-expired financial records, which include any personal information, must be treated as confidential waste and will be shredded or incinerated under

supervision or forwarded to a specialist contractor (for confidential destruction). Financial records not including personal information can be disposed of through ordinary waste paper collection agents but must not be placed in open skips, left out in bin sacks or be exposed to casual retrieval.

4. CHARGES, INCOME, CASH AND BANKING

4.1 Income

Income can be a vulnerable asset and effective income collection systems are necessary to ensure that all income due is identified, collected, receipted and banked properly. It is preferable to obtain income in advance of supplying goods or services as this improves the Partnership's cashflow and also avoids the time and cost of administering debts.

4.1.1 It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to ensure the proper recovery of all monies due to the Partnership. To this end, he or she shall ensure that proper financial and accounting arrangements are made throughout the Partnership for the recording, collection, custody, control and disposal of cash.

4.1.2 All money received by an Officer on behalf of the Partnership shall without delay be paid to the Treasurer or, as he or she may direct, to the Partnership's Bank account. No deduction may be made from such money save to the extent that the Treasurer may specifically authorise. Appropriate accounting entries shall be affected in a timely and accurate manner to record all income due and collected.

4.1.3 Maximum limits for cash holdings shall be agreed with, and shall not be exceeded without the express permission of the Treasurer

4.1.4 Accounts for chargeable services shall be issued by the Partnership Director. The Treasurer shall be responsible for collection and pursuit of outstanding sums.

4.1.5 Irrecoverable debts up to a value of £1,000 may be written off by the Treasurer in consultation with the Partnership Director. Debts in excess of £1,000 may be written off only after due consideration and approval by the Partnership Board. All irrecoverable debts, where the debtor has been subject to bankruptcy, sequestration or liquidation, may be written off by the Treasurer.

4.1.6 If the impact of such a write-off is such that it will result in the amount of any revenue budget head being exceeded, or an income figure not being reached, then the provisions of Regulation 2.2.4 shall apply.

4.1.7 An irrecoverable debt is one where there is no reasonable prospect of recovery. Once formally written off, no active pursuit of the debt will normally be undertaken.

4.2 Banking Arrangements

4.2.1 The Bank Account of the Partnership will be kept with the Bank selected by the

Partnership Board and where required, the Treasurer shall arrange for subsidiary accounts to be kept with that Bank. All such Bank Accounts shall be in the name, or incorporate the name, of the Partnership.

4.2.2 Except where in special circumstances it is not possible to borrow on the Money Market, the Bank Account shall not be overdrawn in excess of the sum authorised by the Partnership and agreed with its Bankers.

4.2.3 Arrangements for electronic funds transfer shall be authorised by the Treasurer or other officer designated by him or her.

4.2.4 Any cheques issued shall bear the signature or the facsimile of one of the authorised signatories agreed by the Partnership Board. The ordering of and the control of cheques shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer.

4.2.5 Cheques and electronic transfers in excess of a figure determined by the Treasurer shall require the signature of a second authorised signatory.

4.2.6 All monies received shall be paid into the Partnership's Bank Account daily or at such other intervals as arranged with the Treasurer.

5. PAYROLL AND EXPENDITURE

5.1 Staffing

In order to provide the highest level of service, it is crucial that the Partnership recruits and retains high calibre, knowledgeable staff, qualified to an appropriate level.

5.1.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Partnership Director to ensure that the Partnership's Policy in relation to the recruitment and selection of staff is fully complied with and that all other Human Resources and Organisational Development Policies approved by the Partnership are adhered to.

5.1.2 Appointments of all employees shall be made in accordance with approved establishments, grades, and rates of pay. The Partnership Director shall have discretion as to the incremental salary point on which employees are to be placed within the approved salary scale for the post, subject to the existence of sufficient provision in the Budget.

5.2 Salaries and Wages

Staff costs are a material item of expenditure for the Partnership. It is therefore important that payments are accurate, timely, made only when they are due for services to the Partnership and that payments accord with individuals' conditions of employment. It is also important that all payments are accurately and completely recorded.

5.2.1 With the general exception of pensions to former employees, the payment of salaries, wages, compensations and other emoluments to all employees of the Partnership shall be made by Aberdeenshire Council.

5.2.2 The Partnership Director will notify Human Resources and Organisational Development and the Head of Finance without delay and in the form prescribed by him or her, of all matters affecting the payment of such emoluments and, in particular:

(i) appointments, resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers;
(ii) absences from duty for sickness or other reason, apart from approved leave;
(iii) changes in remuneration, other than normal increments and pay awards and agreements of general application;
(iv) information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax etc.

5.2.3 All time records or other pay documents shall be in a form prescribed or approved by the Council's Legal and People Service, being the provider of HR Services to the Partnership, and shall be certified by or on behalf of the Partnership Director.

5.2.4 Should it be established that an employee has been overpaid, recovery will be pursued. Should the Partnership Director believe that there are mitigating circumstances, non-recovery may only be permitted if the Treasurer gives written approval, following consultation with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

5.3 Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

5.3.1 All payments in respect of travelling and subsistence allowances shall be at rates determined from time to time by the Partnership and in accordance with the Partnership's adopted scheme, being Aberdeenshire Council's policy and procedures for Travel and Subsistence.

5.4 Payment of Grants and Subsidies

The awarding of Grants are means by which the Partnership provides subsidies or funding to external bodies, (including individuals, businesses and third sector organisations) to further the aims of those external bodies. Grants should not be used to procure works, goods or services which the Partnership would otherwise have to procure in accordance with Regulation 5.6.

5.4.1 The Partnership Director shall have authority to award grants included in the approved Budget which have a clear link to and support the aims and objectives of the Partnership.

5.4.2 Grants may only be awarded on written terms and conditions using grant award letters or grant agreements on terms approved by the Partnership's legal consultants.

5.4.3 Any amendments to such terms and conditions will require the prior approval of the Partnership's legal consultants.

5.5 Authority to Incur Expenditure

5.5.1 The Partnership Director shall have authority to incur expenditure included in the approved Budget up to the level of the Budget provision, subject to Regulations 5.5.2 to 5.5.3 below

5.5.2 Expenditure on I.T. software and hardware may not be incurred until appropriate technical or professional advice has been taken from Aberdeen City Council, the Partnership's ICT consultants.

5.5.3 Single items of expenditure on supplies, goods, works, materials or services shall require competitive quotations in accordance with tendering arrangements set out in Regulation 5.6.

5.6 Procurement of Works, Goods or Services

"Procurement Legislation" means the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, Concession Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016, Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016, as applicable and each as may be amended or replaced from time to time.

NESTRANS shall be required to ensure compliance with applicable Procurement Legislation, associated statutory guidance, and relevant internal governance frameworks adopted by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. In delivering services across both local authority areas, NESTRANS will adhere to the principles, procedures, and standards set out within the Council(s) guidance, ensuring transparency, equal treatment, and robust contract management. NESTRANS must remain cognisant of, and operate in accordance with, current procurement legislation, local authority policies, and any future updates to statutory or regulatory procurement requirements.

Purchase Orders

5.6.1 Subject to regulation 5.6.2 the purchase of all works, goods or services shall be ordered or instructed on an official purchase order form, which shall be in a format approved by the Treasurer. Whereby reason of urgency or necessity a verbal order is issued, it must be confirmed immediately in writing by the issue of an official purchase order form. The supplier shall be requested to quote order numbers on all invoices.

5.6.2 The Treasurer has authority to dispense with the requirement to complete a purchase order and shall maintain a register of such dispensations. Purchasing with a purchase card is subject to this dispensation.

5.6.3 The purchase order, with the relevant contract references/schedule numbers, included where appropriate, shall be signed in manuscript by the Partnership Director or other authorised signatory, or by appropriate electronic methods as approved by the Treasurer. The Partnership Director must furnish the Treasurer with a list of signatories approved for this purpose and shall advise him or her of additions to or deletions from the list as they occur. The officer approving the purchase order should be satisfied that there will be appropriate budgetary provision covering the estimated cost prior to authorisation. All purchase orders or

contracts of £50,000 and above in value must be authorised by the Partnership Director, subject to obtaining appropriate approvals.

5.6.4 Regulation 5.6.1 does not apply to supplies of metered services, periodical payments such as rent and rates, and petty cash purchases

Contract Value

5.6.5 All references to "contract value"/"requirements" shall be read as referring to (a) the total price of the contract (excluding VAT) where the Partnership is the sole customer or client or (b) the Partnership's contribution, where the Partnership is one of a group or partnership of organisations acting as customer or client (including the value of any assets or rights transferred by the Partnership to the supplier). The whole life of the contract should be considered, including optional extension periods.

5.6.6 In the case of a framework agreement the value of the framework agreement is the total value estimated to be paid by the Partnership to the supplier or suppliers (excluding VAT) over the whole life of the framework agreement including any optional extension period.

5.6.7 Where a contract is one of a series of similar contracts, across the Partnership for the same category of goods, or specific requirements needed to complete a project, the total contract value of each must be aggregated to determine the relevant contract value. The splitting of requirements into smaller lots or orders in an attempt to avoid the contract value limits in these regulations is expressly prohibited.

Orders and Contracts less than £5,000

5.6.8 Where the total value of the contract is estimated to be less than £5,000 over the term of the contract, the procuring officer must obtain a minimum of one written quote and be able to demonstrate that best value has been achieved.

Orders Equal to or over £5,000, but less than £50,000

5.6.9 Where the total value of the contract is estimated to be £5,000 or more, but less than £50,000, over the term of the purchase/contract, competitive quotations must be sought and obtained in writing from at least four suppliers. Should the Partnership Director be unable to obtain four written quotes, prior approval to proceed with fewer than four quotations should be sought from the Treasurer.

Orders £50,000 and above

5.6.10 If the total of the contract is estimated to be £50,000 or over, over the term of the purchase/contract, a formal tender shall be issued to appropriate tenderers. The Public Contracts Scotland website must be used for the advertisement of contracts, unless the Treasurer has given express permission for another advertising method to be used.

Contracts above the Higher Value Threshold

5.6.11 Where the value of the contract is estimated to exceed the Higher Value Threshold the advice of the Treasurer must be sought.

Contract Term

5.6.12 All contracts should have a defined duration or be capable of being terminated on a fixed period of notice by the Partnership.

5.6.13 Contracts will be subject to review by the Partnership Director at least every four years. Contracts may only be continued beyond the initial period if it continues to represent best value and provided the appropriate approval is obtained in accordance with these regulations.

Authority to Award Tendered Contracts

5.6.14 Authority to award contracts following a tendering process is permitted as follows:

- Contract value less than £50,000 for the duration of the contract period and accepting lowest priced tender – Partnership Director.
- Contract value less than £50,000 for the duration of the contract period - accepting the most economically advantageous tender to the Partnership, in relation to price / quality mix, despite tender not being the lowest priced – Partnership Director in consultation with the Treasurer.
- Contract value for the duration of the contract period which is equal to or over £50,000 where the matter has not previously been reported to the Partnership – Partnership Board.
- If a decision to accept a tender has been delegated to officers and the value of the selected tender is in excess of 25% and £25,000 above the originally reported estimate the matter should be referred to the Partnership Board.

Authority to make Direct Awards (including special urgency)

5.6.15 Notwithstanding regulation 5.6.14, the Partnership Director may authorise a Direct Award but then only in the following circumstances:

- Where the Contract Value is below £5,000 and the Partnership Director is satisfied it represents best value
- Where the Contract Value is £5,000 or more but less than £50,000, the Procuring Officer has presented a satisfactory Award Report demonstrating best value and either the Treasurer has given prior approval in accordance with regulation 5.6.9, or the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) is satisfied that there is no practical or economically sensible alternative

- Where the Contract Value is £50,000 or more, the Procuring Officer has submitted an Award Report and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) is satisfied that there are grounds for permitting a Direct Award in accordance with the Procurement Legislation (which grounds may include awarding a call-off contract to a supplier under a framework agreement without re-opening competition)

- For the purchase of second hand goods in accordance with regulation 5.6.27, and

- In the case of special urgency as set out in regulation 5.6.17.

5.6.16 Regardless of the Contract Value, the Partnership Board may authorise a Direct Award provided the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) is satisfied that there are grounds for permitting a Direct Award in accordance with the Procurement Legislation (which grounds may include awarding a call off contract to a supplier under a framework agreement without re-opening competition).

5.6.17 In the event of special urgency brought about by circumstances unforeseeable by, and not attributable to the Partnership, the Partnership Director may authorise a Direct Award provided the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) is satisfied and provides written confirmation that there are grounds for permitting a Direct Award in accordance with the Procurement Legislation.

5.6.18 If there is any doubt about whether there are grounds for permitting a Direct Award in accordance with the Procurement Legislation the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) shall consult with the Partnership's Legal consultants before agreeing that the action is justified in the circumstances.

<u>Contract Variations and Extensions – Goods, Services and Works</u>

5.6.19 Where there is a requirement for extending an existing contract for a period of up to twelve months and/or to vary the scope of the contract and the combined value of the existing contract and the extension and/or variation is less than £50,000, the matter shall be delegated to the Partnership Director, subject to the approval of the Treasurer.

5.6.20 Where an extension or variation increases the contract value of an existing contract to £50,000 and above and the contract has not previously been approved by the Partnership, then this will be subject to reporting to the Partnership Board as outlined in 5.6.14 and to ensuring compliance with Procurement Legislation.

5.6.21 Where there is a requirement to extend an existing contract for a period of up to twelve months and/or vary the scope of the contract which in either case will, increase the value of contract by no more than 25% of the original contract value,

(and that contract has previously been approved by committee) the matter shall be delegated to the Partnership Director, subject to the approval of the Treasurer and to ensuring compliance with Procurement Legislation.

5.6.22 Where there is a requirement to extend an existing contract for a period of greater than twelve months and/or increase the value by more than 25% of the original contract value, (and the contact has previously been approved by committee) the matter shall be subject to reporting and approval by the Partnership as outlined in 5.6.14 and to ensuring compliance with Procurement Legislation.

5.6.23 There shall no requirement to report to the Partnership or seek the Board's approval to extend a contract where the option to extend and the budget for the extension was included in the original approval. The authority to exercise an option to extend in these circumstances shall be delegated to the Partnership Director. The Partnership Director shall ensure that any such option is exercised in and to compliance with Procurement Legislation.

Framework Agreements

5.6.24 The establishment of framework agreements and the awarding of contracts under a framework agreement is regulated by Procurement Legislation according to the estimated total value of all contracts that the Partnership anticipates will be awarded under the framework agreement. The award of a framework agreement must be approached in the same way as the award of a contract, and the award of a contract under a framework agreement must be compliant with the terms of the relevant framework agreement.

5.6.25 A Framework Agreement is a general term for agreements with providers which set out terms and conditions under which specific purchases (call-offs) can be made throughout the term of the agreement.

5.6.26 Where the Partnership has entered into a framework agreement with external suppliers covering the provision of goods, works or services, the approval of the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) must be sought before seeking alternative provision with different suppliers. The approval of the Head of Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire Council) must also be sought before entering into a contract under a framework agreement where the procedure for selecting the call-off supplier or the terms of the call-off contract deviate in any way from the procedure or terms set out in the framework agreement that is being used.

Purchase of Second Hand Goods

5.6.27 Second hand goods up to a value of £50,000 may be acquired without a competitive quotation being obtained, provided that:

- the Partnership Director can demonstrate that the purchase is necessary to facilitate service delivery;

- the Partnership Director can demonstrate that the purchase represents best value, having given due consideration to the cost of an equivalent new purchase and estimated life of the asset both from new and current age;

- the goods have been subject to inspection to ascertain their physical condition, with a record kept of the outcome of the inspection;

- the Partnership has clear title to the goods; and

- the Partnership Director obtains in writing (including e-mail) the prior agreement of the Treasurer before effecting the purchase.

Contract Register

5.6.28 The Treasurer shall maintain a Contracts Register for the monitoring of all contracts and framework agreements developed or in use by the Partnership, which shall include the value and amount of each contract (where able to be so identified). The Partnership Director shall ensure that the prescribed information is communicated to the Treasurer twice a year. The Partnership Director shall ensure that all requirements of Procurement Legislation concerning the publication of notices in relation to contracts advertised, entered into or modified are complied with.

Procurement Strategy and Annual Report

5.6.29 Prior to the start of each financial year the Treasurer shall assess whether in that financial year total procurement spend on contracts that are subject to Procurement Legislation is expected to be equal to or greater than £5,000,000 (excluding VAT). If it is determined that procurement spend will reach this threshold, then the Treasurer shall ensure that before the start of that financial year the Partnership:

- Prepares a procurement strategy setting out how the Partnership intends to carry out regulated procurement; or

- Reviews the procurement strategy for the current financial year or, if no procurement strategy for the current year is available, the most recent procurement strategy, and makes such revisions to it as the Partnership considers appropriate.

5.6.30 A procurement strategy published by the Partnership must comply with the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. When preparing a procurement strategy, the Treasurer should carry out appropriate and proportionate consultation and engagement exercises that consider the views of stakeholders.

5.6.31 The procurement strategy, where appropriate, should be approved by the Partnership Board. The procurement strategy must be published on the internet

and in an accessible format. The Treasurer must notify the Scottish Ministers when the procurement strategy is published.

5.6.32 If the Partnership has not prepared and published a procurement strategy on the basis that the threshold in Regulation 5.6.14 was not anticipated to be met, and it becomes apparent that the total expenditure on regulated procurements for the financial year is likely to exceed that threshold, the Treasurer must, as soon as practicable, prepare a procurement strategy or review or revise the Partnership's existing strategy as necessary.

5.6.33 Where the Partnership prepares a procurement strategy, the Treasurer shall also prepare an annual procurement report on the regulated procurement activities undertaken by the Partnership in accordance with the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the relevant financial year and shall publish the report online.

6. ASSET MANAGEMENT

6.1 Assets

6.1.1 The Partnership may hold assets in the form of property, vehicles, equipment, furniture and other items worth, collectively, a significant amount. It is important that these assets are safeguarded and used efficiently in service delivery, and that there are arrangements for the security of both assets and information required for service operations. An up-to-date asset register is a prerequisite for proper fixed asset accounting and sound asset management.

6.1.2 The general security of the Partnership's accommodation shall be the responsibility of the Partnership Director. He or she is responsible for maintaining proper security at all times for all buildings, stocks, stores, furniture, equipment, cash, etc., under his or her control and shall consult the Treasurer in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.

6.1.3 The Treasurer will set up and maintain an asset register of all assets owned by the Partnership (with the exception of minor items covered by Regulation 6.2), recording the purpose for which it is held, the location, the extent, purchase details.

6.1.4 The Partnership's legal consultants will ensure custody of all title deeds under secure arrangements.

6.1.5 Property shall only be let or disposed of in accordance with Partnership Policy.

6.2 Stocks and Stores

6.2.1 Confusion often arises between the terms 'inventories' and 'stock' or 'stores.' For clarity, these terms are as follows:

- Inventories: Items such as computer equipment, equipment, fittings, furniture, machinery, plant, software, vehicles, and other similar assets.

- Stock or Stores: Items used in the delivery of services, including cable,

cement, fuel, glass, ingredients, light bulbs, piping, raw materials, sink units, spare parts, stationery, wood, and other similar materials.

6.2.2 Responsibility for the care and custody of stocks and stores under his or her control shall rest with the Partnership Director, who shall ensure that such assets are secure and adequately accounted for. Records shall be maintained detailing the location, movement and balance of items held which shall themselves be subject to a regular independent physical check.

6.2.3 The Partnership Director shall supply to the Treasurer such information as is required in relation to stores for the accounting, costing and financial records, timeously on request. Surplus materials, stores, or equipment shall be disposed of in accordance with Regulation 6.3.

6.3 Disposal of Assets

6.3.1 All surplus plant, vehicles, equipment and furnishings expected to realise more than £1,000 (exclusive of VAT) where no suitable trade-in arrangements have been made, shall be offered for sale by the Partnership Director in consultation with the Treasurer ensuring that best value is achieved and can be demonstrated. Items expected to raise more than £1,000 (exclusive of VAT) individually, should be offered for sale by open invitation or sold at auction.

6.3.2 Where the value is less than or equal to £1,000 the asset should be offered for use elsewhere in the Partnership, and if no alternative internal use is identified the disposal route elected should represent best value.

6.4 Leasing Arrangements

6.4.1 Definitions: -

Lease: Under IFRS 16, a lease is defined as “a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time. A contract can be (or contain) a lease only if the underlying asset is “identified”.

Right of Use Asset: Having the right to control the use of an identified asset means having the right to direct, and obtain all the economic benefits from, the use of that asset. These rights must be in place for a period of time and/or a specified amount of use.

Lease Liability: Represents the Partnership’s obligation to make lease payments for the asset.

6.4.2 All new and existing lease arrangements must be recorded on the Partnership’s Balance Sheet to reflect both the assets being leased and the corresponding debt liabilities over the term of the lease.

6.4.3 All new lease agreements that fall within the definition of a lease as set out in 6.4.1 above, must be supported by a detailed Business Case to assess best value.

6.4.4 The Partnership Director must notify the Treasurer of all new lease arrangements, together with any changes in current leases.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

7.1 Treasury Management

7.1.1 The recommendations of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services described in Section 4 of that Code shall be adhered to by the Partnership. Section 4 of the Code contains four key recommendations relating to the policies and practices to be adopted by transport partnerships, reporting arrangements, the management and control of risk and best value.

7.1.2 Accordingly, the Partnership will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:

- a treasury management policy statement, stating the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities

- suitable treasury management practices, setting out the manner in which the Partnership will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, these to be maintained by the Treasurer.

7.1.3 The content of the policy statement and treasury management practices will follow the recommendations contained in sections 6 and 7 of the Code, (subject only to amendment where necessary to reflect the particular circumstances of the Partnership. Such amendments will not result in the Partnership materially deviating from the Code's key recommendations). The Partnership will set out its strategy and procedures to ensure compliance with the Code in a Treasury Management Policy Statement, and this will be monitored by the Partnership Board.

7.1.4 The Partnership Board will receive reports on treasury management policies and practices, on an annual basis.

7.1.5 The Partnership delegates responsibility for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will act in accordance with the Partnership's treasury management practices and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

7.1.6 The Treasurer shall normally act as a Registrar for all Stock, Bonds, Bills etc., and shall maintain records of all monies borrowed by the Partnership. Where required to facilitate a particular method of borrowing, the Partnership's Banker

or other agent approved by the Partnership Board may be appointed Registrar.

7.2 Investments and Loans

7.2.1 The Treasurer shall ensure the proper and safe custody of all Funds administered by the Partnership.

7.2.2 All investments of money under the control of the Partnership shall be managed by the Treasurer in accordance with the Partnership's Treasury Management Policy and shall be in the name of the Partnership or in the name of nominees approved by the Treasurer who will report the need for such nominees to the Partnership Board.

7.2.3 All documents of title to any investments or securities, the property of or in the name of the Partnership or its nominees, shall be held in the custody of the Treasurer, save that the title deeds of all property in its ownership shall be in the custody of the Partnership's legal consultants.

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 11 November 2026

4.1 - Director's Report

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report updates the Board on strategic issues not otherwise covered on the agenda, including liaison with Transport Scotland (TS), other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs), and with our regional partners.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

a) Note the ongoing strategic liaison arrangements with Transport Scotland, other Regional Transport Partnerships, and our regional partners;
b) Note the letter issued to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport in Appendix A regarding £2 Capped Bus Fares for North East Scotland;
c) Note the response from Transport Scotland on Alternatives to Prosecution for Road Traffic Offences in Appendix B;
d) Notes Minutes from the Health and Transport Action Plan Steering Group of 17th September 2026 in Appendix C; and
e) Note recent and planned attendance at Conferences and Events as detailed in Appendix D.

3. Strategic Liaison

Transport Scotland

3.1 There have been a number of meetings since the September Board meeting.

3.2 Discussions on an approach for local and national car use reduction plans have recently resumed. This has confirmed that the Government's position that work on the regulatory review of road user charging will not continue to be pursued by the Government, due to cost of living impacts. Work on developing wider plans for road traffic reduction will however continue.

3.3 Following the announcement by the First Minister on 17 October 2026, Officers have had a number of meetings discussing Better Buses Legislation, Public Control of Buses, and £2 Capped Bus Fares. Further detail is included in Item 4.4 on this agenda. **Appendix A** contains the letter sent to the Cabinet Secretary from the Chair requesting that the North-East of Scotland is included as the next stage of the £2 Capped Fare roll out.

3.4 Discussions with Transport Scotland have also enabled an update to be provided on a national approach to alternatives to prosecution for road traffic offences. **Appendix B**

contains details of their response, which was shared with Board Members by email on 07 October 2026.

Regional Transport Partnership Liaison

3.5 The next scheduled meeting of RTP Chairs will be held on Wednesday 02 December, hosted by Nestrans, to be held in Aberdeen. RTP Leads will meet together on 04 November 2026. Agenda items will focus on Public Sector Reform; Approach to Regional Delivery; Transport Governance; Bus Reform; and future funding arrangements.

3.6 RTP Chairs and Leads met with the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport (Stephen Flynn) in Edinburgh on 29 October 2026. The meeting including an overview on how RTPs are currently delivering against national and regional objectives, how RTPs could respond to the Public Sector Reform/Regionalisation agenda, and as well as concerns regarding funding arrangements.

3.7 The roundtable discussion focussed particularly on regional approaches to bus reform, including consideration of urban and rural issues, how approaches to franchising could tie into the Public Sector Reform agenda, and the strong link between transport, economy and skills.

Regional Economic Partnership

3.8 The officers group of the Regional Economic Partnership met on 14 October, discussing the finalisation of the REP Delivery Plan, and approach to the regionalisation agenda.

Bus Alliance Board

3.9 The next meeting of the Bus Alliance Board is due to take place on 12 November. The Bus Alliance have separately written to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport, and he has committed to join a future meeting of the Bus Alliance Board.

Health and Transport Action Plan

3.10 This last met on 17 September. Work continues on the three specific project groups, interface with community transport groups, and learnings from a pilot project considering transport and appointments at Chalmers Hospital Banff. **Appendix C** contains a Minute from the last meeting.

Getabout Partnership

3.11 The Strategic and Operational groups for Getabout continue to meet though, in line with their usual frequency, no scheduled meetings of either group have taken place since the September meeting of the Nestrans Board.

3.12 Through the Transport to Employment programme, work will take place to enhance and promote the Getabout sustainable travel brand and website, develop practical resources, and engage with employers and communities to better understand availability and accessibility issues impacting employment. Tender responses have now been received and will be evaluated.

3.13 The annual winter road safety campaign, Be Bright at Night, began on 26 October and will run through to mid- January 2027. The campaign features advertising on Northsound 1 and Original 106 radio stations, Out of Home advertising on bus shelters across the north east and screens within Union Square, Geolocation adverting, as well as social media content.

Universities and Research/Innovation

3.13 The partnership continues to maintain and develop working relationships with our two local universities and the wider research/innovation community. Our supported University of Aberdeen MSc student has now completed her project "Achieving Modal Shift in North East Scotland - Enhancing Community Confidence in the Public Transport Network." which was presented to officers in early October. The Director is due to provide a guest lecture to the students of the Sustainability Transitions MSc course early in November.

3.14 With Robert Gordon University, officers have supported a research bid considering the application of mobile phone and network monitoring data to issues of asset management and climate resilience on the strategic rural road network. This bid has also been supported in partnership with Hitrans. This has been successful in receiving funding and officers are now working to conclude final project set up arrangements.

Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland

3.15 The partnership continues to support the work of Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland, recognising the necessity to understand our infrastructure resilience on a strategic/regional basis. Plans for a collaborative study across Scotland with other public sector partners have now moved forward, and Nestrans will be contributing to a future resilience study considering a range of future climate scenarios, and how these scenarios could manifest across multiple infrastructure providers on a regional basis. Learnings from this collaboration will in the future be applied specifically to the north east context.

4 Conferences, Presentations and Events

4.1 The Board is invited to note recent and proposed attendance for officers at a number of conferences and events, provided in **Appendix D.** It is noted that the Director was invited to attend a lunchtime fringe meeting at the SNP conference hosted by First Bus, alongside Paul White from industry body CPT and the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport on 17 October 2026. The Director's contribution focussed on the work of the North East Bus Alliance, and our wider partnership work in the region.

5 Nestrans Communications and Press Coverage

5.1 Since the last board meeting, Nestrans featured a media release from Aberdeenshire Council relating to the Banff and Macduff active travel bridge proposals, which included press coverage from Grampian Online, BBC News, and Scottish Construction Now.

Report Prepared by Paul Finch
Director
28 October 2026

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09 October 2026 Our Ref: N13/4/1

Stephen Flynn MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Dear Stephen

North East Scotland - £2 Maximum Bus Fare

As Chair of the Nestrans Regional Transport Partnership, and with the support of our Board, I am writing to formally request that North East Scotland becomes the next area included in the £2 Maximum Bus Fare national roll out.

The Nestrans Board recently welcomed an update on the significant extent of work currently being progressed by the Scottish Government on the Bus agenda. We heard of the progress of the £2 Maximum Fare roll out in Strathclyde, but also heard updates on the Better Buses Legislation, the commitment to delivering multi-modal ticketing, and the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Bus Infrastructure Fund allocations.

The Board also heard of the complementary work being advanced through the North East Bus Alliance including progressing a BSIP; infrastructure development proposals for Wellington Road and Aberdeen Bus Station; investigation of advanced bus priority technologies along the King Street Corridor; and the collection of robust passenger satisfaction evidence to inform future investment and service improvement priorities.

Our Transport to Employment and People and Place allocations are further supporting sustainable transport interventions on a regional basis, targeting those most in need during the current cost of living crisis. Collectively, this work builds on the significant work being progressed on the programme level Outline Business Case for Aberdeen Rapid Transit, funded by the Aberdeen City Region Deal.

In all of the above work, I am assured of the significant close working between officers of Nestrans, our Loal Authorities, and Transport Scotland, as well as the successful and established partnership working within the North East Bus Alliance.

Affordability of Bus Services

Last year our region bid to be included as the first pilot area for the £2 Maximum Bus Fare scheme. Whist this ultimately was awarded to the Hitrans and ZetTrans area, the North East continues to offer a compelling case for early inclusion in the programme, with our submission receiving positive feedback. The prospectus that we developed to support our bid remains relevant, and I attach this for your information.

Our recent discussions on the matter have reaffirmed regional support across both our Councils, and a broad range of stakeholders, spanning economic development, community planning and health & social care partners. This is in addition to our established transport stakeholders and bus operators, reflecting the significant cross-sector benefits that a £2 fare cap could deliver, including:

- **Established Partnership ready to deliver immediate impacts:** Within the Nestrans region, there is an excellent, established and effective partnership which can ensure partners are ready to deliver the next stage £2 Bus Fare roll out.
- **Proven Delivery Capability:** With two local authorities and major bus operators represented, the Nestrans region offers an ideal scale for the next stage of the scheme. Our previous cost projections indicated a manageable net cost of £6m, albeit this should be reviewed in the light of evidence from existing pilots, providing adequate head-room and sufficient risk-contingency.
- **Strong Evidence Base and Policy Alignment:** The £2 Bus Fares Pilot directly aligns with Nestrans' RTS2040, local transport and regeneration plans, and the First Minister's priorities. Given the North East's large and diverse geography, including rural communities, transport costs can present a significant barrier to accessing employment., education, services, and opportunities. A £2 Bus Fares scheme has the potential to tackle transport-related deprivation, address cost of living crisis, and improve access to employment that may otherwise not have been financially viable due to the affordability of transport costs. This is critical to tackling child poverty, and supporting inclusive economic growth across the region.

I highlight that stakeholders such as the Aberdeen Grampian of Commerce, Our Union Street, and Aberdeen Inspired backed our EOI submission last year. Adrian Watson, CEO of Aberdeen Inspired confirmed that:
"There is a tireless campaign by city centre partners and stakeholders to encourage people into the city centre from across the north-east to rediscover their love of Aberdeen and all it has to offer throughout the year. A £2 cap on bus fares would be a compelling incentive in helping achieve that ambition. Capped fares would be a powerful tool to increase footfall, get people through the doors of bricks and mortar businesses, support local and boost our city centre retail and hospitality sectors. Aberdeen, as the regional city of the north-east, would be an ideal place to act as a pilot scheme, hopefully demonstrating beyond doubt that capped bus fares can go a long way to re-energising a city centre."

With the planned re-opening of Union Street after completion of the streetscape works in Autumn, the introduction of a £2 Bus Fare Cap provides the opportunity to maximise and embed the benefits of this investment by improving affordability and supporting increased city centre footfall through encouraging greater use of public transport.

Evidence gathered from Aberdeenshire Council's public transport teams also provide lived experience evidence as to the potential impact of a north east scheme. A typical example is as follows: "*A resident living just outside Turriff, who does not drive, wanted to apply for a better-paid job in Banff (12 miles away) to improve his income. However, high bus fares posed a significant barrier, with a return journey between Fyvie and Turriff—only 15 minutes—costing £13.90.*"

Nestrans' Support for Next Phase of Roll Out

In summary, I would confirm that Nestrans and other stakeholders in the North East of Scotland stand ready to embrace the next phase of the £2 Maximum Bus Fare roll out. The North East provides the Scottish Government with an excellent delivery opportunity to build on the success of the initial pilots through an established partnership, strong evidence base, and proven delivery capability. Participation would support alleviating the affordability challenges faced by many residents, improving access to employment, education, and essential services. This would also further support wider ambitions around reducing poverty, promoting sustainable travel, and delivering on the region's ambition for inclusive economic growth.

Accordingly, the region would welcome the opportunity to work with the Scottish Government on the next stage in this ambitious and popular initiative. Officers would accordingly be happy to have the opportunity to discuss routes to implementation.

Yours sincerely

Michael

Cllr Michael Hutchison
Chair of Nestrans

Enc – Nestrans – Our £2 Maximum Bus Fare Prospectus

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Appendix B

Email Issued to Board Members 07.10.2026

Board Follow Up – Alternatives to Prosecution – Road Traffic Offences

Dear Board Members

At the meeting on 16th September Cllr Davidson raised a query in relation to the progress of alternatives to prosecution with reference to road traffic offences.

We contacted the Road Safety Policy team in Transport Scotland, and we have been advised as follows by the Roads Policy Manager:

"The Scottish Government remains committed to introducing Road Traffic Diversionary Courses (RTDCs), including Speed Awareness Courses, as an alternative to prosecution for certain minor road traffic offences.

This work is being progressed with key partners, to establish the legal and operational arrangements required for implementation.

However, responsibility for the prosecution and disposal of road traffic offences is largely reserved to the UK Government, meaning legislative changes at Westminster are required before these courses can be introduced in Scotland.

We are currently working closely with the UK Government to ensure these courses are available in Scotland at the earliest opportunity."

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HTAP Steering Group
Thursday 17 September 2026 1430-1600
Hosted on Microsoft Teams

Minute

Present
Phil Mackie, (Chair) NHS Grampian, Public Health (PM)
Paul Finch, (Vice Chair) Nestrans (PF)
Caroline Hood, Nestrans (CH)
Ewan Wallace, Aberdeenshire Council (EW)
Andrew Stewart, HTAP Programme Manager (AS)
Timothy Mackay, Moray Council (TM)
Carolyn Lamb, Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (CL)
Susan Forbes, Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (SF)

Apologies
David Dunne, Aberdeen City Council (DD)
Virginia Irvine-Fortescue, Public Representative (VIF)
Natalie Jeffery, Moray Health & Social Care Partnership (NJ)

Item		Action
1.	**Welcome and Apologies**	
	As noted above.	
2.	**Previous Minute**	
	The minute of 4 June 2026 was approved. The Chair confirmed that the NHSG transport review was progressing and would return with fuller terms of reference. National expectations on community transport, climate resilience and sustainability were noted. Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum concerns, including funding, use of taxis and community transport, and blue badge provision at NHS sites, would be considered through the wider review. **ACTION: PM to update a future Forum meeting on how its concerns are being taken forward through the NHSG transport review.**	
3.	**Banff Travel to Healthcare Test of Change Evaluation Paper**	
	SF presented findings from a six-month Chalmers Hospital test of change using existing community transport for accessible door-to-door journeys. Thirty-five journeys were completed for under £2,500 with positive user feedback. Information governance constraints limited booking routes, creating barriers for some people. Members discussed alternative booking models, shared capacity, and local flexibility. Further work should assess impacts on attendance, waiting times and wider health and care outcomes. Members noted the importance of strengthening the economic case for transport-to-healthcare interventions and ensuring that any future model is underpinned by sustainable funding and charging arrangements. The group supported using the learning to inform locally designed solutions, with the report progressing to the Aberdeenshire HSCP Senior Leadership Team and informing NHSG's review.	

Item		Action
	ACTION: EW to raise inclusion of THInC contact details in community hospital and clinic appointment communications with appropriate Chief Officer colleagues. **ACTION: PM to incorporate the learning into the NHSG transport review following appropriate internal consideration.**	
4.	**Programme Manager Update Paper**	
	Progress was reported across all three priority projects. Project 1 neared completion of its first phase, Project 2 moved into proposal for delivery, and Project 3's scope was clarified in an updated paper shared with the group. Wider activity included transport strategy input, transport poverty initiatives, the ARI bus turning-circle closure, and Community Transport Week promotion. Discussion highlighted barriers to CTAC (blood testing) and vaccination access, including service location, referral patterns, and transport links. A future Steering Group development session was suggested. **ACTION: Partner organisations, particularly NHSG and Health and Social Care Partnerships, to consider appropriate representation and engagement in the HTAP Reference Group and priority projects.**	
5.	**Project 2 Developing as a Centre of Excellence – Consolidation & Delivery Phase Paper**	
	The paper proposed a phased, proportionate approach to consolidating HTAP knowledge rather than creating a new structure or website for its own sake. Components could include a knowledge hub, funding support, shared data, training materials, recordings, an active contact directory and a living archive of lived experience. Moray Council training colleagues may contribute; potential for a microsite within existing Nestrans arrangements had been identified; and community planning and place-based evidence could support the lived-experience archive. The paper would return in December for a decision on collective commitment and delivery. **ACTION: Steering Group members to provide comments, offers of involvement and relevant resources within four weeks. AS to refine the paper for decision in December.**	
6.	**Project 3 System Intelligence, Operational Data Sharing & Lived Experience - Scoping & Initial Delivery Phase Paper**	
	AS introduced the proposed scoping and initial delivery phase, responding to fragmentation in transport funding, provision, operational information, and lived-experience evidence. The paper drew on data, intelligence and observatory expertise and linked to Projects 1 and 2. Members were invited to refine the scope and wording so that a project group and clear direction could be agreed for the new year. **ACTION: Steering Group members to comment within four weeks. AS to revise the paper for decision in December.**	
7.	**AOCB**	

Item		Action
	Better Buses legislation and the Programme for Government were identified for discussion but held over owing to time. The Chair welcomed programme progress and thanked members.	
8.	**Future Meetings**	
	Tuesday 1 December 2026, 1000-1130.	

Minute by Andrew Stewart, HTAP Programme Manager

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APPENDIX D

Recent and Forthcoming Conferences & Events Attended by / of Interest to Nestrans

- **Conference and Events**

Date	Location	Title	Organiser	Conf Cost (Excl. Vat)	Nestrans Attendees
28th October 2026	Oldmeldrum	Inspiring Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire Council	Nil	Paul Finch
5th November 2026	Edinburgh	Developing Scotland's Cross-border Rail Links	Prosper	Nil	Paul Finch

- Other Training

Date	Location	Title	Organiser	Cost (excl. VAT)	Attendees
None at present					

- Presentations by Nestrans

Date	Location	Presentation Title	Organisation and Audience	Press Involvement	Presenters
17th October 2026	Aberdeen	Fringe event at the SNP Conference	First Bus	Nil	Paul Finch
02/11/26	Aberdeen University	**Sustainable Transport Delivery**	MSc Course Sustainable Transitions	None	Paul Finch

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NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 16 September 2026

4.2 - Draft Annual Report 2025/26

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents a text draft of Nestrans' Annual Report for 2025/26, which is a statutory requirement for RTPs.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

1) Consider the draft 2025/26 Annual Report presented in **Appendix A;**
2) Subject to any further amendment and presentation of the revised draft to Chair and Vice Chair, approve publication of this report on the Nestrans website once the design has been completed; and
3) Instruct a link to the published report to be sent to Scottish Ministers and the Chief Executives at Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council when the design has been completed.

3. Background

3.1 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires Regional Transport Partnerships "after the end of each financial year…. to publish a report on the performance of its functions during that year". This report should be submitted to Scottish Ministers and constituent Councils.

4. Discussion

4.1 A draft Annual Report for 2025/26 has now been prepared as shown in **Appendix A** to provide a statutory review of the financial year to 31 March 2026 and summarise performance towards delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy to 2040. Once the text is approved, it is proposed that the report be "designed up" for final publication, placed on the Nestrans website, and circulated to our principal funders and partners.

4.2 A draft foreword has been developed by officers as an introduction to the report. The Chair may specifically wish to consider the current presentation of this item.

4.3 Following instructions from the Board, officers will prepare a final design and graphics of the report for publication. If any substantive changes are required ahead of publication, a revised draft will be presented to the Chair and Vice Chair for approval.

Report prepared by
Paul Finch (Director) and Jennifer Anderson (Transport Executive – Programmes & Delivery)
30 October 2026

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Appendix A

Nestrans

Annual Report 2025/26

Draft November 2026

Nestrans Annual Report 2025/26

Contents

Foreword

1. Nestrans Organisation

Nestrans Board and Executive Team
Our Regional Transport Strategy

2. Nestrans Funded Projects

Co-ordination and Project Development Budget
Strategic Investment Budget

3. Externally Funded Programmes

People and Place Programme
Zero Emission HDV Skills Challenge Fund
HGV Market Readiness Fund
Strategic Transport Fund
Aberdeen City Region Deal

4. Partnership Working

Aberdeen City Region Deal
RTPs, S Gov and CoSLA
SCOTS
Community Partners
RES
North East Bus Alliance
HTAP
Getabout
Rail, Air, Sea Partnership working
Road Safety North East Scotland

5. RTS Monitoring

6. Governance Details and Statutory Responsibilities

Appendix: The Nestrans Board and Executive

Foreword

As Chair of the Nestrans Board, I am pleased to present this annual report which highlights the variety of work undertaken by Nestrans and our partners over the past year to advance the delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the North East of Scotland.

During 2025/26, Nestrans worked with local, regional and national partners to support the delivery and development of a wide-ranging programme of investment across the North East of Scotland. These activities demonstrate Nestrans' role in turning the ambitions of the RTS into practical actions for communities across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

We have seen progress across a wide range of transport priorities and this report reflects on the collaborative efforts of local authorities, national agencies, local organisations, and community partners, all working together to create a more accessible, sustainable, and equitable transport offer in the North East of Scotland.

Key achievements this year included the successful delivery of the second year of the People and Place Programme, for which an increased grant offer of £2.2m had been received. We know how valued this programme is at opening up active and sustainable travel opportunities for our communities.

Nestrans also successfully bid for funding through the Zero Emission Heavy Duty Skills Challenge Fund. This was used to build on the outcomes of the HGV Battery Electric Vehicles work to lay the essential groundwork for future skills development, collaborative investment and regional fleet transition planning in the North East.

A number of feasibility studies were also commissioned or progressed using funding provided through the Strategic Transport Appraisal element of the Aberdeen City Region Deal. This has enabled the ongoing development of Aberdeen Rapid Transit and should provide a legacy to support rural accessibility, as well as assisting our constituent authorities with the development of their Local Development Plans. Nestrans has also continued to support behaviour change initiatives and to invest in infrastructure that enhances safety and connectivity across the region.

As ever, the importance of partnership working remains essential in achieving the vision and objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy and on behalf of the Nestrans Board and staff, I would like to thank everyone involved in helping to deliver these outcomes.

Cllr Michael Hutchison

Chair, Nestrans

1. Nestrans Organisation

The North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (Nestrans) is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership covering the local authority areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. There are seven Regional Transport Partnerships throughout Scotland and each is required to prepare an annual report for submission to Scottish Ministers and constituent Councils. This report contains a review of activities and achievements in the financial year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and an update is given on the monitoring of performance in delivery of the objectives within the Regional Transport Strategy to 2040.

Nestrans Board and Executive Team

Councillor Michael Hutchison has served as the Nestrans Chair throughout 2025/26, supported by Councillor Alan Turner as Vice Chair. Dr Margaret Bochel resigned from the Board and her position as Vice Chair in September 2025. We welcomed Mr Kieran Morton in November 2025 as a non-Councillor member following a recruitment process and subsequent approval by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

The Nestrans Board meetings have principally been held within the Council Chamber in the Town House, Aberdeen. In June 2025 our meeting was held in Formartine House, Ellon, showcasing some local project work in and around the town. All meetings have included the opportunity for virtual attendance. Recordings of the meetings continue to be published on the Nestrans website along with the agenda and reports. Nestrans staff continue to support a hybrid model of working for staff.

Paul Finch held the interim Director post from 01 April 2025 until being appointed as Director by the Appointments Committee on 27 May 2025. The vacant Transport Strategy Manager Post was filled from 01 December 2025 by Dr Caroline Hood.

Membership details of the Nestrans Board and Executive Team are given in full in the Appendix along with the dates of Board meetings in 2025/26.

Our Regional Transport Strategy

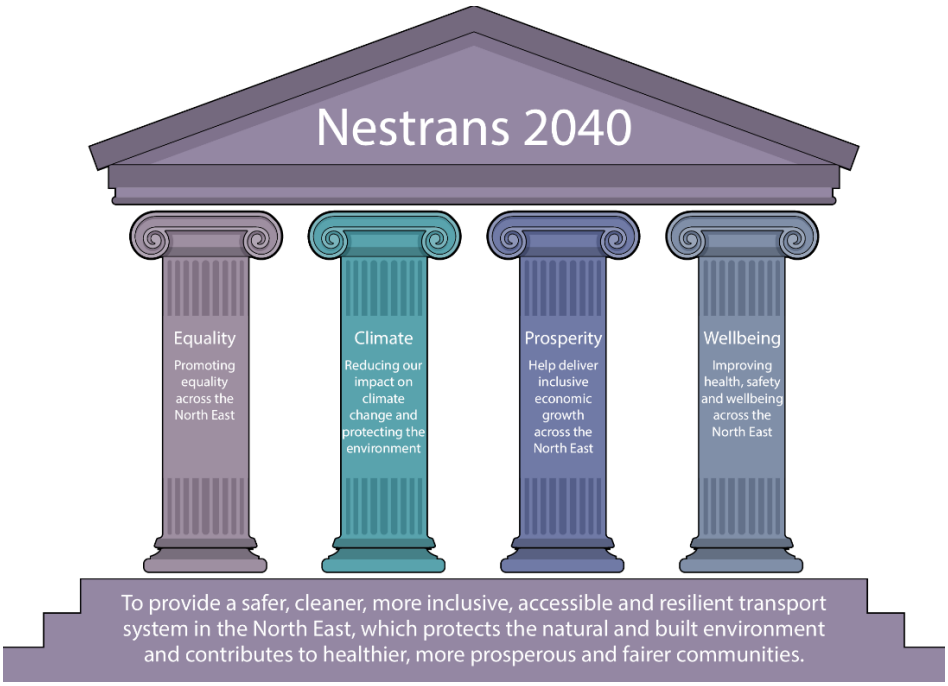
Each Regional Transport Partnership has a duty to prepare, keep up to date, and monitor a Regional Transport Strategy for its area, as set out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

Following Ministerial approval, the Nestrans Board formally adopted the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) to 2040 as the statutory strategy for the area when they met on 10 November 2021. An 'At a Glance Guide' for the RTS is also published on the Nestrans website along with the various supporting documents that were created in the process of developing the new strategy.

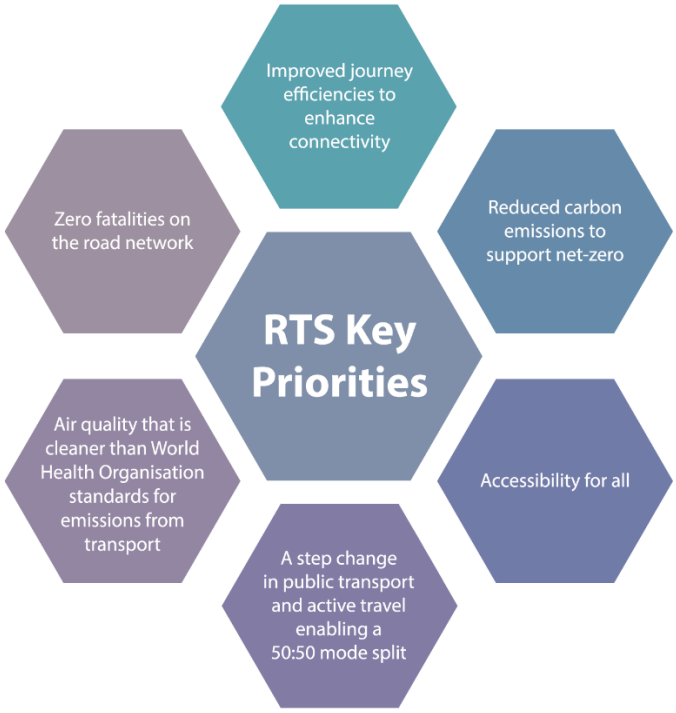
The Vision within the RTS is *"To provide a safer, cleaner, more inclusive, accessible and resilient transport system in the North East, which protects the natural and built environment and contributes to healthier, more prosperous and fairer communities"*.

It is recognised that delivery of the strategy will require implementation and input from a range of organisations and Nestrans continues to seek identification of funding and a priority by partners for the projects that assist with this. A progress report on delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy and spend to date on projects being funded by Nestrans is prepared for each Board meeting and all Board reports can be viewed on the Nestrans website.

The RTS Vision and four objectives support the National Transport Strategy objectives.



Sitting within this framework are six priorities, setting the tone and direction of the strategy.



RTS Actions

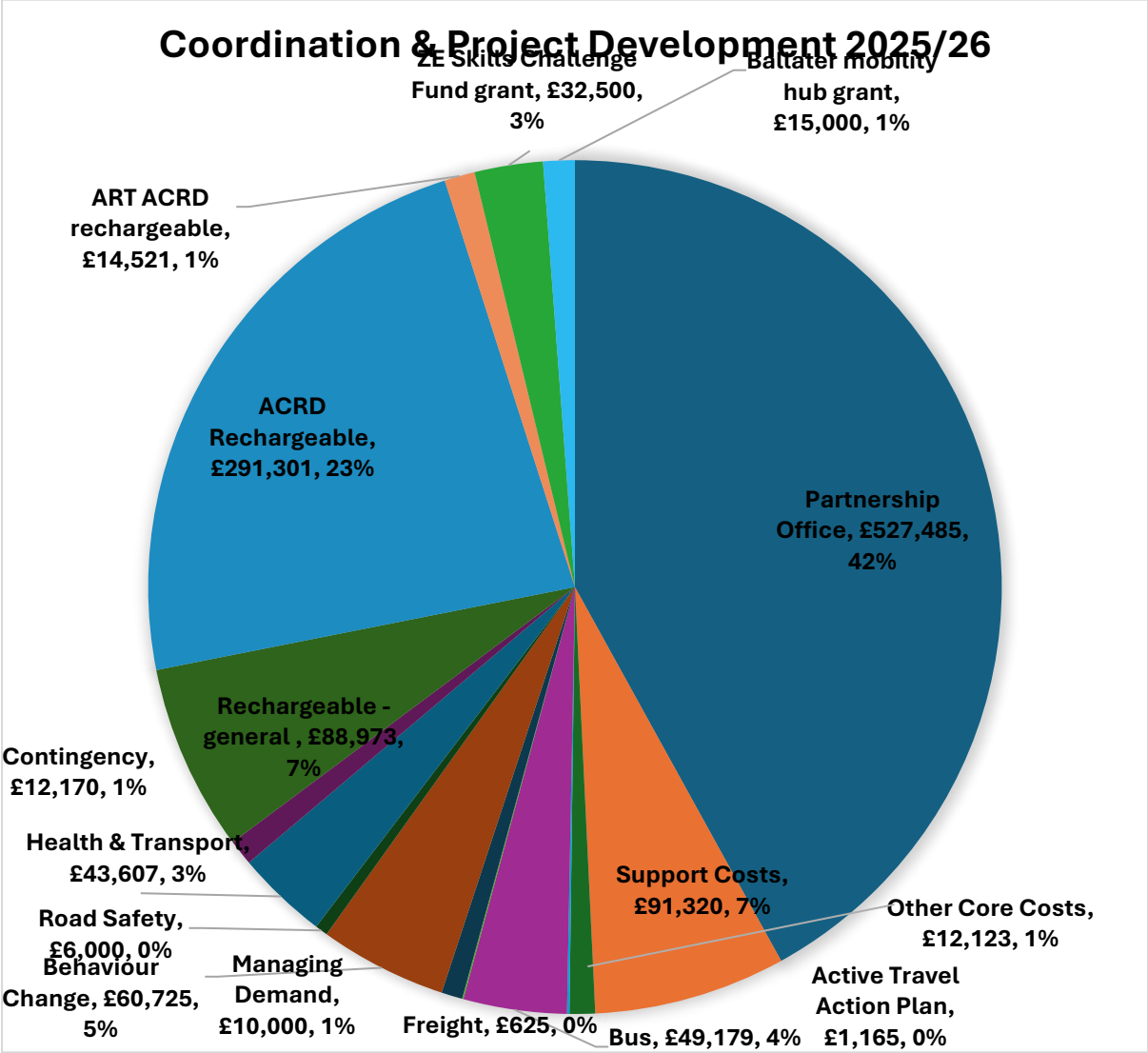
The policies and actions of the RTS are structured under eighteen different headings as follows:

- Increasing the number of people travelling actively for health and the environment
- Developing the rail network
- Aberdeen Rapid Transit
- Improving the region's bus network
- Maximising the benefits of Park & Ride
- Managing demand
- Reducing emissions from transport
- Encouraging behaviour change
- Maintaining and improving the region's transport network
- Facilitating the movement of freight
- External air and sea connections
- Road safety and casualty reduction
- Improving accessibility in rural areas
- Improving access to health
- The affordability of transport
- Improving access to the transport network for all
- Planning and designing places for people
- The future impact of new technologies

2. Nestrans Funded Key Areas of Work in 2025/26

Co-ordination and Project Development Budget

The funding contributions from Council partners and the Scottish Government were retained at the previous year's levels. The Board approved a budget of £987,250 that consisted of an allocation from both Councils of £122,175 each and £742,900 from Scottish Government. The budget was supplemented with £135,766 of carried forward funding from 2024/25 that brought the available budget to £1,123,016. In February 2026, a sum of £108,668 was agreed for carry forward at year end to 2026/27.



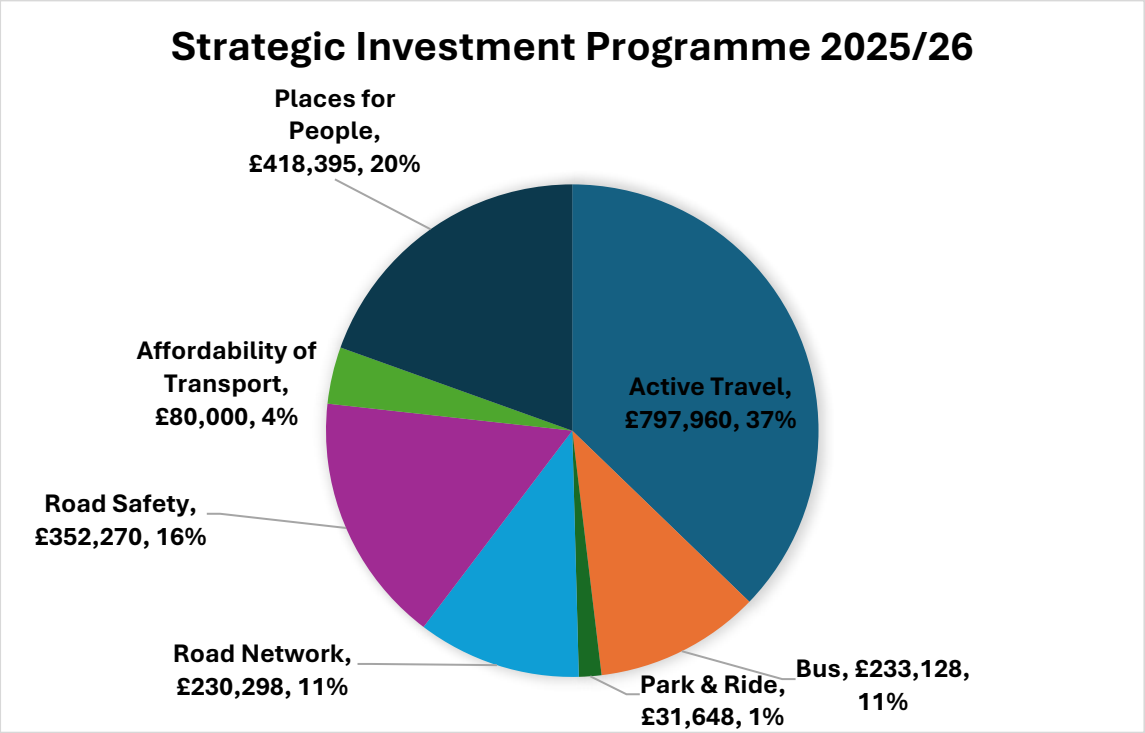
The majority of this budget is used to meet the core operating costs of the Executive Staffing, Partnership Office and associated support costs, but the following non-core project development work was also undertaken:

Budget Heading	Cost	Description
Active Travel Action Plan	£1,165	Funding to Live Life Aberdeenshire for cycle maintenance and consultancy work on cycle infrastructure mapping
Bus Action Plan	£49,179	Consultancy support to prepare an Expression of Interest bid to S Gov for a £2 fare cap pilot; purchase of tablets for Aberdeenshire Council's A2B buses; a contribution along with bus operators to Grasshopper marketing and a contribution to the region wide Real Time Information maintenance
Freight Action Plan	£625	Costs associated with a Freight Forum event on 19 September 2025
Demand Management Development	£10,000	Consultancy costs to start to update previous study on realistic measures for NE to contribute to national car km reduction and decarbonisation aims to incorporate revised emerging targets and assess the potential impacts of different options
Sustainable Travel Grant Schemes	£24,758	Grants awarded to Banchory Paths and Westhill and Elrick Community Council for path upgrades; Ellon Wheel Park group for junction markings at wheel park; Portsoy Community Enterprise and Aberdeen Cyrenians for e-bikes; Ballater Community Enterprise towards the Ballater Bike Hub and to Mearns Community Council for a condition assessment of Shakin Brig in Edzell
Behaviour Change / Travel Planning	£36,016	Contributions to Travelknowhow Scotland website and Thistle Assistance along with all other RTPs; radio adverts on Original 106 and Northsound and "Be Bright at Night" billboards, bus shelters and digital adverts
Road Safety	£6,000	Contribution along with other Road Safety North East Scotland partners to support additional road policing resource for the winter road safety campaign
Health & Transport Action Plan	£43,607	Match funding with NHS Grampian for programme manager and contribution to the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC), which provides advice on travelling to health or social care appointments
Contingency	£12,170	Meeting costs for 24/25 P&P programme in excess of pre-claimed grant and import costs for bike covers

Strategic Investment Budget

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils again provided Capital funding to Nestrans in 2025/26. Regular programme monitoring takes place between Nestrans and the two Councils to ensure efficient delivery of the approved programme and any adjustments are considered by the Board as required through the budget matters report to reflect changing circumstances and provide financial agility for the Councils to assist in maximising other external funding that may be linked to single year grants and ensure optimum delivery against strategic objectives for the north east via the available budgets.

The funding for 2025/26 was £2,172,000, which comprised of an allocation from Aberdeen City Council of £1,000,000 and Aberdeenshire Council of £1,172,000. The Board also allocated £200,000 of forecast investment interest and approved a sum of £966,601 be carried forward from 2024/25 for certain projects that were incomplete at year end and this brought the available budget to £3,538,601. In February 2026, a sum of £793,204 was agreed for carry forward at year end to 2026/27.



Updates on the projects being funded and spend to date are reported to each Board within the progress report and can be viewed within the published papers. A summary of the individual projects funded in 25/26 is given below:

Projects	Cost	Description
Active Travel		
Kennethmont to Ardmore	£6,493	Detailed design and land acquisition discussions for a shared use path to connect the settlements of Kennethmont and Ardmore
F&B Way Bridges Installation	£153,000	Two timber bridges installed
F&B Way Access Point improvements	£76,540	Continuation of re-design and installation of access control points on F&B Way. (Supplemented with People and Place grant funding)
Deeside Way west of Aboyne upgrade	£25,989	Upgrading a section to 2.5m width unbound surface.
River Don core path upgrades	£63,572	Completing works to asphalt the surface of sections of the riverside path at Inverurie that have been susceptible to flooding and repair of concrete steps
Station Rd to F&B Way path, Newmachar	£49,553	Contribution to new 300m footway link between Newmachar and F&B Way
Pedestrian Crossings	£76,650	Crossings installed at Mintlaw Station Road West and Burghmuir Drive, Inverurie. Signal design and road safety review completed for Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead
F&B Way realignment north of Ellon	£110,000	Contribution to enable more works to be progressed in 25/26 on multi-year realignment project that also has funding from Aberdeenshire Council and Walk Wheel Cycle Trust
Craigshaw Dr cycle route.	£8,691	Completion of project close tasks and monitoring and evaluation.
Farburn Terr/Wellheads Cycle Link	£6,149	Ongoing land acquisition discussions
Regional Active Travel Network	£3,016	Data handover and training sessions for Council staff following completion of network plans
A92 Murcar north active travel route	£22,737	Detailed design being progressed.
Marywell Cycle Route	£106,000	Detailed design commenced and topographic survey undertaken.
Wellington Rd Junction Improvement Project	£62,450	Contribution to DMRB stage 3 scheme assessment and Outline Business Case
A96 Dyce Cycle Track	£13,940	Detailed design and landowner discussions being progressed
Beach Cycle Infrastructure	£8,876	New cycle lane separators ordered and delivered, with installation planned for 2026/27
Craibstone P&R to TECA quiet route Feasibility Study	£1,006	Feasibility study being progressed.
Cycle parking and maintenance stands in Aberdeen	£3,298	Installation of maintenance stations (Supplemented with People and Place grant funding)
Bus Network		

Projects	Cost	Description
A92 Gourdon Bus Access	£112,149	Safe access to the northbound (Citybound) bus stop which included footpath construction, refuge island crossing point and installation of street lighting.
Installation of Bus Stops in Rural Areas	£40,203	Design work and land investigations at New Pitsligo, Aboyne and Inchmarlo and works at Benholm.
South Aberdeen to Laurencekirk Corridor Study	£6,754	Completion of Detailed Option Appraisal and Members' briefing.
Bus Shelter upgrades in Aberdeen	£74,022	Eleven shelters upgraded.
Park & Ride		
Ellon Park & Ride - Phases 2 & 3	£6,126	Bollard and CCTV upgrades
Kingswells Park & Ride	£25,521	Resurfaced 570 m^2 and reset 10 gullies
Road Network		
VMS Refurbishment	£230,297	New VMS signs installed to replace 8 that could no longer be repaired and had become obsolete
Road Safety		
A947 Bends either side of A920	£125,744	Contribution to application of high friction surfacing of 3 bends on A947 either side of A920, with balance met from Aberdeenshire Council's Road Safety Investment Fund award
B999/Shielhill junction improvement	£226,526	Contribution to detailed design development, land ownership and permissions activities and preparation of contract documents.
Affordability of Transport		
Tall Ships transport support	£80,000	Contribution towards the accessible shuttle bus, bus service subsidies, park and ride buses, cycle parking, stewarding and maps for the Tall Ships event in July 2025
Places for People		
CCMP Central Union Street	£217,000	Contribution to streetscape works to widen pavements, form bus islands and create new cycle lanes on the central section of Union Street
CCMP Beachfront Pedestrian Spine	£201,395	Contribution to the cycle and pedestrian routes within the new central pedestrian spine at the Beachfront, including the junction alterations at the Links Road (west side) junction to tie into the new alignment
Total	**£2,143,699**	

3. Externally Funded Programmes

People and Place 2025/26 Funding

Supporting active and sustainable travel choices

This programme included projects which ranged from led and inclusive bike rides, cycle training, loans and repairs, to improved walking routes, secure cycle parking, better bus information, support for car clubs and accessible community transport to essential services.

An Evaluation Report was prepared for the 2024/25 Programme and submitted to Transport Scotland in August 2025.

Transport Scotland again allocated capital and revenue funding to each RTP in 2025/26 to support active travel behaviour change programmes and broadened the purpose to include sustainable travel. In this second year of the programme, Nestrans had invited Expressions of Interest and assessed the submissions along with officers from both Councils to develop proposals in accordance with the indicated grant amounts. This sought to complement the Local Authority People and Place awards for project delivery and other funded active travel and sustainable transport projects that have regional funding. The programme included an allocation for a Community Project Fund and constituted community groups were invited to apply towards this at the end of February 2025. Nestrans received an offer of grant on 22 April 2025 for up to £2,163,497, comprising £1,433,611 Capital and £729,885 Resource.

The 2025/26 People and Place Programme pages on the Nestrans website were updated to provide information on all the projects being supported in 2025/26, including an interactive map of “Projects near you”. An in-person event was held in Ellon on 15 October 2025 to enable the various project delivery partners to meet and engage. This included presentations by Transport Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Cycling and Ythan Cycle Club, then attendees were encouraged to walk, wheel or cycle around the neighbouring Gordon Park and the Ellon Wheel Park while actively networking with others.

Due to some nationally identified underspend, Nestrans received a grant variation in February for an additional £13,412.50 Resource and £50,000 Capital. Project delivery updates were reported to the Board throughout the year. Due to some forecast underspends, a range of proposals were shared with Transport Scotland for agreement in principle and a number of grant variations were offered to delivery partners to maximise use of the grant and achieve best value. The 2025/26 grant was claimed in full and the following table provides a summary of the original grant allocations and final spend per project:

		Capital Funding		Revenue Funding	
Project	**Delivery Partner**	**Original Grant**	**Claimed**	**Original Grant**	**Claimed**
The Bikery	Gordon Rural Action	130,783.00	158,424.00	19,022.00	19,022.00
Recycled Bikes for All	Stella's Voice	104,675.00	133,914.00	20,325.00	20,325.00
Connecting Communities Aberdeen	Cycling UK	50,000.00	48,522.48	106,352.00	107,333.95
Aberdeenshire Bothy	Cycling UK	50,000.00	77,009.44	100,752.00	100,551.90
Aberdeenshire's Health & Social Care Greenways	AC (Health & Social Care Partnership)	127,500.00	90,182.10	6,000.00	1,003.73
Aberdeen School Streets Pilot	Aberdeen City Council	20,000.00	4,035.00	7,000.00	5,847.11
School Footprints		20,000.00	22,300.00	7,000.00	6,599.30
Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities		160,000.00	136,488.62	7,000.00	10,208.42
School Cycle Parking Shelters		60,000.00	76,125.04	7,000.00	5,335.65
Grampian Inclusive Cycle Bothies	Sport Aberdeen	170,415.00	224,332.58	17,000.00	17,018.53
Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr (Adventure Abdn)		-	-	59,040.00	59,040.00
Cycle Amenities	Aberdeenshire Council Aberdeenshire Council	160,000.00	191,908.64	2,000.00	2,450.00
Data Provision to Support LTS Delivery and Monitoring		-	-	45,000.00	43,522.03
RTPI - Regionwide		36,000.00	35,980.00	-	-
Huntly Travel Hub – Going Places!	Huntly Development Trust	10,000.00	10,000.00	83,500.00	75,745.00
Move It	Tyred n Cranky	12,000.00	12,400.00	36,925.00	39,925.00
Walking Communities	Walking Scotland	77,425.00	37,059.00	45,363.00	60,560.00
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Sport Aberdeen)	Scottish Cycling	45,985.00	39,640.01	38,550.00	41,075.08
Rock Up and Ride Inclusive Communities (w/Ythan CC)		25,335.00	26,784.37	17,950.00	17,816.33
Kemnay Hospital Transport Scheme	*Bennachie Parish Church at Kemnay*	-	-	1,200.00	176.85
Hospital Volunteer Driving Scheme	*The Silver Circle*	200.00	200.00	3,790.00	3,790.00

		Capital Funding		Revenue Funding	
Project	**Delivery Partner**	**Original Grant**	**Claimed**	**Original Grant**	**Claimed**
Weekly Community Bus	*The Silver Circle*	200.00	200.00	12,770.00	12,770.00
Active and Sustainable Travel Enhancements	*St George's Community Centre*	5,000.00	-	-	-
A Sustainable Path for All: Coull Link	*Tarland Development Group*	8,000.00	10,146.09	-	-
Extending Finzean Community Path Network	*Finzean Community Association*	8,000.00	8,000.00	-	-
Volunteering in the Community (adapted bike)	*Turriff Academy*	7,000.00	5,422.21	-	-
CWAS Turriff (etrike)	*Cycling Without Age Scotland*	10,000.00	9,993.26	-	-
Ferryhill Cycles	*Ferryhill Community Centre*	7,434.00	-	-	-
THInC in the city – Continuation	*Buchan Dial A Community Bus Ltd*	-	-	11,620.00	11,620.00
Installation of Secure Bike Solutions	*9th* Aberdeen Scout Group	4,000.00	2,588.02	-	-
Mearns Hub Bike Shelter	Catalyst Vineyard Church	7,510.00	4,348.97	-	-
Cycle Repair Scheme	Cycling UK	51,149.00	41,070.64	-	-
Scheme Administration	Nestrans	-	-	70,000.00	81,354.21
Marketing		15,000.00	575.95	4,727.00	208.41
Monitoring		50,000.00	30,223.34	-	-
F&B Way access point contribution		-	45,737.24		
	Total	**1,433,611.00**	**1,483,611.00**	**729,886.00**	**743,298.50**
	Additional grant offer	50,000.00		13,412.50	
	Revised Total	**1,483,611.00**		**743,298.50**	

An evaluation report for the 2025/26 People and Place Programme will be developed and published on the Nestrans website in autumn 2026.

A plan for developing the 2026/27 People and Place Programme was published on the Nestrans website in November 2025 along with an application form and guidance to invite proposals and enable an assessment process to take place in early 2026. Indicative plans for a 2026/27 Programme have been developed based on an

indication that funding will be retained at the current years levels and will be adjusted if required once the offer of grant is received.

Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicle Skills Challenge Fund

Supporting the transition to cleaner freight

Nestrans successfully bid for funding through the Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDVs) Skills Challenge Fund which is a one-year funding initiative by Transport Scotland to support the development of workforce skills essential for the transition to zero-emission HDVs. The fund aims to address key challenges in the sector, including the need for accessible training pathways, improved workforce diversity, and increased private sector investment in skills development.

Nestrans proposal aimed to address critical knowledge gaps around the design, deployment, and operation of shared charging models - challenging misconceptions, clarifying technical and commercial considerations, and building trust among logistics operators. An offer of grant of £32,500 was received and was used to deliver a targeted engagement programme on shared charging infrastructure that aimed to build trust among logistics operators and lay the essential groundwork for future skills development, collaborative investment and regional fleet transition planning. This work built on the outcomes of the feasibility study into the economic and technical feasibility of transitioning the HGV fleet in the North East to Battery Electric HGVs that was funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal.

HGV Market Readiness Fund

Helping the freight sector prepare for change

The HGV Market Readiness Fund is a £2 million initiative launched by Transport Scotland to accelerate the decarbonisation of Scotland's heavy goods vehicle sector. It is split into two complementary strands:

- The Consortium Builder Opportunity provides up to £150,000 per project to support collaborative efforts between operators, manufacturers, financiers, and infrastructure providers. Its aim is to develop investment-ready business cases for zero-emission HGVs and associated infrastructure, drawing on successful models from the bus decarbonisation sector.
- The SME Fleet Analysis Support strand offers up to £20,000 per applicant to help small and micro HGV fleet operators assess their current operations and identify viable pathways to decarbonisation. This includes evaluating technologies, infrastructure needs, and financing options such as truck-as-a-service or energy-as-a-service. Reports produced under this strand are expected to inform both individual fleet transitions and broader sectoral learning.

Nestrans supported regional participation in the Consortium Builder Opportunity under the HGV Market Readiness Fund. The North East Scotland Zero Emission HDV Consortium (NES-ZEHC) proposal planned to focus on the Aberdeen to Peterhead / Fraserburgh corridor and sought to convene key stakeholders from

freight logistics, port operations, energy infrastructure, and innovation sectors. Although the NES-ZEHC was not able to move forward within the initial application window due to time constraints, there remained scope to engage with successful consortia post-selection and Nestrans viewed this as a valuable opportunity for continued involvement in shaping zero-emission freight solutions for the region. Transport Scotland were also invited to the freight forum to introduce the SME feasibility strand in more detail prior to the application window closing in December.

Strategic Transport Fund

Working to identify future sustainable transport improvements

Nestrans held and administered contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund (STF) that was defined within the statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014). The STF was ring-fenced for projects needed to address the cumulative impact of the Strategic and Local Development Plans, however the guidance was quashed on 29 April 2016 following a legal challenge heard by the Court of Session, confirmed at appeal in October 2017.

In June 2024, the Nestrans Board agreed that the outstanding balances be disbursed to support the implementation of sustainable transport schemes, in proximity to where the original developments were proposed. No suitable projects were identified in the past year for use of the remaining £317,570. The funding has therefore been retained as an earmarked reserve while officers continue to work to identify opportunities to beneficially allocate it in the vicinity of the areas of Aberdeen that the payments originated from.

Aberdeen City Region Deal

Making the case for future regional transport investment

In January 2016, a City Region Deal agreement was formally agreed that was to see the UK and Scottish governments jointly invest £250 million in the North East over the following 10 years, as part of a total £826 million funding package. Nestrans has a place on the City Region Deal Programme Board. Nestrans provides Transport input to the Aberdeen City Region Deal by leading the City Region Deal Transport Working Group and managing the Strategic Transport Appraisal allocation. Within the ten years of the Deal, a total of £7m has been allocated to the Strategic Transport Appraisal, comprising contributions of £2.5m each from the UK Government and Scottish Government, and £1m each from the two local authorities.

In the past year Nestrans has directly commissioned and managed consultancy support for a number of projects that are being funded via the ACRD – Strategic Transport Appraisal element as summarised below:

Project	Cost	Description
HGV EV study	£61,054	Consultancy study to look at freight and logistics patterns in NE and assess market readiness and any infrastructure barriers to battery electric vehicle HGV charging along with a scenario-based roadmap for rollout of charging infrastructure over the short (1-3 year) or medium (3-5 year) periods. Study nearing completion and identifies strong potential alongside key barriers around grid capacity, costs and charging infrastructure. Standard charging hub designs have been developed and findings validated through operator engagement. This work was complemented by that funded through the Skills Challenge Fund grant and the project was shortlisted for the Scottish Transport Awards.
North East Mobility Hubs	£24,207	The scoping project has been completed and identified how urban, rural, and community-based mobility hubs could operate across the region.
Ballater Mobility Hub	£137,863	Concept designs developed and public and stakeholder consultation undertaken. Outline Business Case completed and assessment of potential coach parking sites in Ballater undertaken. Grant award of £15K received from Cairngorms National Park Authority to contribute to study.
Toll of Birness Case for Investment	£2,060	Preparation of summary note setting out the case for improvements at the Toll of Birness junction based on outcomes from the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance work, highlighting the preferred option for improvement at the junction and the associated benefits and costs.
NE Local Development Plan Cumulative Transport Appraisal	£53,624	A connectivity dashboard has been developed, incorporating enhanced functionality following feedback from both Councils and they will use this tool to assess all individual sites received through the Call for Sites/Ideas processes.
South Aberdeen Connectivity Study	£12,493	Tender brief prepared and agreed with Tactran and Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils. Consultants appointed and inception stage completed with study scope, objectives and programme agreed.

4. Partnership Working

Aberdeen City Region Deal

Making the case for future regional transport investment

In addition to the studies commissioned directly by Nestrans, due to the oversight of the City Region Deal Transport Working Group and management of the Strategic Transport Appraisal allocation, Nestrans has also been involved in partnership working on the following studies that are also being funded via this element of the deal:

A90/A952 Junction Improvements Detailed Design – Aberdeenshire Council is leading the progression of the detailed design to Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) stage 3 for the Toll of Birness and Cortes junctions. Arcadis consultants appointed and Nestrans part of the client team.

A956 Wellington Road Junctions – Aberdeen City Council is leading on the DMRB stage 3 detailed design of junction improvements at Hareness and Souterhead junctions and associated active and sustainable connections. Nestrans provided a funding contribution to this project in 2025/26. A public consultation was undertaken on the preferred option and the Outline Business Case has commenced.

Aberdeen Rapid Transit – Aberdeen City Council has continued to lead the consultancy work and good progress has been made in the past year. The Strategic Business Case initially commissioned by Nestrans, but led by Aberdeen City Council since the establishment of a Bus Partnership Fund Programme Manager post in 2024, was completed and Aberdeen City Council has procured the consultancy support to progress the Outline Business Case. Through this the strategic design principles have been further refined, alongside continued engagement with Transport Scotland on overall objectives, network performance, and risk. Joint working is ongoing to ensure alignment between the proposed ART network and the wider transport system. Development of supporting policy measures was also progressed, including consideration of demand management, active travel integration, and wider network impacts.

Work on infrastructure development and high-level cost estimation continued, with early definition of stop and halt requirements underway. Engagement took place with Aberdeenshire Council to explore potential locations for Mobility Hubs and Park & Ride facilities and to ensure alignment with emerging land use planning. Progress was also made on operational considerations, including vehicles, depots, fares and ticketing, alongside continued development of delivery and funding options, including more detailed financial analysis of the commercial viability and risks associated with a Bus Services Improvement Partnership (BSIP) or franchising approach. Appraisal activity was advanced, with preparation underway for post modelling assessment and early work to scope the approach to financial modelling. Public engagement, supported by

StreetsUK took place between 30 September to 7 November 2025. a series of in-person events took place, as well as an online event, and specific sessions with young people and a parallel market research exercise. The full engagement report is published within the ART project page on the Nestrans website. A Frontage Business Survey was issued in March to support the development of emerging corridor designs.

External links to Aberdeen South Harbour - The preferred option to improve transport links to Aberdeen South Harbour has been further developed by Aberdeen City Council. Legal agreements are progressing across key stakeholders. All designs are complete and under review by Network Rail and utilities companies. Updates to the Energy Transition Zone junction design are progressing, with the Bill of Quantities in preparation and scheme estimates revised to reflect scenarios with and without the junction.

Scottish Government additional projects -The Scottish Government agreed an additional £224 million in January 2016 alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal funding, of which £200 million was allocated to achieve the Aberdeen to Central Belt journey time and capacity improvements identified within the original Strategic Transport Projects Review and £24 million is for the design and construction of a grade separated junction on the A90 at Laurencekirk. Transport Scotland have continued to progress both projects during this year.

Regional Transport Partnerships, Scottish Government and CoSLA

Nestrans continues to liaise with other Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) through quarterly meetings of the Chairs, which are held in person, and further online quarterly meetings between Lead Officers, including Transport Scotland, Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists (SCOTS) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA).

The Director has also participated in a number of meetings with Transport Scotland focussed on new policy guidance related to car use reduction in Scotland.

Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists (SCOTS)

SCOTS is a strategic body comprising of senior transportation professionals from all the 32 Scottish local authorities, and the seven Regional Transport Partnerships. The society's work involves improving performance and innovation in the design, delivery and maintenance of Scotland's transportation systems. Nestrans is represented at the Executive Committee, Liaison Committee and Transport Working Group meetings. The Nestrans Director has continued to Chair the Transport Working Group, which continued to bring together RTPs, Local Authorities and national bodies to consider key transportation issues, consultation responses, and inform wider policy development across Scotland.

Community Partners

Working with partners to ensure transport supports local priorities, health and wellbeing.

Nestrans continues to contribute financially to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships (CPP). The Nestrans Director is on the Board of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership (ACCP) and on the Management Group of Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA).

In Aberdeen City, Nestrans officers have contributed across three different working groups and supported the development of the new Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the underpinning principles and projects that will contribute to fulfilling the aims and objectives of this. For Aberdeenshire CPP, officers have continued to support a number of workshops on Delivering Place-Based community planning, working towards a LOIP refresh. For both partnerships, officers seek to overlap progression of Nestrans' and partners' actions, with those of the Community Planning Partnerships to maximise impact, efficiencies and outcomes.

Nestrans has also continued to support the activities of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership**.** This has again included partnership working on the Healthy Weight Aberdeen project and supporting the ambition of Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Health & Wellbeing LOIP priority area. Nestrans has also been active in engaging with work on the health and social implications of transport poverty undertaken by Public Health Scotland.

Nestrans also continued to engage with the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) for the upper Deeside and Donside areas and in particular on the Ballater mobility hub and coach parking, for which CNPA provided a £15,000 offer of grant in 2025/26 towards the mobility hub facilities design.

Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

Ensuring transport supports the region's future needs, investment and economic growth

The Regional Economic Strategy 2035 was approved by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and endorsed by the board of Opportunity North East as the strategic framework for economic growth in the North East of Scotland. It includes a priority for the region to have clear governance arrangements in place to monitor and manage the design and delivery of the Investment Zone status awarded to the North East, which is being supported by up to £80million in targeted investment, tax reliefs and other incentives over 5 years following a joint selection process by the Scottish and UK Governments. The Nestrans Director attends the Regional Economic Strategy Group to assist in the delivery of the RES and has been supporting the development on an Action Plan for the RES, which highlights future transport investment requirements for the region.

North East Bus Alliance

Working with partners to improve bus service for the region

The Bus Alliance has continued to work together to deliver the aims within the Quality Partnership Agreement and Bus Action Plan. Nestrans continued to provide the secretariat function for the North East Bus Alliance Board and the Executive Group and to work closely with Bus Alliance partners to develop a Bus Services Improvement Partnership Agreement (BSIP). A review and final update of the Bus Action Plan was completed and reported to Board in April 2025. It is intended that this will be refreshed following the signing of a BSIP.

In addition to the Bus Infrastructure Fund Tier 1 allocations that were distributed to all local authorities based on level of Transport Poverty, the organisations previously undertaking work through the Bus Infrastructure Fund when it was paused were invited to submit a list of prioritised projects for consideration via a Tier 2 fund. Nestrans officers supported the Bus Alliance partners to develop and put forward a Tier 2 bid and Aberdeen City Council received a 2025/26 grant offer on 26 August 2025 for up to £995,000 for the following projects:

- Urban Traffic Management Control System Upgrade for bus priority at traffic signals
- Detailed design of upgrade of St Machar Dr/King St junction from a roundabout to traffic signals with bus priority
- Upgrade and expansion of Real Time Passenger Information across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire

RTPs were collectively informed of Transport Scotland's intention to run a short Expression of Interest (EoI) process, in order to select one RTP area to pilot a maximum £2 bus fare scheme. EoI information was released on 21 November 2025, with returns required by 05 December 2025. A short life working group was formed with officers from both Councils, with collective and individual discussions undertaken with relevant Bus Companies. Wider stakeholder support was also gained from organisations such as Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Our Union Street, Aberdeen Inspired, NHS Scotland. Information on the potential impact of the scheme on poverty and employability was gained from relevant contacts in each Council. Targeted consultancy support was also procured to assist with demand assessments, and collation of "proposal" document.

Nestrans, on behalf of the North East Bus Alliance, submitted the Expression of Interest within the stated deadline, but on 19 December 2025 it was announced that our bid had been unsuccessful. Feedback was provided to officers in January 2026 and emphasised the strength of the bid, the clear partnership working that had taken place and the apparent narrowness of the decision to select the joint bid by Hitrans and ZetTrans.

The Bus Alliance and Nestrans have continued to provide input to Aberdeen City Council on the overall ART Business Case development process and consideration of

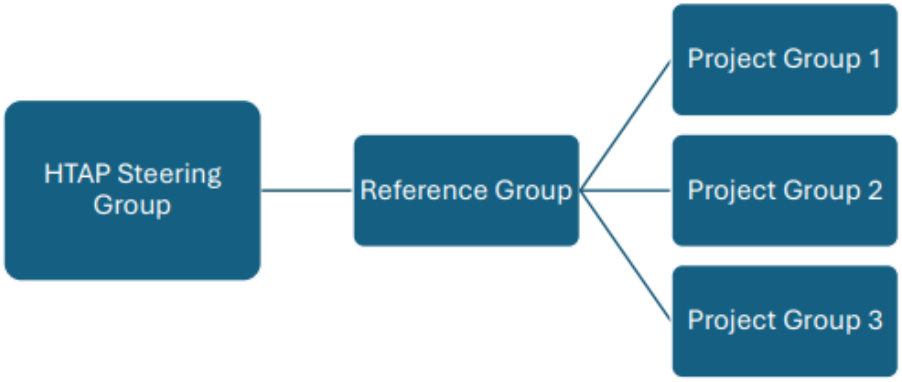
bus priority options identified through the multi-modal corridor studies that align with the approved ART routes.

Work has also progressed on the GrassHOPPER ticket scheme, which allows travel on multi-operator services across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The scheme is administered by Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of the bus operators. The GrassHOPPER ticket became available to purchase digitally through the operators' own apps in 2025 and Nestrans supported a marketing campaign, along with Stagecoach and First Aberdeen, in early 2026 to promote the ticket and its new digital availability.

Health & Transport

Bringing together transport and health partners to improve wellbeing and access to healthcare

Nestrans continued to jointly fund the Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Programme Manager in partnership with NHS Grampian. A revised Health and Transport Action Plan for the Grampian region was launched in February 2025. Since then a new Terms of Reference and Governance Structure have been agreed. This has seen the Steering Group maintain its remit of strategic oversight, with a new Reference Group replacing the previous Sub-Groups (Transport & Public Health and Access to Health & Social Care), with a focus on facilitating collaborating, supporting networking and oversight of the Project Delivery Groups.



The Project Delivery Groups are intended to be short-lived working groups, responsible for designing and implementing specific activities that align with the HTAP objectives. Initially, the three groups have had the following focus: (i) Sustainable Model for Community Transport; (ii) Creating a Centre of Excellence; and (iii) Health & Transport Data Sharing Group.

In the past year Nestrans has again contributed to the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service that is provided by the Passenger Transport Unit within Aberdeenshire Council.

Getabout

Supporting and encouraging active and sustainable travel choices

The Getabout partnership consists of Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, NHS Grampian, University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University, North East Scotland College, the James Hutton Institute and the Energy Savings Trust. Partners have continued to work together using the Getabout brand and website to promote and encourage active, safe and sustainable travel and travel planning throughout the year, along with a variety of other means including radio, social media, bus shelter, billboard and digital screen adverts.

In the past year the governance of the partnership has been reviewed and the previous Getabout Working Group has now made way for two separate groups focusing on Strategy and Operational delivery. The Strategic Group now provide strategic direction, co-ordination, and oversight of collective initiatives that promote walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport use, and other sustainable modes of travel, whereas the Operational Group coordinate and support the implementation of projects, programmes, and activities.

The Getabout website continues to promote travel planning through a link to the Travelknowhow Scotland website. In 2025/26 Nestrans took over the arranging and operation of the contract for the management and maintenance of Travelknowhow Scotland and recharged contributions from all other Regional Transport Partnerships. Specific workplace support activity within each region was also agreed as part of the contract and recharged, but was overseen separately by each RTP. In the North East this involved discussions with North East Scotland College (NESCOL) enrolments team, a young person support worker from Aberdeenshire Council and Barnardo's youth workers across Aberdeenshire about the key barriers in terms of transport for young people trying to access employment in Peterhead, Laurencekirk and across rural Aberdeenshire.

Air, Sea and Rail Connections

Supporting better regional connectivity

The Nestrans Director continues to serve as a representative on the Aberdeen International Airport Consultative Committee, and officers continue to liaise with the airport on key policy issues such as connectivity, surface access, decarbonisation, and regional implications of Scottish and UK policy.

Nestrans maintains a close relationship with the Port of Aberdeen, Peterhead Port Authority and Fraserburgh Harbour on strategic transport issues, decarbonisation, and any opportunities relating to the Aberdeen Energy Transition Zone, Investment Zones, and Fraserburgh's masterplan development. Liaison with these organisations also helps us to understand current freight demands, as well as potential future opportunities, including land-side implications.

Nestrans continued its work to secure improvements to rail services across the North East and beyond through our quarterly rail liaison meetings with Transport Scotland, Network Rail, ScotRail, LNER, and Cross Country Trains. This covers issues affecting the North East such as timetables, rolling stock, service disruption, stations, and decarbonisation proposals.

Discussions have continued with ScotRail regarding the proposal to install an additional ticket vending machine at Stonehaven. Network Rail undertook a high level accessibility assessment of Portlethen Station for inclusion in the October 2025 Railway for Everyone report. This highlighted a range of accessibility improvements that could be taken forward at the same time as proposed platform lengthening work. Nestrans previous appraisal work on the accessibility issues at Insch station were shared with Network Rail and discussions have taken place on how to explore options that could deliver benefits in the short to medium term.

The East Coast Mainline Authorities (ECMA), is a partnership of local and regional transport authorities along the corridor. An officer group met in October 2025 to discuss the future role and structure of the consortium and it was agreed that the East Coast Mainline is a vital piece of national infrastructure with strategic importance for Scotland's connectivity and economic development. Although no authority was currently in a position to take on the secretariat role, further reflection by members on the future structure and an assessment of secretariat options is underway to ensure the line is fit for future demands, with continued collaboration across regional and national partners being deemed essential to secure investment, influence industry reform, and support long-term improvements.

Road Safety North East Scotland (RSNES) partnership

Working with partners to improve road safety and reduce road casualties

Nestrans is a member of the Road Safety North East Scotland (RSNES) partnership along with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, NHS Grampian, North Safety Camera Unit, Road Safety Scotland, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Nestrans provide the secretariat for both the Strategic Group and the new Operational Group that has been set up to support coordinated action towards casualty reduction targets in the North East in line with the Road Safety Framework to 2030. Nestrans again funded the "Be Bright at Night" Winter Road Safety Campaign and partnered with the local authorities to provide funding for Police Scotland to support additional policing resource for the winter road safety campaign through to January 2026.

The Nestrans Transport Executive (Travel Planning) also prepared a report for Police Scotland on the Senior Driver Evaluation Pilot Scheme and the time for this was recharged to Police Scotland to claim through their grant for the pilot from Transport Scotland.

5. RTS Monitoring

The Nestrans Board has agreed the following two-tier approach that reflects that taken by Transport Scotland for monitoring of the National Transport Strategy:

- **Annual monitoring of headline indicators** which focus on trends over time and are directly linked to the strategy's six priorities providing a more focussed list of indicators aimed at monitoring the overall success of the strategy.

- **A three-yearly evaluation report** that adds in other data of interest to Nestrans, rolling forward a number of the indicators of more general interest from the previous monitoring report. This also includes any additional survey data, qualitative data and lived experience from stakeholder groups, studies, projects, partners and the public. This report aims to show broader trends of interest and more detail, with the ability to add supporting narrative and analysis.

Following the wider three-yearly evaluation report that was undertaken in 2024, the fourth annual monitoring report information that was reported to Board in April 2025 returned to the annual headline indicators format. This aims to show progress against the main priorities of the RTS, but it is recognised that it may take many years for the strategy to decisively influence most of the indicators and this process will be ongoing. While Nestrans may have limited influence over some of the indicators, monitoring wider regional trends remains important.

Under each of the six RTS priorities, a number of indicators have been identified which seek to measure the effectiveness of policies and interventions in moving towards the intended aim. For each, a baseline and targets have been set where appropriate, including interim targets for 2030 if applicable.

The twenty indicators identified are:

Connectivity:	Improving Rail journey times
	Car travel times
	Bus travel times
	HGV journey times
Casualty Reduction:	Fatalities in Road Traffic Collisions
	All severities of injuries
	Reducing the numbers of pedestrians killed or seriously injured
	Reducing the numbers of cyclists killed or seriously injured
Emissions:	Reducing concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide

	Reducing concentrations of Particulate Matter (PM2.5)
	Reducing concentrations of Particulate Matter (PM10)
Carbon:	Moving towards Net Zero carbon emissions from surface transport
Accessibility:	Proximity of a station to where people live
	Accessibility of railway stations
	Satisfaction of bus users with value for money
	Satisfaction of bus users with convenience and accessibility of services
Mode Split:	Reducing overall demand for travel
	Influencing proportions of travel choice by mode
	Lessening dependence on car travel
	Reducing the amount of car travel across the region

Against these 20 indicators are a total of 23 Monitoring topics, with identified baselines (2019 where possible) and for which targets have been set.

Monitoring of the indicators rely on externally produced data, and most data sources have caught up from the pandemic. Despite this, it is not always possible to update every indicator each year. Data that refers to 2020 and 2021 was significantly impacted by the pandemic and travel restrictions. Therefore, there remain uncertainties around the medium and long term impacts of the pandemic and how people will react to behaviour changes which were enforced and then enabled by the restrictions. The 2025 report however provides some further insight into post pandemic behaviours. It was found that 13 of the 20 indicators are progressing towards the set RTS targets.

It is worth noting that the 2030 and 2040 targets for indicator 2b (A reduced number of casualties) were adjusted. The pandemic resulted in lower levels of traffic on the road network which had a direct impact on the number of road casualties. The ambition has been increased in order to reflect that the targets within the RTS should be aspirational and far reaching. The amended aim now looks to achieve a reduction in the number of casualties in Road Traffic Collisions in the north east by 67% by 2040 (interim aim of 50% reduction by 2030) from the agreed 50% by 2040 (interim aim of 25% by 2030).

6. Governance Details and Statutory Responsibilities

Governance Documents

The full suite of governance documents within which Nestrans, as a publicly accountable body, must operate are published on the Nestrans website. This includes the latest Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Policy for 2025/26 that was approved by the Nestrans Board in February 2025. The Nestrans Board Members Register of Interests was updated as required and the risk register that is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that significant risks are identified, evaluated and controlled was reported to Board in June 2025.

Equalities Duties

As a public body, Nestrans has duties in relation to the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 to set equality outcomes that will help in the elimination of discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations for relevant protected characteristic groups. The most recent Nestrans Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming report was reported to the Board in April 2025 and the implementation of equalities policies is an on-going process, with Nestrans being committed to meeting our statutory duties.

Nestrans also had an Integrated Impact Assessment undertaken for the 2025/26 People and Place Programme to consider the potential direct and indirect impacts associated with the projects proposed for delivery, which contained a risk mitigation action plan.

Climate Change Duties

As a public body, in respect of our duties in relation to the Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009 and Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, Nestrans is required to submit a report in November of each year on our annual emissions in the previous financial year. The report for 2025/26 will be prepared and submitted by the 30 November 2026 deadline.

Nestrans' commitment to the Climate Change Acts, targets and values is shown in the Regional Transport Strategy 2040, which has climate change as one of its fundamental pillars. Nestrans has continued to work with partners to seek to influence and facilitate the required behavioural, social, and cultural change to reduce transport related emissions in line with the ambition set out in RTS 2040.

Adaptation is a critical component of preparing for the impacts of climate change, minimising likely distribution impacts on the transport network both for present and future scenarios. This has become increasingly clear over recent years within the Nestrans region with efforts of Nestrans aligned with this working closer with local,

regional and national partners on this matter. We participate in both local authorities' Climate Adaption partnerships and feed considerations through both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning processes.

Nestrans also supported the establishment of the Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland Forum and became a co-signatory to a Memorandum of Understanding acknowledging our active participation in the group. This support recognises the importance of being part of the national effort to improve our infrastructure resilience in the face of climate change impacts, and the development of effective adaptation strategies.

Nestrans submitted a response in September 2025 to the Call for Views led by the Net Zero, Energy and Transport committee to support the Parliament's scrutiny of the draft Climate Change Plan, with the final Scotland's Climate Change Plan: 2026-2040 being published in March 2026.

Other Statutory Responsibilities

Once completed and reported to Board, Nestrans Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 and the Statements required to comply with the duties on public bodies to provide information under Sections 31 and 31 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 will be published on the Nestrans website within the Documents section.

Appendix: The Nestrans Board and Executive

The Board

The Nestrans Board is its main decision-making body and in terms of the Order that established Nestrans, membership consists of four Councillor Members from Aberdeen City Council and four from Aberdeenshire Council. In addition, Nestrans is entitled to have between three and four non-councillor members. In 2024/25, the two Councils nominated the following Councillors to sit on the Board:

Aberdeen City Council	**Aberdeenshire Council**
Councillor Michael Hutchison (SNP)	Councillor Dawn Black (SNP)
Councillor Sandra Macdonald (Labour)	Councillor John Cox (Reform UK)
Councillor Miranda Radley (SNP)	Councillor Isobel Davidson (Liberal Democrats)
Councillor Ian Yuill (Liberal Democrats)	Councillor Alan Turner (Conservative)

The non-Councillor Members appointed by the Partnership and endorsed by Scottish Government Ministers for the period to October 2029 are:

Non-Councillor members	
Mr Colin Allanach	Chartered Mechanical Engineer with a Masters in Business Administration, Board Member of Scottish Cycling and involved in establishment of Grampian Cycle Partnership
Dr Margaret Bochel (to Sept 2025)	Former Head of Planning & Sustainable Development at Aberdeen City Council
Mr Gerry Donald	Former Head of Property and Asset Development at NHS Grampian
Mr Kieran Morton (from Nov 2025)	Business Development Manager at Port of Aberdeen
Mr Ian Ross	Chartered Civil Engineer with a history of Transportation projects

The Board has appointed the following professional advisers to sit on the Board:

Board Adviser	
Mr Alan Wood	Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, Aberdeenshire Council
Mr David Dunne	Chief Officer of Strategic Place Planning, Aberdeen City Council

The Board has appointed the following office bearers:

Appointee	Office
Councillor Michael Hutchison	Chair
Councillor Alan Turner	Vice Chair
Dr Margaret Bochel (to Sept 2025)	Vice Chair

The Board meets to a schedule, usually agreed around November for the following year, at roughly two-monthly intervals. Board meetings are held on a hybrid basis, with members able to join virtually if unable to attend in person and with recordings posted on the Nestrans website. During the period 2025/26 meetings were held on:

Board Meeting Dates 2025/26
23 April 2025
25 June 2025
17 September 2025
12 November 2025
18 February 2026

Meetings are scheduled into the busy Council calendars to ensure that most members are able to attend. There is a facility for each Councillor member to nominate a substitute who can only participate if the substantive member is not present. Nominated substitute members in the past year were:

Aberdeen City Council Substitutes	Aberdeenshire Council Substitutes
Councillor Christian Allard (SNP)	Councillor George Carr (Conservative)
Councillor Kate Blake (Labour)	Councillor Doreen Mair (Independent)
Councillor Martin Greig (Liberal Democrats)	Councillor Trevor Mason (Liberal Democrats) to Feb 2026
Councillor Alexander McLellan (SNP)	Councillor Stephen Smith (SNP)
	Councillor Laurie Carnie (Reform UK) from Feb 2026

Professional Support and Services

The Board takes professional support and services from the two constituent authorities as follows:

Aberdeen City Council
Legal Services
Democratic and Administration
Information and Communications Technology
Aberdeenshire Council
Personnel Services
Finance Services

Nestrans Staff

To support the Board in carrying out its functions there is an Executive Team in place. This team consists of:

Position	
Director	Paul Finch (from 27 May)
Interim Director/Transportation Strategy Manager	Paul Finch (to 26 May)
Transportation Strategy Manager	Caroline Hood (from 1 December)
Transport Executive (Programmes & Delivery)	Jennifer Anderson
Transport Executive (Strategy & Delivery)	Claudia Stuerck
Transport Executive (Travel Plan & Delivery)	Caroline Hood (to 30 November 2025) and Gwyneth McMinn (from 2 March 2026)
Office Manager	Tricia Howden (approx. 22 hours over 4 days/week)
Active Travel Development Officer	Jon Barron
Transport Officer	Adam Kench
Marketing and Communications Officer	Lucy Johnston (3 days per week)

The Executive Team continued to work on a hybrid basis in 2025/26

Office accommodation continued to be rented at:

Archibald Simpson House

27-29 King Street

Aberdeen

AB24 5AA

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 11 November 2026

4.3 Information Publication

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To allow the Board to consider the information that is to be published for 2025/26 in accordance with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

1) Approve publication on the Nestrans website of the information for 2025/26 required under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

3. Background

3.1 Regional Transport Partnerships are included in the schedule of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and as such are required to publish certain information on an annual basis.

4. Implications for Nestrans

4.1 Sections 31 and 32 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 impose duties to publish information on certain expenditure and statements on steps taken to promote and increase sustainable growth and improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy through the exercise of its functions. An expenditure statement has been prepared as shown in **Appendix A** for publication on the Nestrans website to detail expenditure in 2025/26 relating to the following stipulated matters:

- Public Relations;
- Overseas Travel;
- Hospitality and Entertainment;
- External Consultancy;
- Payments with a value in excess of £25,000; and
- Members or employees who received remuneration in excess of £150,000.

4.2 Statements for 2025/26 have also been prepared and are contained in **Appendices B and C** respectively, on the steps taken by Nestrans in the exercise of its functions to:

- Promote and increase sustainable economic growth; and
- Improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

Report prepared by Jennifer Anderson, Transport Executive (Programmes & Delivery)
30 October 2026

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nestrans

Public Relations

Date	Gross Amount	Payee	Subject-matter
MAR-26	134.40	McKenzie Print Limited	Business cards for PF/CH - 250 each
People & Place Programme Promotions (rechargeable via grant)			
SEP-25	23.40	Langstane Press Ltd	A5 P&P Leaflets For Parliamentry Event 11 Sept
OCT-25	214.10	Stella's Voice	Pop Ups 250xA5 and 150xA4 Flyers
Active and Sustainable Transport Promotion & Safety Promotion			
NOV-25	1,344.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel ads 3-16 Nov plus producn costs
NOV-25	1,344.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel ads 17-30 Nov plus producn costs
NOV-25	4,860.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital ASL ads for 11 weeks and 3-7pm plays
NOV-25	540.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital ads in Union Sq btwn 30 Oct-12 Nov
DEC-25	1,344.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel ads 1-14 Dec plus producn costs
DEC-25	1,920.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel ads 18-30 Nov plus producn in AB33-AB56
DEC-25	115.71	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital ads in Union Sq btwn 24-26 Nov
JAN-26	1,344.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel Ads 15-28 Dec Plus Producn Costs
JAN-26	424.28	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital Ads In Union Sq Btwn 27 Nov-10Dec
JAN-26	1,344.00	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Adshel Ads 29 Dec - 11 Jan Plus Producn Costs
JAN-26	274.31	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital Ads In Union Sq btwn 11-24 Dec
JAN-26	265.68	Bauer Media Outdoor UK Ltd	Digital ads in Union Sq btwn 25 Dec - 1 Jan
	15,119.98		
NOV-25	508.80	Bauer Radio Limited	Be Bright At Night radio adverts on Northsound 1
DEC-25	2,332.80	Bauer Radio Limited	Be Bright At Night radio adverts on Northsound 1
JAN-26	2,410.56	Bauer Radio Limited	Be Bright At Night radio adverts on Northsound 1
FEB-26	1,947.84	Bauer Radio Limited	Be Bright At Night radio adverts on Northsound 1
	7,200.00		
Public Transport Promotion			
OCT-25	15,651.60	First Aberdeen Limited	Contribution to Abdn bus gate promotion winter 23/24
Getabout			
APR-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in March
MAY-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in April
JUN-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in May
JUL-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in June
AUG-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in July
SEP-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm July & August
OCT-25	719.97	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Sept
NOV-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Oct
NOV-25	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Nov
JAN-26	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Dec
FEB-26	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Jan (banked)
FEB-26	720.00	D C Thomson & Co Ltd	Radio adverts on Original 106fm in Feb (banked)
	8,639.97		
Nestrans and Getabout Websites			
MAY-25	1,656.00	Alt Ten Interactive Limited	Website hosting and 1hr support/month to June 2026
APR-25	36.00	CCS Connectivity Limited t/a Internet for Business	Domain name nestrans.org.uk 9/4/25 - 8/4/26

Overseas Travel

Date	Gross Amount	Payee	Subject-matter
None			

Hospitality & Entertainment

Date	Gross Amount	Payee	Subject-matter
NOV-25	122.00	Aberdeen City Council	Catering for non-Cllr Board post interviews + delivery
NOV-25	120.00	Aberdeen City Council	Catering for Nestrans Board and workshop on 12 Nov
	242.00		
OCT-25	750.00	Leonardo Hotel	Leonardo Hotel Room hire and catering for freight forum on 19 Sep
JUN-25	96.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Tea/coffee at ART member briefing 26 May

Hospitality & Entertainment continued			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
People & Place Events (rechargeable via grant)			
JAN-26	375.16	Tactran	Contribution To TS P&P Event In Dundee 9 Sept
OCT-25	1,362.00	Thistle Catering	Catering for P&P Huntly event 15 Oct
NOV-25	195.00	The Victoria Hall Ellon	Hire of Hall and equipment on 15 October 9am-4pm
OCT-25	139.50	Stella's Voice	Scottish Parliament event catering on 11 Sept

External Consultancy			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
APR-25	2,084.04	AECOM	Regional Cycle Infrastructure Mapping
APR-25	1,583.76	AECOM	IIA for 2025-26 P&P projects
MAY-25	18,857.47	AECOM	North East Mobility Hubs work up to end April 2025
MAY-25	410.82	AECOM	Regional Cycle Infrastructure Mapping to 2 May 2025
MAY-25	4,364.08	AECOM	IIA for 2025-26 P&P projects to 2 May 2025
JUN-25	1,240.19	AECOM	IIA For 2025-26 P&P Projects To 30 May 2025
JUL-25	41,287.94	AECOM	North East Mobility Hubs work in May 2025
SEP-25	18,692.89	AECOM	Ballater Mobility Hub OBC work to end June
OCT-25	65,860.02	AECOM	Ballater Mobility Hub OBC work July-Sept
OCT-25	13,242.48	AECOM	North East Mobility Hubs work Apr to Oct 2025
NOV-25	7,081.99	AECOM	Ab-L'kirk Study work to Oct 2025
DEC-25	1,050.84	AECOM	North East Mobility Hubs final invoice
DEC-25	10,007.47	AECOM	Bus Support with EoI for fare cap pilot
DEC-25	197.76	AECOM	Cycle Infrastructure Mapping
JAN-26	5,356.49	AECOM	Ballater Mobility Hub Sept-Nov
JAN-26	18,000.00	AECOM	Ballater Mobility Hub Sept-Nov
FEB-26	9,320.12	AECOM	Ballater Mobility Hub OBC work Dec
FEB-26	1,022.70	AECOM	Ab-L'kirk Study work to Feb 2026
	219,661.06		
AUG-25	3,619.00	Jacobs UK Ltd	RATN work from 28 March to 4 July
OCT-25	6,615.00	Jacobs UK Ltd	ART marketing and comms undertaken in 2024
	10,234.00		
JUL-25	2,878.24	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH website, social media + 1of 4 videos Nestrans
JUL-25	1,137.90	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH support for Nestrans
JUL-25	28,237.76	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH website, social media + 1of 4 videos other RTPs
JUL-25	27,043.74	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH support for other RTPs
OCT-25	1,137.90	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Part B In Q2 Support For Nestrans
OCT-25	194.24	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Part A In Q2
OCT-25	22,321.74	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Part B In Q2 - Support For Other RTPs
OCT-25	1,905.76	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Part A In Q2
JAN-26	1,137.60	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Q3 Part B Support For Nestrans
JAN-26	194.24	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH part A social media and 1 of 4 video case study
JAN-26	12,655.74	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	Travelknowhow Scotland Q3 Part B Support For Other RTPs
JAN-26	1,905.76	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	TKH part A social media and 1 of 4 video case study
	100,750.62		
APR-25	12,327.91	Stantec UK Ltd	ART SBC, infrastructure, BSIP and network design
JUN-25	2,471.90	Stantec UK Ltd	Toll of Birness Case for Investment
JUL-25	10,504.90	Stantec UK Ltd	ART - SBC work and travel to ACC Cttee
NOV-25	17,420.90	Stantec UK Ltd	NE LDP Cum Transport Appraisal work to 31 Oct
DEC-25	16,495.30	Stantec UK Ltd	NE LDP CTA work to date incl connectivity analysis
	59,220.91		
APR-25	5,992.80	Systra Ltd	HGV EV feasibility study -WP1 inception report
JUN-25	11,985.60	Systra Ltd	HGV EV study -WP2 modelling/evidence review
JUL-25	11,985.60	Systra Ltd	HGV EV -WP3 review of BEVs for freight technology
OCT-25	11,985.60	Systra Ltd	HGV EV - WP4 & WP 5
OCT-25	11,985.60	Systra Ltd	HGV EV -WP4 draft report submission
OCT-25	18,156.00	Systra Ltd	HGV EV - Stage 5 draft report submission
NOV-25	1,173.43	Systra Ltd	HGV BEV -Costs to attend/present at freight forum
FEB-26	5,992.80	Systra Ltd	HGV EV -Stage 6 report submission
DEC-25	8,356.63	Systra Ltd	BEV HGVs Skills Fund WP1 inception
JAN-26	8,356.63	Systra Ltd	BEV HGVs Skills Fund WP2 Programme Design
MAR-26	8,356.63	Systra Ltd	Stage 3 completion of scheduled Webinar and site visits
	104,327.32		

Payments in Excess of £25,000			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
Capital and Revenue Budget Projects Delivery and Nestrans Support Services			
JUL-25	5,437.50	Aberdeen City Council	Rent Of Archibald Simpson House Q2 In Advance
OCT-25	5,437.50	Aberdeen City Council	Rent Of Archibald Simpson House Q3 In Advance
DEC-25	5,437.50	Aberdeen City Council	Rent Of Archibald Simpson House Q4 In Advance
APR-25	3,336.60	Aberdeen City Council	Business Rate 24/25 For Suite 1 (Part) On RV Of £6700
APR-25	821.70	Aberdeen City Council	Business Rate 24/25 For Suite 3A On RV Of £1650
APR-25	1,070.70	Aberdeen City Council	Business Rate 24/25 For Suite 9 (Part) On RV Of £2150
APR-25	298.80	Aberdeen City Council	Business Rate 24/25 For Parking Space On RV Of £600
APR-25	796.80	Aberdeen City Council	Business Rate 24/25 For Suite 1 (Part) On RV Of £1600
FEB-26	3,446.09	Aberdeen City Council	Service Charge For 2023-24
FEB-26	9,058.11	Aberdeen City Council	Electricity Service Charge For 2023-24
JUN-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In April 2025
JUN-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In May 2025
AUG-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In June 2025
AUG-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In July 2025
NOV-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In August 2025
NOV-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In Sept 2025
NOV-25	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In Oct 2025
FEB-26	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In Nov 2025
FEB-26	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In Dec 2025
FEB-26	102.89	Aberdeen City Council	Office Cleaning In Jan 2026
APR-25	38.90	Aberdeen City Council	ICT Purchases Accessories
APR-25	2,200.32	Aberdeen City Council	Swan Circuit Charges
APR-25	2,218.76	Aberdeen City Council	ICT Devices - 2nd Year of 3
APR-25	167.14	Aberdeen City Council	EE Mobile Charges
APR-25	981.65	Aberdeen City Council	Vodafone Telecom Charges
AUG-25	3,918.00	Aberdeen City Council	Cost Of IAS19 for 24/25 and Additional Reports
NOV-25	122.00	Aberdeen City Council	Catering For Non-Cllr Board Post Interviews + Delivery
NOV-25	120.00	Aberdeen City Council	Catering For Nestrans Board And Workshop On 12 Nov
APR-25	9,831.53	Aberdeen City Council	ICT Annual ALEO Charge Under SLA
APR-25	504.00	Aberdeen City Council	Legal Officer Costs For Feb Board
AUG-25	720.00	Aberdeen City Council	Legal SLA Costs Q1 (Apr+Jun Board+Director Query)
OCT-25	504.00	Aberdeen City Council	Legal SLA Costs Q2 (Sep Board+ZE HDV Grant)
JAN-26	612.00	Aberdeen City Council	Legal SLA Costs Q3 (Nov Board+FOISA Response)
FEB-26	120.00	Aberdeen City Council	Deposit - Hire Of Seminar Room At Art Gallery 12 Mar
AUG-25	5,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Contribution To Community Planning Aberdeen 24/25
AUG-25	5,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Contribution To Community Planning Aberdeen 25/26
AUG-25	- 5,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Credit For Contribution To CP Aberdeen 24/25
JUN-25	15,382.66	Aberdeen City Council	Warranty/Maint Sim Agreements For EV Chargers
JUN-25	12,532.96	Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeen Car Parking Review
JUN-25	5,685.47	Aberdeen City Council	Car Club Bay Implementation And Maintenance
SEP-25	55.70	Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeen School Streets Pilot Rev In July
NOV-25	890.42	Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeen School Streets Pilot Rev In Aug+Sep
JAN-26	454.29	Aberdeen City Council	Aberdeen School Streets Pilot Rev Q3 Oct-Dec
SEP-25	77.98	Aberdeen City Council	School Footprints Rev In July
NOV-25	180.54	Aberdeen City Council	School Footprints Rev In Aug+Sep
JAN-26	1,015.41	Aberdeen City Council	School Footprints Rev Q3 Oct-Dec
SEP-25	1,058.30	Aberdeen City Council	Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities Rev In July
NOV-25	2,301.64	Aberdeen City Council	Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities Rev In Aug & Sep
JAN-26	1,748.79	Aberdeen City Council	Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities Rev Q3 Oct-Dec
SEP-25	77.98	Aberdeen City Council	School Cycle Parking Shelters Rev In July
NOV-25	67.70	Aberdeen City Council	School Cycle Parking Shelters Rev In Aug & Sep
JAN-26	1,195.95	Aberdeen City Council	School Cycle Parking Shelters Rev Q3 Oct-Dec
AUG-25	813.60	Aberdeen City Council	Legal SLA Costs Relating To P&P Grant Offer Letters
SEP-25	2,899.20	Aberdeen City Council	School Cycle Parking Capital Q1
JAN-26	52,083.44	Aberdeen City Council	School Cycle Parking Shelters Cap Q3 Oct-Dec
SEP-25	75,622.96	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
NOV-25	24,061.81	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
NOV-25	18,424.55	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
JAN-26	27,489.12	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
JAN-26	21,231.84	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
FEB-26	13,363.39	Aberdeen City Council	B999 Shielhill Road Junction Improvement
JUN-25	108,819.60	Aberdeen City Council	UTC Hardware Upgrade
AUG-25	43,249.32	Aberdeen City Council	VMS Refurbishment
FEB-26	252,474.00	Aberdeen City Council	Union Street Central Streetscape Works
NOV-25	30,572.81	Aberdeen City Council	Kingswells Park And Ride
JAN-26	52.87	Aberdeen City Council	Kingswells Park And Ride
JUN-25	1,134.00	Aberdeen City Council	Bus Shelter Replacements
NOV-25	80,965.20	Aberdeen City Council	Bus Stop Upgrades
JAN-26	356.54	Aberdeen City Council	Bus Stop Upgrades
JAN-26	343.31	Aberdeen City Council	Bus Stop Upgrades
SEP-25	96,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Tall Ships Transport Support
FEB-26	240,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Beachfront Pedestrian Spine

Payments in Excess of £25,000			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
Capital and Revenue Budget Projects Delivery and Nestrans Support Services (continued)			
JUN-25	32,491.72	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Parking And Maintenance Stands
JUN-25	678.07	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Parking And Maintenance Stands
AUG-25	3,562.54	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Parking And Maintenance Stands
SEP-25	4,523.51	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Parking And Maintenance Stands
JAN-26	224.10	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Parking And Maintenance Stands
JUN-25	2,601.00	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
AUG-25	106.94	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
SEP-25	26.74	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
SEP-25	26.74	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
NOV-25	722.20	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
NOV-25	121.85	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
JAN-26	54.16	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
JAN-26	27.08	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
FEB-26	27.08	Aberdeen City Council	Craibstone P&R To Teca Quiet Route Feasibility Study
FEB-26	48,000.00	Aberdeen City Council	Wellington Road Junction Improvements
AUG-25	4,881.74	Aberdeen City Council	Craigshaw Drive Cycle Route
JUN-25	1,555.80	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
AUG-25	242.26	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
SEP-25	1,621.34	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
NOV-25	1,713.36	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
NOV-25	122.69	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
JAN-26	260.71	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
JAN-26	1,805.38	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
FEB-26	92.02	Aberdeen City Council	Farburn/Wellheads Cycle Link
FEB-26	602.83	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
JUN-25	26,366.46	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
JUN-25	363.38	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
AUG-25	598.55	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
SEP-25	711.62	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
NOV-25	554.02	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
NOV-25	306.72	Aberdeen City Council	A92 Murcar North
JAN-26	7,200.00	Aberdeen City Council	Marywell Cycle Route
FEB-26	6,665.80	Aberdeen City Council	Marywell Cycle Route
JUN-25	59,731.20	Aberdeen City Council	Craigiebuckler Dr To Countesswells Ave Ph 2
JUN-25	6,773.99	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
JUN-25	2,104.74	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
AUG-25	4,637.86	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
SEP-25	556.81	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
SEP-25	1,844.57	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
NOV-25	4,678.55	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
NOV-25	1,413.08	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
JAN-26	260.71	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
JAN-26	291.38	Aberdeen City Council	A96 Dyce Cycle Track
JUN-25	6,978.62	Aberdeen City Council	A93 Multi Modal Corridor Study Stag Part 2/OBC
MAY-25	10,550.28	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Infrastructure Maintenance
MAY-25	12,622.41	Aberdeen City Council	Cycle Counter Maintenance
APR-25	144.00	Aberdeen City Council	Legal Advice On Draft P&P Grant Offer Letters
	1,457,358.46		
JUN-25	96.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Provision of hospitality catering at Woodhill House 26.05.25
MAY-25	5,000.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Provision of Finance Services Under SLA Financial Year 25/26 (part payment for April & May 25)
AUG-25	3,180.00	Aberdeenshire Council	HR Under SLA for April and May 2025
JAN-26	31,440.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Towards Cost of Finance Services per SLA - Jun 25 to Mar 26
JAN-26	13,800.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Towards cost of HR Services per SLA Jun 25-Mar 26
DEC-25	16,115.98	Aberdeenshire Council	THInC contribution 2025-26
APR-25	2,847.59	Aberdeenshire Council	HTAP Coordinator Costs contribution
MAY-25	5,000.00	Aberdeenshire Council	HR&OD Community Planning Partner contributions for 25/26
DEC-25	24,142.84	Aberdeenshire Council	HTAP programme co-ordinator
MAR-26	12,069.84	Aberdeenshire Council	HTAP programme co-ordinator
MAR-26	36,600.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Contribution to RTPI Maintenance
MAR-26	35,980.00	Aberdeenshire Council	People & Place Grant Award costs incurred by Aberdeenshire Council re RTPI regionwide
MAR-26	33,552.36	Aberdeenshire Council	A947 Bends on A920
APR-25	61,896.68	Aberdeenshire Council	General Road Safety Improvements
JUN-25	1,395.68	Aberdeenshire Council	General Road Safety Improvements
JUN-25	31,404.23	Aberdeenshire Council	Installation of bus stops in rural areas
MAR-26	46,440.16	Aberdeenshire Council	Installation of Bus Stops in Rural Areas
MAR-26	173.63	Aberdeenshire Council	A92 Gourdon Bus Access
JUN-25	- 11,731.30	Aberdeenshire Council	A93 Crathes Access to Bus Services
JUN-25	3,105.60	Aberdeenshire Council	Ellon Park & Ride Phase 3

Payments in Excess of £25,000			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
Capital and Revenue Budget Projects Delivery and Nestrans Support Services (continued)			
DEC-25	5,961.60	Aberdeenshire Council	Ellon Park & Ride Phase 3 AH
MAR-26	1,389.90	Aberdeenshire Council	T83024 - Ellon Park & Ride Phase 3
APR-25	78,397.72	Aberdeenshire Council	Alford to Montgarrie shared use footway
JUN-25	37,185.01	Aberdeenshire Council	Alford to Montgarrie shared use footway
APR-25	89,712.77	Aberdeenshire Council	F&B Way Access Point Improvements
MAR-26	2,195.71	Aberdeenshire Council	F&B Way Access Point Improvements
JUN-25	58,727.11	Aberdeenshire Council	A90 Ellon/Foveran/Newburgh
APR-25	5,765.35	Aberdeenshire Council	Inverurie - North/South links to new Academy
APR-25	67,150.91	Aberdeenshire Council	Ellon Integrated Travel Towns
JUN-25	149,154.85	Aberdeenshire Council	Ellon Integrated Travel Towns
APR-25	71,102.17	Aberdeenshire Council	River Don Access Path
JUN-25	20,660.02	Aberdeenshire Council	River Don Access Path
DEC-25	73,206.92	Aberdeenshire Council	River Don Core Path Upgrades
APR-25	254,319.80	Aberdeenshire Council	Oldmeldrum Meg Way
JUN-25	80.20	Aberdeenshire Council	Oldmeldrum Meg Way
APR-25	16,443.22	Aberdeenshire Council	Station Rd Mintlaw East Ped Crossing
APR-25	9,398.44	Aberdeenshire Council	Burghmuir Dr, Inverurie North Ped Crossing
JUN-25	159,010.07	Aberdeenshire Council	Pedestrian Crossings
DEC-25	21,288.25	Aberdeenshire Council	Pedestrian Crossings - Burghmuir Dr Inverurie
MAR-26	7,791.47	Aberdeenshire Council	Kennethmont to Ardmore
MAR-26	3,215.60	Aberdeenshire Council	F&B Way Realignment north of Ellon
FEB-26	6.70	Aberdeenshire Council	For ID Badges June 2025 Business Services, Property & Facilities
FEB-26	1,559.25	Aberdeenshire Council	Assessment centre cost for senior appointment
MAR-26	5,422.21	Aberdeenshire Council	Aadapted bike for Turriff Academy via People & Place grant award
APR-25	1,000.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Grant Funding - Bringing the Bike to you project
JUN-25	26,000.00	Aberdeenshire Council	Grant Funding - Bringing the Bike to you project - Balance
JUN-25	61,229.23	Aberdeenshire Council	F&B Way Access Point Improvements
	1,579,883.77		
see above	219,661.06	AECOM	(as above under external consultancy)
APR-25	8,499.00	Cycling Scotland	Access to bikes for young people in Q4
APR-25	15,374.00	Cycling Scotland	Cycle parking in schools in Q4
APR-25	11,498.60	Cycling Scotland	Workplace Cycle Parking in Q4
APR-25	62,616.00	Cycling Scotland	Cycle Storage Programme Q4 capital
APR-25	560.00	Cycling Scotland	Access to bikes for young people in Q4
APR-25	256.00	Cycling Scotland	Cycle parking in schools in Q4
APR-25	216.00	Cycling Scotland	Workplace Cycle Parking in Q4
JUL-25	170.00	Cycling Scotland	2X Delegate tickets for CS Conference 10 Sept
	99,189.60		
JUL-25	31,516.50	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeen Q1
JUL-25	27,320.60	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeenshire Bothies Q1
JUL-25	3,682.00	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeen Q1
JUL-25	12,500.00	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeenshire Bothies Q1
JUL-25	11,788.00	Cycling UK	Cycle Repair Scheme Q1 Capital
OCT-25	24,749.98	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities, Aberdeen Q2 Revenue
OCT-25	23,186.28	Cycling UK	Aberdeenshire Bothies Q2 Revenue
OCT-25	36,004.46	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities, Aberdeen Q2 Capital
OCT-25	12,500.00	Cycling UK	Aberdeenshire Bothies Q2 Capital
OCT-25	12,494.25	Cycling UK	Cycle Repair Scheme Q2 Capital
JAN-26	25,811.44	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeen Q3 Revenue
JAN-26	28,349.04	Cycling UK	Aberdeenshire Bothies Q3 Revenue
JAN-26	6,502.96	Cycling UK	Connecting Communities - Aberdeen Q3
JAN-26	12,500.00	Cycling UK	Aberdeenshire Bothies Q3 Capital
JAN-26	8,290.14	Cycling UK	Cycle Repair Scheme Q3 Capital
	277,195.65		
MAY-25	4,755.50	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q1 Revenue
MAY-25	32,695.75	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q1 Capital
JUL-25	4,755.50	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q1 Revenue
JUL-25	32,695.75	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q2 Capital
OCT-25	4,755.50	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q3 Revenue
OCT-25	32,695.75	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q3 Capital
NOV-25	1,858.50	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q3 Additional Capital
JAN-26	4,755.50	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q4 Revenue
JAN-26	38,271.25	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Q4 Capital
MAR-26	20,207.00	Gordon Rural Action	The Bikery Additional Capital
	177,446.00		

Payments in Excess of £25,000			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
MAY-25	7,500.00	Huntly Development Trust	Grant Funding - P&P Led Bike & Walking Sessions
JUN-25	20,875.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Going Places! Q1 resource
SEP-25	20,875.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Q2 Revenue
SEP-25	9,416.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Capital
DEC-25	20,875.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Q3 Revenue
DEC-25	550.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Capital
MAR-26	13,120.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Revenue
MAR-26	34.00	Huntly Development Trust	Huntly Travel Hub - Capital
	93,245.00		
MAR-26	643.73	NHS Grampian	AHSCP Greenways revenue claim 1
MAR-26	360.00	NHS Grampian	AHSCP Greenways revenue claim 2
MAR-26	36,000.00	NHS Grampian	AHSCP Greenways capital claim 1
MAR-26	9,000.00	NHS Grampian	AHSCP Greenways capital claim 2
	46,003.73		
APR-25	1,704.11	Paths For All Partnership	Workplaces Walking Programme in Q4
APR-25	42,029.02	Paths For All Partnership	Workplaces Walking Programme in Q4
	43,733.13		
NOV-25	19,964.00	PfA t/a Walking Scotland	Walking Communities Q2 Revenue
NOV-25	10,632.00	PfA t/a Walking Scotland	Walking Communities Q1 Revenue
FEB-26	10,802.00	PfA t/a Walking Scotland	Walking Communities Q3 Revenue
FEB-26	22,948.00	PfA t/a Walking Scotland	Walking Communities in Q3 Capital
	64,346.00		
AUG-25	4,935.00	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Rev Q1
AUG-25	4,046.25	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Sport Aberdeen Cap Q1
AUG-25	3,233.75	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Cap Q1
OCT-25	16,688.07	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Sport Aberdeen Rev Q2
OCT-25	2,085.00	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Rev Q2
OCT-25	8,492.17	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Sport Aberdeen Cap Q2
OCT-25	4,401.75	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Cap Q2
JAN-26	15,368.52	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Sport Aberdeen Rev Q3
JAN-26	11,903.68	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Rev Q3
JAN-26	4,054.75	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Sport Aberdeen Cap Q3
JAN-26	4,877.26	Scottish Cycling	Rock Up and Ride with Ythan CC Cap Q3
	80,086.20		
see above	100,750.62	Shona Drummond Marketing Ltd	(as above under external consultancy)
MAY-25	2,035.00	Sport Aberdeen	P&P 24/25 revenue - April 25
JUN-25	1,363.02	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim in April for staff costs
JUN-25	1,404.55	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim in May for staff costs/expenses
JUN-25	462.67	Sport Aberdeen	GICB capital claim in April for Management fee
JUN-25	462.67	Sport Aberdeen	GICB capital claim in May for Management fee
JUN-25	4,276.22	Sport Aberdeen	P&P 24/25 capital to end April
JUN-25	3,176.41	Sport Aberdeen	P&P 24/25 GICB revenue to end April
JUN-25	4,680.00	Sport Aberdeen	Bikeability, Bike Dr & Learn to Ride in May
JUN-25	685.00	Sport Aberdeen	Bikeability, Bike Dr & Learn to Ride in June
JUL-25	2,015.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1 Bike Dr Q1 revenue
JUL-25	4,468.80	Sport Aberdeen	P&P 24/25 bike helmets and bikes
JUL-25	5,800.86	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue to end Jun 25
JUL-25	6,020.66	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue to end May 25
AUG-25	1,535.02	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim Jun 25 staff costs/expenses
AUG-25	1,530.24	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Revenue Claim July 25
AUG-25	4,880.69	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Jun 25 for Management fee+Aulton utilities
AUG-25	5,002.68	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim July 25
SEP-25	2,060.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1 Aug25
SEP-25	1,416.66	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim August 25
SEP-25	10,121.04	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim August 25
OCT-25	7,060.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue
OCT-25	1,481.56	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim September 25
OCT-25	3,445.57	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim September 25
NOV-25	6,225.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue Oct 25
NOV-25	1,481.56	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim October 25
NOV-25	4,900.62	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim October 25
DEC-25	8,425.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue Nov 25
DEC-25	1,356.62	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim in November 25
DEC-25	10,019.01	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim in Nov + Aulton utilities
JAN-26	5,975.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue Dec 25

Payments in Excess of £25,000			
Date	***Gross Amount***	***Payee***	***Subject-matter***
JAN-26	1,356.62	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim in Dec 25
JAN-26	10,534.83	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim in Dec 25 + Aulton utilities
FEB-26	9,080.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue Jan 26
FEB-26	8,550.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr revenue Feb 26
FEB-26	3,474.71	Sport Aberdeen	GICB revenue claim in Jan 26
FEB-26	8,532.41	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim in Jan 26
MAR-26	9,650.00	Sport Aberdeen	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1, Bike Dr in Feb 26
MAR-26	116.20	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Revenue Claim in Feb 26
MAR-26	475.52	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Revenue Interim Claim March 26
MAR-26	7,851.40	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Claim in Feb 26
MAR-26	94,524.22	Sport Aberdeen	GICB Capital Interim March 26 Claim
	267,913.04		
see above	370,764.18	Stantec	(as above under external consultancy)
JUN-25	5,081.25	Stella's Voice	Grant payment - 25/26 P&P
JUN-25	26,168.75	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q1 Capital
JUL-25	5,081.25	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q2 Revenue
JUL-25	26,168.75	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q2 Capital
OCT-25	5,081.25	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q3 Revenue
OCT-25	208.41	Stella's Voice	Travel and accommodation to Parliamentary event
OCT-25	139.50	Stella's Voice	Scottish Parliament event catering on 11 Sept
OCT-25	31,825.31	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q3 Capital
OCT-25	214.10	Stella's Voice	Pop Ups 250xA5 and 150xA4 Flyers
JAN-26	5,081.25	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q4 Revenue
JAN-26	24,544.19	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All Q4 Capital
MAR-26	25,207.00	Stella's Voice	Recycled Bikes for All additional Capital
	154,801.01		
MAY-25	10,168.76	Sustrans	I Bike Schools In Aberdeen - Mar Resource
MAY-25	8,918.84	Sustrans	I Bike Schools Abdnshire Mar Resource
MAY-25	5,864.86	Sustrans	Bike Communities March resource
JUL-25	13,814.21	Sustrans	Ibike Aberdeen Resource Costs 24-25 Q4+1
JUL-25	27,409.87	Sustrans	IBike Aberdeenshire resource costs 24-25 Q4+1
	66,176.54		
see above	132,353.08	Systra	(as above under external consultancy)
JUN-25	9,231.25	Tyred n Cranky CIC	Q1 2025 P&P Grant Award - Revenue
JUN-25	6,000.00	Tyred n Cranky CIC	Q1 2025/26 P&P Grant award - Capital
JUL-25	9,231.25	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Q2 Revenue
JUL-25	2,000.00	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Q2 Capital
OCT-25	9,231.25	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Q2 Revenue
OCT-25	4,000.00	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Q3 Capital
JAN-26	9,231.25	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Q4 Revenue
FEB-26	3,000.00	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It Revenue for Cycle Training
MAR-26	400.00	Tyred n Cranky CIC	2025/26 Move It extra capital for bike maintenance items
	52,325.00		

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Sustainable Economic Growth Statement

Introduction

Section 32(1)(a) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 provides that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, each listed public body must publish a statement of the steps it has taken during the financial year to promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions. Nestrans is a listed body within the Act.

This statement is intended to fulfil the requirement of the Act in relation to Sustainable Economic Growth. This statement should be read in conjunction with the statement on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy and the financial information provided on the Nestrans website that are also required by the Act**.** Further information on Nestrans' work can also be viewed in the audited statement of accounts and Annual Report for 2025/26.

Regional Transport Strategy to 2040

Nestrans' primary function is to produce and implement a Regional Transport Strategy. This is a statutory document, with the requirements set out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, and associated guidance published in 2006.

The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) to 2040 received Ministerial approval on 4 November 2021 and was formally adopted by the Nestrans Board as the statutory RTS for the area when they met on 10 November 2021. It is considered that the RTS to 2040 fulfils all the statutory requirements and complies with the necessity of STAG option appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment. The Vision within the RTS is *"To provide a safer, cleaner, more inclusive, accessible and resilient transport system in the North East, which protects the natural and built environment and contributes to healthier, more prosperous and fairer communities"*. It was developed under four equal and overlapping pillars relating to Equality, Climate, Prosperity and Wellbeing that align with and support the pillars of the National Transport Strategy2 that was published in February 2020 and therefore many of the Scottish Government's National Outcomes.

RTS Policies and Actions

The policies and actions within the RTS to 2040 are structured under 18 headings. They were developed to support the delivery of the strategy and meet the aims and objectives therein. It is recognised that delivery of the strategy will require implementation and input from a range of organisations. Nestrans has therefore continued to seek identification of funding and a priority for the projects by partners that assist with this. A progress report on delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy and spend to date on projects being funded by Nestrans is prepared for each Board meeting and all Board reports can be viewed on the Nestrans website. A summary of overall progress in the past year by Nestrans is given below against the headings of the various policies and actions within the RTS.

Achievements in 2025/26

Increasing the Number of People Travelling Actively for Health and the Environment (AT)

Regional Transport Partnerships were asked to administer year 2 of the People and Place Programme in 2025/26 to encourage more people in Scotland to walk, wheel, or cycle more often and the remit was extended to also include sustainable transport. Nestrans received a grant of up to £2,163,497 for the programme proposals submitted for the North East. Following a successful bid, further grant variations brought the total award up to £2,226,909.50 and this was claimed in full for a number of projects which were successfully delivered thanks to the assistance of a number of national, regional and local delivery partners. Details can be viewed on the 2025/26 People and Place Programme pages on the Nestrans website along with the subsequent 2025/26 Programme Evaluation report .

Nestrans also funded £797,960 towards a number of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure improvement schemes being developed and delivered by our constituent Councils. A list of Nestrans funded projects is given at the end of this statement, but this included the development and delivery of cycle paths and upgrade of footways, improvements to the Formartine & Buchan Way and the installation of pedestrian crossings.

Sustainable Travel grants were awarded to Banchory Paths and Westhill and Elrick Community Council for path upgrades; Ellon Wheel Park group for junction markings at the wheel park; Portsoy Community Enterprise and Aberdeen Cyrenians for e-bikes; Ballater Community Enterprise towards the Ballater Bike Hub and to Mearns Community Council for a condition assessment of Shakin Brig in Edzell.

Developing the Rail Network (RL)

Nestrans continued to work with Transport Scotland, ScotRail and Network Rail to ensure that the aspirations of the North East are taken into account in developing our railways. Discussions continued with ScotRail regarding the proposal to install an additional ticket vending machine at Stonehaven. Nestrans previous appraisal work on the accessibility issues at Insch station were shared with Network Rail and discussions have begun to explore options that could deliver benefits in the short to medium term. The Detailed Option Appraisal for the South Aberdeen to Laurencekirk study was completed and a members briefing held.

Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART)

All ART work has been led by Aberdeen City Council, with support from Nestrans and funded in 2025/26 through Aberdeen City Region Deal – Strategic Transport Appraisal monies. The Strategic Business Case was completed and Aberdeen City Council has procured the consultancy support to progress the Outline Business Case. Joint working has ensured alignment between the proposed ART network and the wider transport system. Work has progressed on infrastructure development, high-level cost estimation and operational considerations. The costs and risks associated with both a Bus Services Improvement Partnership (BSIP) and a franchise approach continue to be explored

Public engagement, supported by StreetsUK took place between 30 September to 7 November 2025 and the full engagement report is published within the ART project page on the Nestrans website. A Frontage Business Survey was issued in March to support the development of emerging corridor designs.

Improving the region's bus network (BUS)

Nestrans continues to be a member of the North East Bus Alliance. Nestrans funded over £230,000 for bus shelter provision and upgrades throughout the region, an accessibility improvement to bus services on the A92 at Gourdon and the purchase of iPad tablets for use on A2B dial-a-bus services. Nestrans also contributed towards the annual maintenance costs for the regional real time passenger information service and to marketing of the multi-operator Grasshopper ticket. Consultancy support was also commissioned to prepare an Expression of Interest bid to Scottish Government for a £2 fare cap pilot.

Maximising the Benefits of Park & Ride (P&R)

Park & Ride information continued to be kept up to date on the Getabout website and Nestrans contributed to the resurfacing of the lower car park and access road and reset of gullies at Kingswells Park & Ride and to bollard and CCTV upgrades at Ellon Park & Ride.

Managing Demand (MD)

Nestrans commissioned an update to the study undertaken in 2023 to consider what may be realistic for the region in response to the Scottish Government's national target to reduce car vehicle kilometres by 20%, against a 2019 baseline, by 2030. The update will seek to refresh the baseline evidence with latest data and incorporate emerging carbon and vehicle kilometre reduction targets and revise the assessment of the potential impacts of different options.

Reducing Emissions from Transport (RE)

The Getabout website continues to raise awareness and provide information about the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for Aberdeen that began to be enforced from 1 June 2024. Studies commissioned by Nestrans and funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal (ACRD) to assess the economic and technical feasibility of Battery Electric HGVs in the North East are nearing completion. This work was complemented by funding through the Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicles Skills Challenge Fund, which was used to deliver a targeted engagement programme on shared charging infrastructure that aimed to build trust among logistic operators and lay the groundwork for future regional fleet transition planning.

Encouraging Behaviour Change (BC)

Travel planning support and active and sustainable travel continued to be promoted through the Getabout brand and website. The various campaigns undertaken throughout the year used a variety of social media, radio, billboard, bus shelter and digital adverts across the region. The 2025/26 People and Place Programme again provided a significant impetus towards supporting behaviour change through

encouraging more people to walk, wheel and cycle more often. Nestrans continued to offer a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and a Community Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme.

Nestrans took over the arranging and operation of the contract for the management and maintenance of the Travelknowhow Scotland website and recharged contributions from all other Regional Transport Partnerships. Specific workplace support activity within each region was also agreed as part of the contract and recharged, but was overseen separately by each RTP. Nestrans funded some bespoke travel planning support for organisations in the North East.

Nestrans also contributed towards sustainable transport for the Tall Ships event in Aberdeen in July 2025, with funding used towards an accessible shuttle bus, bus service subsidies, park and ride buses, cycle parking, stewarding and maps for the event.

Maintaining and Improving the Region's Transport Network (MI)

Nestrans is part of the client team for the A90/A952 junction improvements detailed design, which has been commissioned by Aberdeenshire Council and is being funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal. Nestrans funded the replacement of strategic Variable Message Signs within Aberdeen that had reached end of life and could no longer be repaired.

Facilitating the Movement of Freight (FR)

As noted under Reducing Emissions, the study commissioned by Nestrans using Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Appraisal funding into the technical and economical feasibility of the transition to Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) Heavy Goods Vehicles in the North East and associated infrastructure requirements is nearing completion. The feasibility study assesses the economic viability of transitioning heavy goods vehicle (HGV) fleets and operations in North East Scotland to battery electric vehicles (BEVs), and the associated infrastructure requirements up to 2030, assessing short term (1-3 years) and medium term (3-5 years) time horizons. This was disseminated to Freight Forum members at a meeting in March 20206 and complemented through further work funded using a Zero Emission HDV Skills Challenge Fund grant to engage with local hauliers to address critical knowledge gaps, change assumptions and build trust in collaborative charging models, thus laying the groundwork for future workforce development, upskilling and investment.

External Air and Sea Connections (AS)

Nestrans continued to liaise with Aberdeen International Airport, Port of Aberdeen, Peterhead Port Authority and Fraserburgh Harbour on strategic transport issues and any opportunities relating to the Aberdeen Energy Transition Zone and Peterhead Investment Zone.

Road Safety and Casualty Reduction (RS)

Nestrans continue to participate in the Road Safety North East Scotland partnership. In addition to funding the "Be Bright at Night" campaign, Nestrans contributed along with

local authorities to provide funding for Police Scotland to support additional policing resource for the winter road safety campaign. Nestrans also funded over £226,500 towards the development of a junction improvement at B999/Shielhill Road in Aberdeen and over £125,700 towards route action work on the A947 that involved the resurfacing of bends either side of the A920 to re-establish skid resistance.

Improving Accessibility in Rural Areas (RU)
Funding from Aberdeen City Region Deal was used to complete the work to scope urban and rural mobility hubs and community based mobility hubs and to further develop plans for a mobility hub and coach parking in Ballater. The People and Place programme also supported The Silver Circle in upper Donside and Bennachie Parish Church of Kemnay to provide transport to medical appointments and a weekly community bus that rotates around the larger population centres of Huntly, Alford, Aboyne and Ballater.

Improving Access to Health (HE)
Nestrans has continued to contribute along with NHS Grampian to the cost of the Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP) manager post to help achieve the objectives set out in the refreshed HTAP Plan. Nestrans also continues to contribute to the operation and promotion of the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC) service. Staff also collaborate with the national group led by Public Health Scotland to share best practice with transport, health and planning professionals.

The Affordability of Transport (AF)
The North East Bus Alliance continued to raise awareness of ticket types and payment methods available to ensure the most cost effective ticket is purchased. The People and Place programme has again supported access to bikes, bike maintenance and storage. This included the refurbishment of donated bicycles and those collected from household waste recycling centres. These refurbished bikes are then provided at a reduced cost to members of the public, or for free to those in need.

Nestrans funded consultancy support to prepare an Expression of Interest on behalf of the North East Bus Alliance to be the pilot area for maximum £2 bus fare cap scheme. Although this was unsuccessful, the feedback provided recognised the strength of the bid and partnership working that had taken place.

Improving Access to the Transport Network for All (AA)
Nestrans contributed along with Stagecoach and First Aberdeen towards marketing for the regional GrassHOPPER multi-operator ticket that enables travel by bus across different operators within the region and its new digital availability. Nestrans also continued to contribute along with other Regional Transport Partnerships to the management and marketing of the Thistle assistance website, cards and leaflets.

Planning and Designing Places for People (PP)
Nestrans officers continue to support Aberdeen City Council in various projects associated with the City Centre Masterplan. This included over £418,000 of funding towards the construction of the new streetscape for the Union Street central section and

the cycle and pedestrian routes within the new central pedestrian spine at the beachfront. The strategic regional Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) that Nestrans manages and maintains has been used to support the development of a number of studies being funded through the Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Appraisal allocation including Aberdeen Rapid Transit, Wellington Road junction improvements and the Battery Electric Vehicles HGV feasibility study.

Future Impact of New Technologies (NT)
Nestrans continues to work with Community Planning Partnerships, our constituent authorities, Transport Scotland, and Universities to enhance skills and opportunities in the transport sector.

Partnership Working

Partnership working is of key importance in achieving the vision of the RTS, as most projects require delivery by other organisations, particularly our partners Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. Nestrans continues to collaborate with those developing and delivering transport strategies and projects of importance to the North East to seek to influence and prioritise this work to enhance travel options within the region and improve connections to the rest of Scotland, the UK and beyond.

Nestrans is an active member of the Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists (SCOTS) and represented at the Executive Committee and Liaison Committee meetings. The Director continues to Chair the Transport Working Group, and through this is influencing national approaches through its linkages with CoSLA, and Transport Scotland. Nestrans provide secretariat for both the North East Bus Alliance and the Road Safety North East Scotland Partnership.

Nestrans provides Transport input to the Aberdeen City Region Deal by leading the City Region Deal Transport Working Group and managing the Strategic Transport Appraisal allocation. Nestrans continues to manage a number of transport related commissions that are funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Appraisal and in the past year this has included work on Battery Electric Vehicle freight charging requirements and hubs that has explored market status, risk and deliverability. The consultancy support to look at the potential for a network of mobility hubs and points and to assess how such a network could be implemented across both Aberdeen City and Shire, considering urban and rural contexts was completed. Consultants have also completed the Outline Business Case for a mobility hub at Ballater and progressed an assessment of potential coach parking sites. The Cumulative Transport Appraisal work to support development of Local Development Plans has progressed with a connectivity dashboard tool being developed that both Councils are using to assess the individual sites received through the Call for Sites/Ideas process. Consultants have been appointed to undertake a South Aberdeen Connectivity Study and this work will involve officers from Tactran and Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils. Access to Transport information from the strategic ASAM model continues to be provided to support a

number of feasibility and development studies. Nestrans has continued to work with both planning authorities on a cumulative impact assessment to assess the transport impacts of both emerging local development plans on the strategic transport network and to identify mitigation options.

Nestrans has also supported commissions led by both Councils that are being funded through the Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic Transport Appraisal allocation, namely:

Aberdeen Rapid Transit
A90/A952 Junction Improvements Detailed Design
A956 Wellington Road Junctions
External Transport Links to Aberdeen South Harbour

Nestrans has continued to contribute financially towards and be fully involved with both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships. Nestrans also engages in other groups/projects including the Regional Economic Partnership; the Climate Adaptation partnerships of both Councils, the Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland Forum and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Projects

In 2025/26, Nestrans provided funding towards the following projects:

Strategic Investment Programme

- Active Travel:
  Kennethmont to Ardmore shared use path – Detailed design and land acquisition discussions;
  Formartine & Buchan Way Bridges installation – Two timber bridge kit installed;
  Formartine & Buchan Way Access Point Improvements – Re-design and installation of access control points (supplemented with People & Place grant funding)
  Station Road to Formartine & Buchan Way, Newmachar – Contribution to new 300m footway link between Newmachar and the F&B Way
  Formartine & Buchan Way realignment north of Ellon – contribution to multi year realignment project that also has funding from Aberdeenshire Council and Walk Wheel Cycle Trust
  Deeside Way west of Aboyne upgrade – Upgrading a section to 2.5m width unbound surface;
  River Don core path upgrades – Completing works to asphalt sections of path prone to flooding and repair of steps;
  Pedestrian Crossings in Aberdeenshire – New crossings on Station Road (West), Mintlaw and Burghmuir Dr, Inverurie and completion of design and road safety review for Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead;
  Craigshaw cycle route – Completion of project close tasks and monitoring and evaluation.;
  Wellheads Drive cycle link – Ongoing land acquisition discussions;
  Regional Active Travel Network – Data handover by consultant and training sessions for Council staff
  A92 Murcar north active travel – Contribution to detailed design development;
  Marywell Cycle Route – Detailed design commenced and topographic survey;
  Wellington Road Junction Improvement Project – Contribution to DMRB stage 3 scheme assessment and Outline Business Case
  A96 Dyce Cycle Track – Detailed design and land acquisition discussions;
  Beach Cycle Infrastructure – New cycle lane separators purchased;
  Craibstone P&R to TECA – Ongoing feasibility study into quiet active travel route options;
  Cycle parking and maintenance stands in Aberdeen – Installation of maintenance stands (supplemented with People & Place grant funding).

- Bus Improvements
  High Spec Shelters at key strategic interchanges in Aberdeenshire – Design work and land investigations at New Pitsligo, Aboyne and Inchmarlo and works at Benholm;
  A92 Gourdon Bus Access – Access to northbound bus stop, including footpath construction, refuge island crossing point and installation of street lighting;
  South Aberdeen to Laurencekirk corridor study – Completion of Detailed Option Appraisal;
  Bus Shelter upgrades in Aberdeen – Eleven shelters upgraded.

- Park & Ride
  Ellon Park & Ride – Installation of bollards and CCTV upgrades;
  Kingswells Park – Resurfacing lower car park area and reset 10 gullies.

- Road Network
  VMS refurbishment – New Variable Message Signs installed at 8 locations to replace signs that had become obsolete.

- Road Safety
  A947 Bends either side of A920 – Application of high friction surfacing;
  B999/Shielhill junction improvement – Contribution to detailed design, land ownership and permission activities and preparation of contract documents.

- Affordability of Transport
  Tall Ships transport support – Contribution towards the accessible shuttle bus, bus service subsidies, park and ride buses, cycle parking, stewarding and maps.

- Places for People
  City Centre Masterplan Streetscape – Contribution to streetscape improvement works to widen pavements, form bus islands and create new cycle lanes on the central section of Union Street;
  City Centre Masterplan Beachfront Pedestrian Spine - Contribution to the cycle and pedestrian routes within the new central pedestrian spine at the Beachfront, including the junction alterations at the Links Road (west side) junction to tie into the new alignment

Co-ordination & Project Development Programme

- Active Travel Action Plan
  Active Travel Action Plan – Cycle infrastructure mapping and funding to Live Life Aberdeenshire for cycle maintenance.

- Bus Action Plan
  Contribution to region wide Real Time Passenger Information annual maintenance;
  Consultancy support to develop Expression of Interest for £2 fare cap pilot;
  Tablets for A2B buses;
  Contribution to Grasshopper marketing.

- Freight Action Plan
  Freight Forum Meeting

- Managing Demand
  Consultancy support to update car km reduction and decarbonisation study.

- Behaviour Change
  Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and Communities Sustainable Travel Grant;
  Getabout safe and sustainable travel promotion and travel planning support, including contribution to Travelknowhow Scotland;
  Thistle Assistance support.

- Road Safety
  Road Safety North East Scotland Partnership – Contribution to winter Policing campaign.

- Health & Transport Action Plan
  HTAP support manager post – (match funded by NHS Grampian);
  THInC – contribution to operating costs of Transport to Healthcare Information service.

Statement on Improving Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy

Nestrans staff continued to adopt a hybrid model of working from home where required, but with more office visits and with some staff mostly office based throughout 2025/26. The organisation continues to work collaboratively in seeking to deliver the aims within the Regional Transport Strategy to 2040. Every effort is also made to secure additional external funding where available to deliver transport benefits for the North East.

As a small strategic body the scope and opportunities to achieve continued year on year efficiency savings, whilst maintaining the capacity and capability to deliver the Partnership's various and increasing duties is limited. In 2024/25 all RTPs had a 5% reduction in Revenue Grant in Aid from Scottish Government. Funding in 2025/26 was retained at previous year's levels from both the Government and our constituent authorities.

Nestrans continues to seek and implement initiatives to assist in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the services delivered. A brief overview of the ongoing and new initiatives is given below.

Shared Services

Legal, Administrative, Financial, ICT and HR Services

The activities of Nestrans continue to be supported by partner Councils through the provision of specialist assistance and advice. These activities are governed by separate Service Level Agreements. The use of existing support staff is considered to be an efficient and economic use of an existing pool of specialist staff, the cost of which would be significantly higher if an external or dedicated in-house cadre of similarly qualified and experienced staff were to be used. Details of each support service are as follows:

Legal & Administrative Services

Legal Services etc are provided by Aberdeen City Council. Services include legal advice, contractual advice and provision of clerking for the Board and meetings. The cost of legal and contractual advice was £2,454 in 2025/26, whereas the administrative costs of clerking for the Board again remained at £20,000.

Treasurer

Financial support is provided by Aberdeenshire Council. Services provided include invoice and payment processing, financial ledger, regular financial monitoring reporting to the Board, internal audit, liaising with external audit, assistance with budget preparation and control, final accounts preparation and pension fund management, general accountancy advice and treasury management. The cost of this service was reviewed and due to the inclusion of Pay and Reward services increased to £30,367 in 2025/26.

HR Services
Human Resource services are provided by Aberdeenshire Council. This includes drafting and review of HR policies and procedures, monitoring any changes in legislation, support in dealing with staff matters (including recruitment, training and Health and Safety), offering advice on related matters and reporting to the Nestrans Board. The Pay and Reward service previously provided under HR moved to Finance and the cost of the HR services in 2025/26 therefore decreased to £14,150.

ICT Services
Aberdeen City Council provides and maintains quality Information and Communication Technology Services. The cost is based on the software, licensing and support costs per member of staff per annum. The leased devices were refreshed in 2023 and the total costs under the agreement for 2025/26 was £8,179, which was marginally less than the previous year due to less support request requirements.

Getabout Partnership
Nestrans is a key member of the Getabout Partnership that also consists of Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, NHS Grampian, University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University, North East Scotland College, the James Hutton Institute and the Energy Savings Trust. The joint working of the partnership continues to provide increased efficiency and effectiveness when promoting sustainable travel throughout the region via a single brand and through the Getabout website and social media accounts.

Road Safety North East Scotland Partnership
Nestrans is a member of the Road Safety North East Scotland Partnership along with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, NHS Grampian, North Safety Camera Unit, Road Safety Scotland, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Nestrans again funded the “Be Bright at Night” Winter Road Safety Campaign and partnered with the local authorities to provide funding for Police Scotland to support additional policing resource for the winter road safety campaign through to January 2026.

The Nestrans Transport Executive (Travel Planning) also prepared a report for Police Scotland on the Senior Driver Evaluation Pilot Scheme and the time for this was recharged to Police Scotland to claim through their grant for the pilot from Transport Scotland.

ASAM Regional Transport Model
The Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) is a multi-modal strategic model for the North East of Scotland. The 2019 base year model was commissioned by Nestrans and funded through Aberdeen City Region Deal. Transport Scotland has continued to provide administration support for requests to use the latest ASAM model via their Land Use and Transport Integrations in Scotland (LATIS) data service. A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed in 2025 between Nestrans and Transport Scotland for the future management and maintenance of the model.

In the past year, access to the model was agreed to assist with development of a number of studies being funded through the Aberdeen City Region Deal Strategic

Transport Appraisal allocation. This included progression of the Outline Business Case for Aberdeen Rapid Transit and the DMRB Stage 3 report for the Wellington Road Junction Improvements, both of which are being led by Aberdeen City Council. Data was also provided for the Battery Electric Vehicles HGV Feasibility Study commissioned by Nestrans.

Thistle Assistance Card
Nestrans again contributed along with other Regional Transport Partnerships to the cost of marketing, maintaining and updating the website and App for the Thistle Assistance cards that are used by people requiring assistance when using public transport. SEStran manage this scheme thus providing efficiency and effectiveness benefits nationally. As well as fixed costs for management and marketing support, there was a recharge for the 449 leaflets printed and posted out to the Nestrans area in 2025/26, which comprised of 319 individual requests and two bulk requests, one for 30 items and the other for 100 items.

National Travel Planning Resource for Employers in Scotland
Nestrans issued a tender on behalf of all RTPs for the provision of a National Travel Planning Resource for Employers in Scotland. This was awarded to Shona Drummond Marketing to manage and maintain the Travelknowhow Scotland website as a nationally available travel planning toolkit resource and to provide additional bespoke support for each RTP area. The cost per area was agreed with the other RTPs and Nestrans recharges the agreed contributions quarterly.

Cairngorms National Park Heritage Horizons
Cairngorms National Park Authority were awarded £12.5million as part of the National Lottery Heritage Horizons. Nestrans has continued to work with the National Park along with other partners and stakeholders, to develop the Cairngorms Strategic Sustainable Travel Plan for the Park and in particular to help develop and implement projects for the Deeside area. The Cairngorms National Park Authority have been involved with the Ballater mobility hub and coach parking study commissioned by Nestrans and provided a £15,000 grant towards this work, which was claimed in February 2026.

Aberdeenshire Council – Active Travel
Aberdeenshire Council used Nestrans budget as match funding for Active Travel Infrastructure Fund Tier 1 funding from the Scottish Government to maximise delivery. In 2025/26 this was done for the Station Road to Formartine & Buchan Way path in Newmachar and the Inverurie Burghmuir Drive pedestrian crossing projects.

Aberdeenshire Council - Public Transport
Nestrans again contributed towards the annual maintenance costs of the region wide real time system, along with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council and bus operators First Aberdeen and Stagecoach. Work also progressed on the GrassHOPPER ticket scheme, which allows travel on multi-operator bus services across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The scheme is administered by Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of the operators. The ticket became available to purchase digitally through the operators' own apps in 2025 and Nestrans supported a marketing campaign along with Stagecoach and First Aberdeen in early 2026 to promote the ticket and its new digital availability.

Aberdeenshire Council – Road Safety
Nestrans funded £125,744 to contribute to the application of high friction surfacing of 3 bends on A947 either side of A920, with the balance met from Aberdeenshire Council's Road Safety Investment Fund award.

Formartine & Buchan Way
Nestrans funded a further £122,277.33 in 2025/26, of which £45,737.24 was via the Scottish Government's People and Place grant, to remove unnecessary barriers that prevent people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, adapted bikes and buggies from accessing the path and installation of new accessible de-mountable bollards with the work undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council. A contribution of £110,000 was also made to enable more works to be progressed in 2025/26 on the realignment of the F&B Way north of Ellon that also received funding from Aberdeenshire Council and from Walk Wheel Cycle Trust.

Aberdeen City Council – various projects
Nestrans again contributed to City Centre Masterplan projects that are being led by the Council. A contribution of £217,000 was provided towards streetscape works on the central section of Union Street that also has funding via the UK Levelling Up fund. A contribution of £201,395 was made to the new pedestrian spine at the beachfront, which the Council are funding through their capital budget. Nestrans also contributed £226,525 towards the Shielhill junction improvement road safety scheme design and development for which Aberdeen City Council has allocated funding through their capital budget and are also using developer obligation funds. The Wellington Road Junction Improvement project design development is mainly being funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal and Developer Obligation funding, but Nestrans also contributed £62,450 to support further progress in 2025/26. Nestrans also contributed £80,000 to support active and sustainable transport for the Tall Ships Event in Aberdeen from 19-22 July 2026, with the Council funding £110,000.

Attracted Funding and Cost Savings

Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme
Nestrans provides a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme, which can provide up to 50% match funding to organisations investing in measures to promote more sustainable travel by their employees or customers. In 2025/26, a grant to Portsoy Community Enterprise of £1,947 enabled a second E-bike with helmet, lock and panier to be purchased. Both will be available for hire to visitors to Portsoy Links Caravan Park and local residents in Portsoy.

A grant of £4,843 was provided as match funding to Aberdeen Cyrenians to purchase a fleet of seven e-bikes and accessories along with cycle training for seven members of staff to enable them to use the bikes to travel sustainably for their work in the community.

A grant of £4,000 was also given to Ballater Community Enterprise towards the cost of accessible paths, landscaping and a hardstanding area for a bike hub that is being part funded by Cairngorms National Park Authority. The bike hub provides secure

storage for adaptive bikes used for guided rides in collaboration with Sport Aberdeen and Able to Adventure and for up to 20 standard bikes to meet rising visitor demands.

A further grant of £1,036 was provided as match funding to Mearns Community Council to arrange a condition assessment of the Shakin Brig in Edzell.

Aberdeen City Region Deal – Strategic Transport Appraisal (ACRD-STA)

Funding was provided through the Strategic Transport Appraisal element of the Aberdeen City Region Deal for the following studies commissioned by Nestrans:

NE Mobility Hubs
The scoping project to identify how urban, rural and community based mobility hubs could operate across the region was completed. The cost for this work in 2025/26 that was recharged amounted to £24,207.

Ballater Mobility Hub
Concept designs and consulted upon and the Outline Business Case completed. An assessment of potential coach parking sites was also undertaken and the cost recharged amounted to £137,863. As noted above, a further £15,000 grant funding was provided by Cairngorms National Park Authority for this work.

Toll of Birness Case for Investment
A summary note setting out the case for improvements at the Toll of Birness junction was prepared based on the outcomes of previous Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance work, to highlight the preferred option for improvement and the associated benefits and costs. The cost for this work in 2025/26 amounted to £2,060.

NE Local Development Plan Transport Appraisal
A connectivity dashboard has been developed for Councils to use to assess the individual sites received through the Call for Sites/Ideas process. The cost recharged in 2025/26 amounted to £53,624

South Aberdeen Connectivity Study
The tender brief was prepared and agreed with Tactran, Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils. Following the appointment of consultants, the inception stage has been completed and the overall scope, objectives and programme agreed. The cost recharged in 2025/26 amounted to £12,493.

HGV Battery Electric Vehicles
This study commissioned by Nestrans looked into the economic and technical feasibility of transitioning the HGV fleet in the North East to Battery Electric HGVs and the cost recharged in 2025/26 amounted to £61,054.

Aberdeen Rapid Transit
The consultancy work was originally commissioned by Nestrans, but has been led by Aberdeen City Council since the establishment of a Bus Partnership Fund Programme Manager post in 2024. Following the pausing of the Bus Partnership Fund, work on ART has been funded through Aberdeen City Region Deal. Nestrans recharged £14,521 in 2025/26, but Aberdeen City Council then led on procurement of

consultancy support to progress the Outline Business Case following completion of the Strategic Business Case .

Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicle Skills Challenge Fund
Nestrans successfully bid for funding through this one year funding initiative by Transport Scotland to support the development of workforce skills essential for the transition to zero-emission HDVs. The fund aims to address key challenges in the sector, including the need for accessible training pathways, improved workforce diversity, and increased private sector investment in skills development.

An offer of grant of £32,500 was received and was used to deliver a targeted engagement programme on shared charging infrastructure that aimed to build trust among logistics operators and lay the essential groundwork for future skills development, collaborative investment and regional fleet transition planning. This work built on the outcomes of the above feasibility study into the economic and technical feasibility of transitioning the HGV fleet in the North East to Battery Electric HGVs that was funded via Aberdeen City Region Deal.

People and Place Programme
The Scottish Government again allocated funding to Regional Transport Partnerships to develop and deliver a People and Place Programme. The purpose was extended in this second year from purely supporting active travel behaviour change to also include sustainable travel. The total funding allocation to Nestrans of £2,163,497 and a later additional grant offer of £63,412.50 were used in full to deliver 31 projects in partnership with 20 different delivery partners comprising national and local organisations, local authorities and community based organisations. The projects expanded opportunities for active and sustainable travel, improved inclusion and accessibility and strengthened the local skills and capacity needed to support lasting behaviour change. Further details on each project can be viewed on the Nestrans website in the 2025/26 Project Portfolio and within the 2025/26 Evaluation Report.

Health and Transport Action Plan
Nestrans continued to fund 50% of the costs of a support manager for the Health and Transport Programme in partnership with NHS Grampian in 2025/26. Nestrans has also continued to contribute along with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Aberdeen City Health & Social Care partnership and NHS Grampian to deliver the Transport to Healthcare Information Centre (THInC). The public transport unit within Aberdeenshire Council operates this dedicated telephone service to provide information on transport options for access to all NHS Grampian sites.

Procurement Activity

Framework Usage

Although there is no guarantee of work being awarded, any use of a framework significantly reduces the cost of procurement of services to Nestrans and the consultants.

Scotland Excel Engineering and Technical Consultancy Services Framework Agreement (0820)

Although this agreement ended in March 2025, Nestrans had previously issued some tender briefs in January and February. The submissions were assessed on agreed quality/price scales and the following projects awarded that have been progressed this year under the terms of the framework:

- Cumulative Transport Appraisal of NE Local Development Plans
- Ballater Mobility Hub – Design and Outline Business Case

Due to the Engineering and Technical Consultancy Services Framework Agreement (0820) that ended in March 2025 being the only one accessed by Nestrans, approval was requested and granted to freeze our Scotland Excel Associate Membership costs. Nestrans staff assisted with the evaluation of lot 2 of the Transportation and Traffic Engineering and Technical related consultancy services for the new framework that is expected to go live in May 2026, with Nestrans Associate Membership costs to resume thereafter.

Other Frameworks

The Nestrans Board approved use of the SCAPE Scotland and Crown Commercial Service framework should it be required to appoint consultants for services that cannot be undertaken in-house or by neighbouring authorities, either due to a skill shortage, the specialist nature of the work, or due to other workload commitments.

In 2025/26, Nestrans made a direct award through the SCAPE Scotland framework for the South Aberdeen Connectivity Study.

Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) portal

Nestrans also makes use of the PCS portal in addition to available frameworks to maximise best value. Tenders were invited via the portal without use of a framework in 2025/26 for the following:

- Zero Emission Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDVs) Skills Challenge Fund
- National Travel Planning Resource

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NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP – 11 November 2026

4.4 - Regional Bus Policy Update

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides an update of recent bus policy developments.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

a) Note and welcome the announcement by the Scottish Government of the roll out of £2 Bus Fare Cap to the Nestrans area from April 2027;
b) Note plans for early engagement with Transport Scotland and other RTPs who have had the experience of launching the £2 Bus Fare Cap initiative;
c) Note the announcement regarding the Scottish Government's intention, through franchising and regulation, to bring the bus network back into public control by the end the current Scottish Parliament in 2031;
d) Approve a position of continuing to develop a Bus Services Improvement Partnership in order to secure meaningful partnership benefits to our bus network, with our bus operators, prior to any new bus delivery arrangements potentially coming into place.
e) Note the offer of funding from Transport Scotland to undertake a scoping study to consider the costs, benefits, risks and pathway to potential franchising arrangements in the north east;
f) Subject to confirmation of Transport Scotland funding, authorise the Nestrans Director to procure and appoint suitably qualified consultants to prepare a Scoping Study considering Franchising and Public Control of the Region's Bus Network, in accordance with Nestrans' procurement procedures and within an anticipated budget allocation range of £50,000 to £100,000.

3. Background

3.1 As highlighted at the September Board Meeting (Item 4.2) Bus policy and associated interventions have emerged as a key area of priority for the new Scottish Government. There has already been debate in the Scottish Parliament on measures to improve buses, and it has been refreshing to see informed cross-party discussion on not only the affordability of bus fares, but also the availability and suitability of bus routes, and bus service performance, particularly in suburban, accessible rural, and remote rural areas.

4. Roll out of £2 Bus Fare Cap to the Nestrans Area

4.1 The Scottish Government wishes to deliver lower public transport fares in order to reduce essential household costs as part of the priority to eradicate child poverty. Part of this is the national rollout of a £2 bus fare cap which is hoped to be implemented Scotland-wide by the end of the current Scottish Parliament. Progress to date has seen the introduction of a scheme in the Hitrans and ZetTrans regions with roll out across the SPT region commencing on 7th September.

4.2 Members will be aware of the announcement made by the First Minister on 17th October that Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland will be the next part of the country to be included in the plans for the national roll out. The plan is for the £2 Fare Cap to be in place from April 2027.

4.3 Officers from Nestrans have initiated early conversations with Transport Scotland officers, with a preliminary meeting being arranged for the afternoon of 10th November with Nestrans and relevant Local Authority colleagues. We have also made contact with RTP colleagues from Hitrans, to learn from their experience of assisting Transport Scotland launch the Fares Cap programme.

4.4 It is the intention to arrange a Members' Briefing (across Nestrans and the two Local Authorities) when there are firmer details available for sharing, and we will look to include in that the experience from other parts of the country.

5. Announcement of Public Control of Buses

5.1 Members will also be aware of the additional announcement made by the First Minister on 17th October that by the end of the current Scottish Parliament (2031), through franchising and regulation, that the bus network will be brought back into public control.

5.2 Some additional information has since been made available in a letter from the Cabinet Secretary to the Scottish Parliament's Transport Committee dated 17th October 2026. This letter confirmed *"we are looking to make progress in supporting franchising and bringing control of the bus network in Scotland into public hands. This will build on the existing regulatory structures for bus services to specify minimum adequate service levels across the country by the end of this parliament."*

5.3 Follow up conversations with Transport Scotland officials have indicated that the Government has a current preference for franchising, although that they are aware that this is not necessarily the answer for every part of the country. The conversations have also indicated that they are currently looking at a regional approach, rather than a national approach, and that regulation reform to support this is also intended.

5.4 Officers identify that there would be considerable work to assess and appraise possible options regarding public control of buses. Considerable effort would then also be required to develop and implement a franchising framework if this were seen to be a preferred way forward, with a number of uncertainties and risks to progression inherent in this work. Any work would also have to take into account the emerging discussions on Public Sector Reform, and the financial implications which would rest with the procuring authoirity/ies. Meantime, consultation on, and amendments to legislation, may also have to be delivered through the Scottish Parliament.

5.5 Given the work to date on a Bus Services Improvement Partnership (BSIP), officers are minded to continue to progress this option meantime, to ensure that early benefits for the north east bus network can be delivered through a partnership approach with bus operators in the interim.

6. Transport Scotland Bus Franchising Fund

6.1 In the 2025/26 Scottish Budget published in March 2026, it was stated that the Scottish Government *"will invest £4 million in 2026-27 to support Local Transport Authorities to build business cases for local bus improvements through franchising, using powers created in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019."* Up until very recently, no further information had been made available in relation to this fund, albeit officers had made several enquires across the year including its applicability to those areas exploring BSIPs.

6.2 This commitment has been more recently augmented within the SNP's regional manifestos for different areas of Scotland (including that published for the North East of Scotland), which noted *"we will carry out a rural bus service review to explore further opportunities for franchising with a focus on Scotland's rural communities. This builds on existing work to support Local Transport Authorities to build business cases for local bus improvements through franchising, backed by £4 million investment in 2026-27".*

6.3 In early October, officers at Nestrans were approached by Transport Scotland officials in terms of early exploratory discussions as to the area's interest in pulling down funding from this budgetary allocation. Following the First Minister's announcement regarding public control of the bus network, the context of work of the North East Bus Alliance, and the business case for Aberdeen Rapid Transit, it is considered prudent to take the opportunity of using this funding to further understand the potential costs, benefits, risks and possible implementation pathways and timelines, including urban and rural aspects specific to the North East Scotland. This is notwithstanding our commitment to pursue BSIP in the interim.

6.4 Accordingly, it is proposed that officers work up a brief for a scoping study for a competitive tender, with the assumption of incurring expenditure between January and March 2027. This would also allow for options for further stages of work next Financial Year if national funding were to be made available, and if there were deemed to be a case to continue considering these options. Any work would be framed around scoping up alternative models appropriate to the North East, and then assessing relatively high level impacts, and implementation pathways.

6.5 The work would be managed by a group of officers across Nestrans and the two local authorities, and procured via the Scotland Excel Framework. As the budget may sit in the range of £50,000 and £100,000, approval is sought from the Board to allow the Director to award a contract for this work to suitably qualified transport consultants, subject to a compliant tendering exercise, and funding being made available from Transport Scotland to support this work.

Report Prepared by Paul Finch and Adam Kench
02 November 2026

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5.1 People and Place Programme 2026-27 Update

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Board the up-to-date position on the 2026/27 People and Place Programme, setting out highlights from Q2 alongside identified risks. This report also sets out plans for the 2027/28 Nestrans People & Place programme for approval.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the progress made during the second quarter of this year's People and Place Programme.
2. Note key outcomes from the in-person People and Place event held in Aberdeen in October; and
3. Approve the plan for developing and agreeing the 2027/28 People and Place Programme and the publication of application materials during the week commencing Monday 16th November 2026.

3. 2026-27 Programme Overview and Quarter 2 Highlights

3.1 Nestrans' People and Place Programme, funded by an initial grant of £1,729,261 from Transport Scotland for the financial year 2026/27, aims to increase everyday active and sustainable travel across the region. The programme supports a wide range of projects delivered by local authorities, third sector organisations, and community groups, with a focus on walking, wheeling, cycling, and community/shared transport.

3.2 The People and Place Programme pages on the Nestrans website have been updated and now contain the relevant information on all the supported projects, including an interactive map of "Projects near you".

3.3 This reporting period covers Q2 (July–September 2026), with progress measured against financial management, outcome delivery, and risk management. Progress is monitored through detailed quarterly narrative and financial reports along with project outcome metrics in line with recently introduced monitoring and evaluation requirements from Transport Scotland.

3.4 Selected partner updates for Q2 are provided as follows.

Aberdeenshire Council

- Delivered Tots-in-Tow event in Inverurie which brought together 8 organisations offering various cycling support aimed at families, engaging 737 individuals.

THInC in the City – Buchan Dial-a-Community Bus

- Delivered 1,234 passenger journeys, supporting 123 unique patients.

Cycling UK

- New Aberdeenshire Schools Development Officer working with Ellon cluster – delivered 24 cycling sessions supporting 290 individuals.
- The Aberdeenshire Bothy delivered 95 cycle sessions, 7 walking and wheeling activities supporting 471 people.
- New Aberdeen Development Officer delivered 43 cycling activities and 1 walking activity, reaching 218 people.

The Bikery – Gordon Rural Action

- Ran 12 sessions of kids bike maintenance classes in the summer holidays, and had 34 participants, with each one gifted a multi-tool to maintain their bikes.
- New website launched for The Bikery.
- Serviced and repaired 115 bikes in the workshop to help people keep cycling.
- Sold 43 bikes back into the local communities and gave 6 away for free.

Huntly Development Trust

- Trained one new Health Walk Leader and continued to run weekly health walks.

Rock up and Ride – Scottish Cycling

- Sport Aberdeen ran 52 cycling sessions with 306 participation attendances (143 individuals), with a particular focus on BMX sessions over summer.
- Ythan Cycle Club - 235 attendances at inclusive cycling sessions at Ellon Wheel Park.

Sport Aberdeen

- Adventure Aberdeen supported 15 schools and 117 pupils through Learn to Ride and Bikeability level 1.
- Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies supported delivery of 42 sessions, totalling 434 visits, engaging 121 distinct participants and held an event to celebrate the launch of the new core path connecting the Aberdeen Cycle Hub to the beach.

Recycled Bikes for All - Stella's Voice

- 314 bikes refurbished - 71 bikes donated to schools, 199 donated to asylum seekers and migrants and 44 donated to charities and social work.
- Launched Bikes for Christmas campaign.

Move it! – Tyred n Cranky

- Opened a new shop on George St which is a base for servicing, refurbishing and rehoming bikes, and also acts as a local travel hub for info and advice.
- 62 bikes serviced and repaired; 15 bikes refurbished.

3.5 To celebrate and showcase the achievements of our partners in the current programme, an event was held at Pittodrie Stadium in Aberdeen on 6th October. The day featured updates from Transport Scotland and programme partners, including THInC in the City from Buchan Dial-A-Community Bus. A visit to the Aberdeen Cycle Hub provided an opportunity for a tour of the facilities that support delivery of Cycling UK's Connected Communities Aberdeen project, Sport Aberdeen's Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies (GICB) and Scottish Cycling's Rock up and Ride programme with Sport Aberdeen. GICB were on site offering a chance to try adapted cycles. The afternoon brought lively discussions on sustainability, efficiency and strengthening partnerships as we look ahead to the next year of delivery. 100% of attendees remaining at the end of the day, rated the event as great or excellent, with many providing helpful suggestions for next year and ideas for staying better connected across the year.

4. Issues/ Risks

4.1 The biggest challenge many partners face is around capacity. Extended periods of unplanned staff absence has impacted several organisations this quarter, impacting delivery. Having a strong volunteer team can be helpful in these situations as well as ensuring other staff have the relevant training to fill roles and responsibilities where possible. Two of our delivery partners have had new staff members join this Financial Year. This has impacted delivery as new staff have to learn the job, build connections and complete training, although new staff also bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm. Another delivery partner has been unable to recruit into a vacant post, and believe that the year by year short-term contract that is being offered is not appealing to potential applicants. They are now exploring options to rely on financial reserves in order to be able to advertise a longer-term post.

4.2 Sport Aberdeen have highlighted that football clubs may wish to resume their use of changing facilities at Aulton Pavilion. Sport Aberdeen repurposed the space since it was no longer in use by football clubs, and it is now branded the Aberdeen Cycle Hub hosting three People and Place funded projects alongside the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. Whilst the space will remain as the Aberdeen Cycle Hub due to its success and importance in the community, some space may be required to be reallocated back for use by football clubs, which poses a challenge regarding storage. Nestrans are now in discussion with Transport Scotland and Sport Aberdeen around securing funding to provide external storage facilities to support with space at the cycle hub.

4.3 Rising fuel and electricity costs are presenting a challenge for our partners particularly those providing community transport. Additional revenue has been allocated from Transport Scotland for this financial year which can be put to this purpose. In the long-term this may present an ongoing challenge, impacting the extent of service that is possible within budget limits.

5. Next steps/ Looking forward

5.1 Transport Scotland officers have confirmed that they will prioritise strengthening and stabilising all the work that has taken place across Scotland leading into year 4 of the programme. They are looking to build on the "community of practice" through sharing knowledge, learnings and expertise, examining successes and identifying areas of improvement. They are looking at ways to standardise approaches where possible, as has been done this year with the introduction of a consistent monitoring and evaluation approach across RTPs and delivery partners. Going into year 4, Transport Scotland have confirmed that they are currently anticipating a budget that is likely to be similar to this year, and have advised RTPs to use this for their planning purposes.

5.2 Planning for year 4 of the P&P programme, Nestrans will continue to build on the success from previous years, recognising the value of maintaining strong relationships with delivery partners. Nestrans will continue to work closely with local authority partners to ensure that P&P and Local Authority Direct Award allocations provide a complete package of interventions meeting the needs of communities across the region.

5.3 It is anticipated that themes and activity areas will remain the same as this year. This year Transport Scotland introduced 2 new themes: Communities and Sustainable Travel. This totals 6 themes: Schools & Young People; Accessibility & Inclusion; Workplaces; Communities; Capability & Capacity; Sustainable Travel. Our intention is to continue working with project partners to deliver a programme that covers all activity areas, ensuring that our offer is inclusive, accessible and tailored to the wants and needs of local communities.

5.4 The intention is to publish the Programme Plan for 2027/28 on the Nestrans website, together with the application form and guidance during the week commencing Monday 16th November 2026. This would allow a deadline for applications of Monday 14th December 2026. Following a review of organisational suitability (to meet the terms of Scottish Government funding), all applications that merit further consideration will be circulated as early as practicable to a Working Group comprising officers from Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, and Aberdeenshire Council, for initial assessment.

5.5 The updated application guidance will include wording to highlight that the core funding scenario to be used will be as per the current grant award for 2026/27. Applicants will be made aware of the risk of changes in allocations following conclusion of the Scottish Government budget process in Spring next year.

5.6 To allow for consistent appraisal, a comprehensive assessment framework has been developed. Following the Working Group's scrutiny, a Decision Panel will convene to formalise recommended support or otherwise towards each of the respective projects. The Decision Panel will be comprised of the Nestrans' Director, together with senior representatives from both Councils.

5.7 Nestrans' People and Place Programme is delivering strong progress towards its aims against each of the themes, with relationships continuing to strengthen between partners and new collaborations developing. Key risks are being managed, though ongoing

funding and staff capacity remain challenges. Efforts in the next quarter will focus on gathering accurate projected spend profiles and identifying opportunities for best use of additional spend. Nestrans will continue supporting partners with reporting requirements to ensure that we capture the impact of the programme.

Report prepared by
Katrina Schofield, People and Place Officer
26 October 2026

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5.3 Transport to Employment

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report updates the Board on progress and planned delivery for the Nestrans' Transport to Employment 2026/27 programme.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

a) Note the progress detailed within this report;
b) Approve the publication of the Evidence Base and Delivery Report on the Nestran's website;
c) Note the programmed reduction in funding, and endorse the revised programme (Appendix B) that projects an estimated spend of £500,000 this financial year;
d) Note the intention to deliver a ticketing initiative pilot within the region with this envisaged to take place during Q4, with the launch of the £2 fare cap in the region to take place from April 2027.

3. Overview of Q2 Activities

3.1 Over the course of Q2 (July, August & September) a number of programme workstreams have progressed as detailed below.

3.2 Two Demand Responsive Transport service extension have launched, one in Central Buchan, and a second linking Cornhill and Aberchirder. In combination, these are increasing access to employment and training opportunities for these communities. Since August, funding has enabled an additional early morning service to be introduced to the existing Central Buchan A2B service. This additional availability is already having a positive impact so far with figures from end of September, showing the additional capacity had carried 148 passengers, covering 1,648 miles. In addition, a grant award has been provided to Banffshire Partnership, allowing them to provide a twice-daily route as an extension to an existing service. This has seen the service coverage expand, benefiting the village of Cornhill and town of Aberchirder. This helps these residents access the main employment and training locations in Banff and Macduff.

3.3 Nestrans through liaison with People & Place partners has looked to explore the opportunity to provide targeted cycle training, maintenance support and distribution of recycled bikes across the region as part of the programme. Nestrans has awarded Tyred n Cranky a grant award to lead on this work across the region. This will see delivery in Aberdeen, utilising their new shop premises in the city centre, as well as delivery across Aberdeenshire in priority areas including Peterhead and Huntly.

3.4 At the start of October, an Invitation to Tender was issued on Public Contracts Scotland to procure supplier support to utilise and promote the existing region's sustainable travel brand, GetAbout through a targeted transport to employment approach. This procedure closed on 30 October 2026. The aspiration is that a supplier is to be appointed following an evaluation process by 13 November 2026 with work commencing from 16 November 2026.

4. Transport to Employment – Rapid Review

4.1 Q2 also saw the completion of the rapid review of evidence conducted by transport consultants Stantec. This report establishes and collates a robust evidence base which has enabled the identification of viable T2E transport interventions, helping the region to deliver on the intended outcomes of the fund. An Executive Summary of the report has been provided as **Appendix A**. A summary of some of the key findings and options identified with the greatest suitability to be delivered during this financial year has been detailed below. The draft Evidence Base and Delivery Report has been made available in the Members' Area of the Nestrans' website. Subject to Board approval, it will be published on publicly available pages of the website.

4.2 The work has included detailed analysis on child poverty, income deprivation and employment deprivation. In Aberdeen, the research showed that this is concentrated in Northfield, Tillydrone, Torry and Aberdeen Harbour, whilst in Aberdeenshire it is principally concentrated in Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Banff and Huntly. These areas also have higher proportions of lone-parent households, which are recognised as being at greater risk of poverty. As a result, these communities are likely to be most exposed to transport-related barriers to employment, training and essential services.

4.3 Furthermore, economic inactivity linked to caring responsibilities was reviewed, with areas likely to be most vulnerable to parents and carers facing potential barriers to entering employment identified. Analysis showed that across the region, highest concentration in Aberdeen City was within Northfield and Tillydrone, whilst for Aberdeenshire it was concentrated across five data zones, with the majority located in north Aberdeenshire. Many of the region's key employment locations are concentrated in Aberdeen and north Aberdeenshire and are linked to sectors requiring technical skills or specialist training, reinforcing the importance of accessible transport connections to both employment and education opportunities.

4.4 The following interventions were identified as having the greatest deliverability potential this financial year. A brief description has been provided under the interventions of how officers intend to take each forward.

Journey Planning and Travel Training Programme

It is envisaged that this will form one of the key components of the GetAbout promotion project through the workplace engagement that it is due to take place.

Evidence and Opportunity Review

Officers will look to maintain and enhance the Power BI dashboard as the programme's targeting tool, with potential additions covering childcare accessibility, travel patterns

and Workforce Mobility trip generators to explored. Further detail on this is provided at 5.4.

Travel Cost Support
It is recognised and evidenced in the report that cost is a significant barrier to accessing employment and training opportunities. Detailed plans in relation to this intervention is provided under item 6.

Marketing and Engagement
The focus of the GetAbout commission is to utilise the travel brand in order to improve engagement resources in relation to transport to employment. This will range from web-based resources to radio adverts.

Monitoring and Evaluation
It is recognised the importance of showing positive outcomes from delivery of the programme. Work is ongoing to consider how to utilise data from delivery partners and show how interventions have delivered against the intended outcomes of the funding.

4.5 The Evidence Base and Delivery Report is supported by a Microsoft Power BI data model. The development of this model has proved to be a valuable asset that the programme has funded as it helps to layer the key data metrics into a map based format, making it easier to identify priority areas for interventions. This model not only holds a strong legacy value beyond this financial year, it also has already generated real interest from local partners, with community planning colleagues in particular, already seeing how such a resource could have benefit for their work. Officers wish to expand this resource as part of the programme, and this is detailed under 5.4.

5. Programme Update & Q3 Developments

5.1 Officers have maintained a close partnership approach to the progression of the T2E programme with our local authority colleagues. This has confirmed an unwillingness to invest in additional temporary bus service enhancements without the guarantee of future year funding – for those looking for jobs or training, withdrawing the service beyond March 2027 would be a significant reputational risk for Nestrans and the two Councils. When combined with the emerging outcomes from the Rapid Review of evidence and potential funding opportunities, this revealed significant risk of underspend within our previously planned programme of expenditure for the programme.

5.2 On 01 October 2026, Nestrans officers discussed this with our Transport Scotland Grant Manager to inform them of projected under spend within the programme.

5.3 Following this meeting, officers finalised a revised programme **(Appendix B)** and this is presented at this meeting for Members' endorsement. This programme sets out our plan to spend £500,000 this financial year, resulting in £485,809 of the grant offered to Nestrans not being taken up. The revised programme has been agreed by Transport Scotland (05 October 2026) and officers believe that this revised programme sustains strong delivery within the north east of Scotland to the expected outcomes of the fund. Developments this financial year also helping to inform and maximise delivery opportunities should funding be made available in future financial years. Officers are

working at pace to deliver on this revised programme and expected Q3 developments have been detailed below.

5.4 As stated above, procurement is taking place to obtain supplier support to utilise and promote GetAbout activities with a targeted focus on transport to employment. It is envisaged that during the remainder of this calendar year targeted focus groups will be conducted with this helping to inform the development of resources. This will then provide the springboard to engage directly with employers and employees within the region in the new calendar year utilising the resources that have been generated.

5.5 The Microsoft Power BI data model is to be enhanced, adding additional data to bolster the quality of this resource. Officers intend on working with Stantec on the opportunity to expand the work to date, incorporating accessibility and travel pattern data relating to early-years and childcare facilities, alongside relevant Workforce Mobility trip-generator data.

5.6 As stated above, our delivery partner Tyred n Cranky have been awarded funding to work with Nestrans to deliver within this programme, focusing on cycling training, maintenance and distribution of recycled bikes. Since award, Tyred n Cranky have built a relationship with the Mamacita Foundation in Aberdeen. This is helping in the targeting of individuals who would most directly benefit from such support. They are organising targeted training sessions that help increase users cycling confidence. The funding is also helping to refurbish donated bikes which are then distributed. Beneficiaries will receive a bike that is sized for them has been fully checked and refurbished. They will also receive a helmet, a lock, and a set of rechargeable lights and will be invited to attend a short workshop on looking after their bike by qualified mechanics, and given a bottle of chain oil and a cloth. Upskilling people to cycle and maintain their own bikes supports access to employment and training options.

5.7 Officers are keen to explore opportunities with NESCol around supporting students in access to training as a pathway to employment. A meeting is to take place at the NESCol Aberdeen City Campus to look to understand this opportunity further. Officers are also exploring the opportunity to procure additional support in order to expand the scope of targeted engagement regarding supporting bus use.

6. Ticketing Initiative in North East Scotland

6.1 One of the intended outcomes of the T2E funding is to improve the affordability of transport, creating enhanced access to employment and/or training. Following initial discussions with bus operators, local authority officers and Transport Scotland, Officers are now seeking to deliver a pilot bus ticketing initiative pilot during Q4 of 2026/27 financial year.

6.2 This would see discounted ticketing offered in targeted communities to improve the affordability of bus transport, increasing access to employment and training opportunities. The identification of the targeted communities is to be driven by the data model tool and through engagement with local authority officers and LEP colleagues. This is envisaged to be facilitated through the GrassHOPPER multi-operator ticket allowing for wide coverage of usability across the region’s bus operators.

6.3 It is noted that this proposal was developed prior to the announcement on 17 October 2026 that the £2 bus fare cap would be expanded into the north east Scotland region in April 2027. The proposed initiative provides a targeted opportunity for a limited period, which also has a clear successor pathway, allow individuals to commit to longer-term opportunities regarding employability or training without the concern that affordability will return as a barrier to access once the Transport to Employment funded pilot ends.

6.4 Officers however are now mindful of the resource implications for this proposal and the upcoming roll out of the £2 fare cap, and this presents a risk that resources across the partners will be stretched. Whilst officers currently believe that the opportunity should be progressed as it can provide lessons learned and early evidence prior to the wider £2 fare cap rollout, discussions with our partners over the next weeks will determine the implementation pathway for this proposal.

Report Prepared by
Adam Kench, Transport Officer
02 November 2026

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Nestrans Transport to Employment

Executive Summary - Evidence Base and Delivery Report

Date:
30 October 2026

Prepared for:
Nestrans

Prepared by:
Shannon Sweeney

Project/File:
330910248

Stantec

Revision Record

Revision	Description	Author	Date	Quality Check	Date	Independent Review	Date
1.0	Draft for comment	Shannon Sweeney	30/10/26	Scott Leitham	30/10/26		

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Prepared by: Shannon Sweeney
Signature

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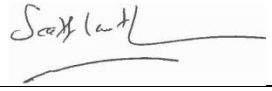
Reviewed by: Scott Leitham
Signature



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Approved by: Scott Leitham
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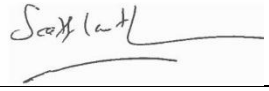

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Purpose of the Programme

The Transport to Employment (T2E) Programme aims to reduce transport barriers that prevent parents and carers from accessing, sustaining or progressing in employment, training and education. Nestrans has received £985,809 of revenue funding for 2026/27 to identify and deliver practical interventions across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire that improve transport availability, affordability and accessibility, while supporting increased household income and the reduction of child poverty.

1.2 Study Approach

The study combines five linked strands of work to establish where transport disadvantage is greatest and identify measures that can be delivered within the current funding period:

- Review of national, regional and local policy and experience from other Regional Transport Partnerships.
- Socio-economic and transport baseline analysis, including child poverty, deprivation, car ownership, employment locations, public transport provision and travel costs
- A Power BI connectivity dashboard combining socio-economic indicators with 'Hansen' measures of public transport access to employment
- Engagement with councils, Local Employability Partnerships, transport officers, employability providers and other stakeholders
- Development and appraisal of a long list of interventions against the programme aims and deliverability by the end of March 2027.

1.3 Headline Findings

Transport barriers are multi-dimensional

The principal barriers are not limited to whether a service exists. Availability, operating hours, frequency, journey time, reliability, affordability, personal accessibility, information and confidence all affect whether employment, training and childcare journeys are practical. These issues are intensified where trips must be linked around childcare or non-standard working hours.

The evidence identifies a clear urban-rural divide. Aberdeen City and the main A90/A96 corridors generally benefit from stronger bus and rail provision and access to cycle hire. By comparison, many rural communities in Aberdeenshire face lower service frequencies, limited rail access, longer public transport journeys and higher fares. Bus journeys from Fraserburgh, Huntly and Macduff to Aberdeen are around 35 to 40 minutes longer than equivalent car journeys.

Across the region, the people most exposed to these barriers include low-income households, lone-parent families, households without access to a car, parents managing childcare, people working early, late or weekend shifts, and residents seeking work or training at peripheral or rural locations.

1.4 Where need and poor connectivity coincide

As part of the study, a Power BI dashboard was developed to bring together socio-economic indicators and public transport connectivity data at data zone level. The dashboard uses Hansen accessibility measures to assess access to employment by scheduled bus services and allows different working patterns and weightings of socio-economic need and connectivity to be explored. This provides an interactive evidence base for identifying locations where transport disadvantage and socio-economic need coincide and for targeting potential interventions. The socio-economic analysis identifies concentrated need in both the City and Aberdeenshire. In Aberdeen City, priority communities include Northfield, Tillydrone, Torry, Woodside and Heathryfold/Middlefield. In Aberdeenshire, priority communities include Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Banff, Macduff, Huntly and parts of Buchan. These locations show concentrations of income and employment deprivation, children in low-income families, lone-parent households and low car ownership.

1.5 Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement broadly confirmed the analytical findings. Key issues raised were rural service availability, early-morning and evening gaps, Sunday provision, reliability and cancellations, long journey times, fare affordability, limited awareness of ticketing and support, difficulties travelling with wheelchairs or prams, and poor alignment between services, childcare and shift patterns. Stakeholders also emphasised two delivery constraints: **avoiding duplication of person-centred support already provided by the Local Employability Partnerships and avoiding the provision of services that people may rely on but which cannot be sustained after March 2027.**

1.6 Recommended 2026/27 delivery package

The report identifies six linked quick-win workstreams that can be progressed within the current funding period:

Employment-focused DRT and shift-worker service enhancements

Extend the Central Buchan A2B service beyond its current 18:30 finish towards approximately 22:00, building on the existing early service from 05:30. Extend the Banffshire Partnership employability service to connect Aberchirder and Cornhill with Banff and Macduff during the working day.

Journey planning and travel training

Provide personalised journey planning, accompanied first journeys, bus buddy support, accessible social stories and travel-training resources. Include cycle-confidence support and access to bicycles

Evidence and opportunity review

Maintain and enhance the Power BI dashboard as the programme's targeting tool, with potential additions covering childcare accessibility, travel patterns and Workforce Mobility trip generators.

Travel cost support

Develop targeted fare subsidy pilots using the multi-operator GrassHOPPER ticket, focused on routes, localities and participant groups where cost is a material barrier to employment, education or training.

Marketing and engagement

Undertake targeted research and develop a reusable Getabout Employment Access Toolkit for employers, employability services and community organisations

Monitoring, evaluation and administration

Establish consistent indicators and data collection, complete an Integrated Impact Assessment, manage governance and budgets, and produce an evaluation report to capture outcomes, lessons and recommendations.

1.7 Longer Term Opportunities

The appraisal also identifies measures that have strategic merit but require further feasibility work, longer-term funding or stronger delivery partnerships. These include:

- Expansion of community transport capacity and coverage.
- Employment-focused DRT or shuttle services to key workplaces and shift-based employment hubs.
- Direct transport to NESCol and SRUC campuses.
- Transport support for out-of-school childcare.
- A regional transport information portal and improved promotion of LEP support.
- Transport apprenticeships, work placements and bus-driver training.
- Travel support for apprenticeships and training placements.
- An Employer Transport Forum to identify shared workforce-access problems and develop co-funded solutions

1.8 Next Steps

The next stage will focus on confirming the quick-win package, associated funding allocations, delivery responsibilities and necessary approvals with Transport Scotland and local partners. Detailed delivery plans will then be developed, defining target groups, geographic focus, mobilisation arrangements, exit strategies and monitoring requirements, with the Power BI dashboard used to refine targeting and establish a consistent baseline for evaluation.

Delivery will require continued coordination between Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Local Employability Partnerships, transport operators, community transport providers, employers and third-sector partners. Monitoring evidence will subsequently be used to assess which pilots should be continued or scaled and which could form the basis of future business cases and funding applications.

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Appendix B

Nestrans – Transport to Employment Programme 2026/27 – September Update

	Project	Description	Workstream	Theme(s)			Deliverables	Forecasted Budget
				Availability	Accessibility	Affordability		
1	Priority Actions	Provide targeted funding to Banffshire Partnership and Aberdeenshire Council to expand the Banff–Aberchirder service. Expand Central Buchan A2B demand-responsive transport services in response to evidenced gaps in access to employment.	#1 Supporting DRT	☒	☒	☐	Expansion of Banff to Aberchirder DRT service Expansion of Central Buchan A2B DRT service	£30,000
2	Rapid Review	Undertake a rapid evidence review to identify transport interventions that could be delivered during 2026/27 and developed over the medium to longer term. Develop a Power BI dashboard combining relevant transport, employment and socioeconomic data to identify communities and population groups experiencing barriers to accessing employment.	#2 – Initial Research #3 – Developing a data model	☒	☒	☐	Report identifying interventions PowerBI dashboard	£30,000
3	Analysis to Inform Delivery	Enhance the Power BI dashboard by incorporating data on accessibility and	#4 – Enhancing the data model	☒	☒	☐	Enhanced PowerBI dashboard	£10,000

		travel patterns associated with early-years and childcare facilities, alongside relevant Workforce Mobility trip-generator data. Use the enhanced evidence base to identify opportunities to improve connectivity and reduce transport barriers affecting access to employment and childcare. .						
4	Training & Support	Provide targeted practical support to help people overcome barriers to travelling to employment. This will include access to bicycles and adult cycle-confidence training delivered through established regional partners, alongside accessible information and travel-support resources to help people plan and undertake journeys by public transport.	#5 – Active Travel Measures #6 – Public Transport Measures (Bus Focussed)	☒	☒	☐	Delivery of cycling confidence sessions (including access to bikes if required) Creation of social stories/accessible resources to support access to public transport.	£80,000
5	Promotion	Undertake targeted research and engagement with communities and employers to identify barriers to travelling to work and test the messages most likely to support behaviour change. Use the findings to develop a reusable Getabout	#7 – Focus Groups #8 – Resource Development, Creation and Utilisation #9 – Workplace Engagement	☒	☒	☐	Reusable toolkit	£100,000

		employment-access toolkit, supported by targeted employer and community engagement during 2026/27.						
6	Fares Intervention Pilot	Develop and deliver targeted fares pilots in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire using the multi-operator GrassHOPPER ticket. Pilot areas and eligible participant groups will be identified using evidence from the Power BI dashboard and consultation with both local authorities and relevant delivery partners.	#10 – Trial of Ticketing Initiative (Aberdeen) #11 – Trial of Ticketing Initiative (Aberdeenshire)	☐	☐	☒	Subsidised travel along targeted routes and localities	£200,000 (distributed 50/50 across LAs)
7	Monitoring & Evaluation and Scheme Administration	Develop and implement a consistent monitoring and evaluation framework covering activity delivered by Nestrans and relevant partner programmes. Complete an Integrated Impact Assessment and provide dedicated programme-management and administrative resource to support effective governance, delivery, financial monitoring and reporting.	#12 – Monitoring and Evaluation #13 – Scheme Administration	☒	☒	☒	Integrated Impact Assessment Evaluation Report Staff resource	£50,000
								Total
								£500,000

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6.1 Car Reduction Evidence

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents the findings of recent research commissioned by Nestrans examining car-use reduction, transport decarbonisation and traffic demand management within the North East of Scotland. The work provides an updated evidence base to inform regional transport policy, engagement with national policy development and future strategic transport modelling and appraisal activities.

2 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is recommended to:

1. Note the completion and findings of studies on car-km reduction, transport decarbonisation and traffic demand management.
2. Note that the findings have informed a review of the car-demand reduction assumptions applied within the ASAM “With Policy” scenario.
3. Note the adoption of regional policy-on car-kilometre reduction assumptions of 3% in 2030 and 3% in 2045, relative to the Reference Case, as documented in the supplementary note at Appendix B.
4. Approve publication of the finalised “Reducing Car-km and Carbon Emissions: Options for the Nestrans Region” report on the Nestrans website.

3 Background and National Policy Developments

3.1 The Scottish Government's previous policy position sought a national reduction in car kilometres travelled of 20% by 2030 relative to levels in 2019. This ambition had informed transport policy development across Scotland and was subsequently reflected within national and regional transport modelling assumptions, including development of the Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) "With Policy" scenario. This scenario modelled the future impacts of a full range of national policy ambitions being implemented, and was in contrast to the “Without Policy” scenario, which looked at a scenario without such policy ambitions being in place.

3.2 In 2023 Nestrans published research undertaken by Jacobs on the regional implications of this traffic reduction target (Nestrans Board, 21 June 2023, Item 5.1). This found that for the North East region, the national target would be very challenging to achieve, without substantial traffic demand measures being put in place.

3.3 Since then, national policy has evolved. The most recent relevant Scottish Government policy position was set out in the refreshed Climate Change Plan[1], published in March 2026. This now seeks annual car mileage levels at least 4% below business-as-usual forecasts by 2030, rather than delivery of the previous 20% reduction target.

3.4 Alongside the changes to the targets, Transport Scotland have been working on a national basis, preparing for publication of Road Traffic Reduction Plans, and undertaking work

[1] Scottish Government (2026), Climate Change Plan: 2026-2040, available at https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-climate-change-plan-2026-2040-annexes/

considering how existing legislation to enable Road User Charging could be updated to make it more fit for purpose for the current target. However, a recent statement by the Scottish Government has confirmed that the “regulatory review” on road user charging options is now no longer being taken forward, due to concerns related to cost of living impacts.

4. Update to Reducing Car-Km Study

4.1 In response to the new national car-km reduction target, Nestrans re-commissioned Jacobs to update their previous work on assessing options for achieving car reduction targets in the Nestrans region. This provided the opportunity to review future travel demand, assess the likely impacts of transport interventions, examine the role of demand management measures and provide an updated evidence base to inform regional transport policy and future appraisal activities. An Executive Summary of the work is attached as **Appendix A**. The full report is available through the Members' Area of the Nestrans website. The full report will be published on the public area of the website if approved by Board.

4.2 The completed work represents a thorough and updated assessment of future car use reduction and traffic demand management opportunities within the North East of Scotland. The principal conclusions are that:

a) car kilometres are forecast to continue increasing under Business-as-Usual conditions;
b) existing commitments and funding levels are unlikely to achieve the current target of at least 4% below the 2030 Business-as-Usual forecast;
c) achieving or approaching the target would require significantly enhanced investment in sustainable transport alongside measures that manage demand for car travel; and
d) the region’s rural geography, differing levels of access to transport alternatives, and the distributional effects of individual measures would need to be considered in developing any future proposals.

4.3 The research also distinguishes between reducing car travel and reducing transport emissions. Reduced car use can contribute to decarbonisation, while vehicle-fleet electrification is expected to make a substantial contribution to future transport emissions reductions.

4.4 Engagement undertaken in 2023 which is reported in the work continues to provides context on issues that may influence the design and implementation of demand-management measures. However, it is cautioned that the engagement reflected the policy, economic and transport context at that time. Further assessment and engagement would therefore be required before specific measures were progressed.

5. Implications for Future Transport Planning and Appraisal

5.1 The studies provide an updated evidence base for regional transport planning, appraisal and modelling. In particular, they indicate that modelling assumptions developed under the former national 20% car-kilometre reduction ambition no longer reflect current national policy, nor the likely effects of currently committed interventions.

5.2 This is directly relevant to current applications of the Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM), including the Cumulative Transport Appraisal informing the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local Development Plans and the Aberdeen Rapid Transit Outline Business Case. These require a consistent and credible basis for representing policy effects within the ASAM “With

Policy" scenario. Transport Scotland officials have encouraged regional officers to use available evidence to develop an updated "With Policy" scenario appropriate for North East Scotland.

5.3 Officers have therefore reviewed the existing ASAM car-demand reduction assumptions in consultation with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. The previous assumption (which translated the national target of 20% to an approximate 12% regional reduction) is no longer considered appropriate. Equally, applying no adjustment would make no allowance for the cumulative effects of continued transport and planning interventions.

5.4 Based on an interpretation of the evidence available from the most recent evidence work, and assessment within the ASAM model, a revised policy-on scenario has been developed relative to the Reference Case.

Year	Regional car-kilometre reduction relative to the Reference Case for "With Policy" Scenario
2030	-3.00%
2045	-3.02%

5.5 These assumptions are not forecasts or targets, nor are they point estimates directly derived from the research. Rather, they represent a pragmatic planning assumption developed through consideration of the available evidence, the current policy context and professional judgement. The assumptions seek to provide a credible and proportionate "with policy" scenario for strategic modelling while avoiding continued reliance on the historic 12% regional reduction assumption developed under the previous national 20% car-kilometre reduction ambition.

5.6 These assumptions have been provided to the teams current progressing the Cumulative Transport Appraisal, Aberdeen Rapid Transit Outline Business Case and other relevant ASAM modelling exercises. Individual interventions, including Aberdeen Rapid Transit, will continue to be represented separately where appropriate.

5.7 **Appendix B** records the agreed modelling assumptions and should be read alongside the car-kilometre reduction report, which provides the underlying evidence and uncertainty around potential outcomes.

Report Prepared by Claudia Stuerck
Transport Executive
02 November 2026

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Executive Summary: Car-km and Carbon Reduction Options for the Nestrans Region

1. Introduction

This report assesses whether the North East of Scotland can achieve its target of reducing car kilometres by at least 4% below the projected 2030 Business-as-Usual (BAU) forecast, and the interventions required to approach this outcome. The analysis considers travel demand, demographic and economic trends, sustainable transport investment, and measures to improve alternatives or manage demand for car use.

2. Key Findings

2.1 Forecast Traffic Growth Remains Significant

Demand for car travel in the region is forecast to continue growing. Under the BAU scenario, car kilometres are projected to increase by approximately 6% to 7.5% between 2025 and 2030.

Achieving the regional target of 4% below the 2030 BAU forecast would therefore not result in an absolute reduction in car use relative to 2025. Instead, car travel in 2030 would still be expected to remain approximately 2% to 3.5% above 2025 levels.

2.2 Current Delivery Programmes Are Unlikely to Achieve the Target

Measures already planned or funded, including improvements to public transport, active travel infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives, are unlikely to be sufficient to meet the target.

Under realistic BAU funding assumptions, improvements to sustainable travel alternatives are expected to achieve a reduction of less than 0.5% in car kilometres by 2030.

These measures remain important for improving accessibility, health outcomes and transport choice. However, their impact on overall car travel demand is likely to be limited when delivered at the current scale and within existing funding levels.

2.3 Achieving the Target Requires a Different Scale of Intervention

The modelling indicates that approaching a 4% reduction below BAU would require a combination of:

- Substantially enhanced investment in public transport and active travel;
- Sustained revenue funding for behaviour change programmes;
- Stronger land-use and transport integration;
- Parking restraint measures; and
- Policies that directly increase the cost or reduce the convenience of driving.

Measures that improve alternatives to car travel and measures that manage demand for car use are likely to be most effective when implemented together. Reliance on either approach alone is unlikely to generate sufficient change to approach the target.

3. Assessment of Potential Measures

The report considers a wide range of interventions and develops low- and high-impact scenarios for each. Measures identified as having the greatest potential influence on car travel demand include:

- Workplace parking levies;
- Increased parking charges and parking controls;
- Expansion of Low Emission Zone style restrictions;
- Road user charging and other demand-management measures;
- Conisderable increases in public transport provision and quality; and
- Ambitious active travel investment programmes.

There is significant uncertainty around the scale at which some measures could be implemented and the level of impact that could realistically be achieved by 2030. Current public acceptability also cannot be established from the available evidence. The report therefore presents ranges of potential impacts rather than single forecasts.

4. Deliverability and Acceptability

Engagement undertaken in 2023 provides useful context on issues that may influence the design and implementation of future demand-management measures. These include concerns relating to cost, fairness, accessibility and impacts on rural communities.

However, the engagement reflected the policy, economic and transport context at that time. Given subsequent changes in that context, and in the absence of updated engagement, current public and stakeholder opinion is not known.

The 2023 findings indicate that the delivery of stronger demand-management measures would need to be considered carefully and supported by visible and credible improvements in sustainable travel options, and particular consideration would be required for lower-income households, disabled people and residents of rural areas where alternatives to private car travel may be more limited.

Further engagement would be required as specific proposals are developed to understand current views and inform the detailed design and implementation of individual measures.

5. Overall Conclusion

The region’s dispersed settlement pattern and extensive rural hinterland limit sustainable transport alternatives and make reducing car dependence particularly challenging.

The report concludes that the Nestrans region is unlikely to achieve its car-kilometre reduction target through existing commitments and funding alone. Under BAU assumptions, improvements to public transport, active travel and behaviour change programmes are forecast to have only a marginal impact on traffic levels by 2030.

Achieving or approaching the target would require a step change in investment and policy ambition, combining significantly enhanced sustainable transport provision with measures that actively manage demand for car use. This would involve important policy and delivery choices, particularly given the region’s substantial rural travel demand and limited alternatives to private car travel.

Further work and engagement would be required to develop specific proposals and assess their practical, financial and distributional implications.

Supplementary Note

Car Demand Reduction Assumptions for ASAM Applications

Date: 26 October 2026

1. Introduction

The current ASAM "With Policy" scenario incorporates a car demand reduction assumption broadly derived from the former Scottish Government target of reducing car kilometres by 20% by 2030. For the North East, this translated to an approximate reduction of around 12% in car travel demand.

Subsequent changes in national policy, together with the most recent Nestrans evidence on car use and demand management, suggest that the policy basis for this assumption is no longer current and that the assumption is difficult to defend.

The purpose of this note is not to establish a definitive car kilometre reduction target or forecast for the region. Rather, it is to identify a credible and proportionate with policy demand adjustment for use in current modelling exercises. The adjustment is a pragmatic planning assumption informed by, but not derived directly from, the available evidence.

This note records the agreed regional car-kilometre reduction assumptions to be applied across current and future modelling commissions, including:

- The Cumulative Transport Appraisal (CTA) supporting the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local Development Plans;
- Development of the Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) Outline Business Case;
- Other strategic planning and appraisal work undertaken using ASAM.

This note should be read in conjunction with *Reducing Car-km and Carbon Emissions: Options for the Nestrans Region*. That report provides the underlying evidence on regional car use, the potential contribution and deliverability of different policy measures, and the uncertainties associated with achieving reductions by 2030. This supplementary note does not repeat that assessment. Its purpose is to record how the evidence has been translated into a proportionate assumption for current modelling exercises.

2. Background

Existing ASAM Policy Assumption

The current ASAM "With Policy" forecast was developed when:

- The Scottish Government's policy position was to reduce car kilometres travelled by 20% by 2030;
- Significant behavioural change was anticipated nationally; and
- Further demand-management measures were expected to emerge to support delivery.

The resulting ASAM policy scenario assumed approximately a 12% reduction in car demand across North East Scotland. At the time this represented a reasonable interpretation of national policy. However, subsequent experience has shown that the application of the policy framework has not delivered the scale of behavioural change originally envisaged, and car demand has remained higher than anticipated.

3. Current Policy Context

The Scottish Government's more recent policy statements no longer seek delivery of the original 20% reduction target.

The 2026 Climate Change Plan instead indicates a requirement for annual car mileage to be at least 4% below a business-as-usual forecast by 2030, representing a substantially less ambitious position than the original target.

Consequently, the policy basis underpinning the existing ASAM assumption is no longer current. It is therefore appropriate to review the demand assumptions used in future modelling exercises.

4. Evidence from Recent Nestrans Studies

The most relevant evidence base is provided by:

- Reducing Car-km and Carbon Emissions:
  Options for the Nestrans Region (October 2026)

The report assesses the potential contribution of a broad range of measures, including improvements to active travel and public transport, Aberdeen Rapid Transit, travel planning, sustainable travel promotion, parking measures and other forms of demand management.

The report concludes that most measures to improve alternatives to car use are individually likely to produce relatively modest reductions in regional car-kilometres. The packages assessed in the report that focus primarily on improving sustainable transport alternatives are forecast to reduce regional car-kilometres by less than 0.5% by 2030. Achieving a reduction closer to the Scottish Government’s 4% below business-as-usual position would require substantially increased investment alongside measures that manage demand.

The report also identifies considerable uncertainty around the effects and deliverability of individual measures and packages. The higher-impact outcomes depend on factors including sustained funding, political support, accelerated delivery and the introduction of measures that may face significant public and distributional challenges.

The evidence does not provide separate car-kilometre reduction factors for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The with policy modelling assumption has therefore been expressed at the regional level rather than as separate area-specific assumptions.

5. Agreed Modelling Approach

Stantec, in their capacity as the consultants responsible for the delivery of the Cumulative Transport Appraisal and Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) Outline Business Case commissions, were consulted on the development of an updated approach to representing policy effects within the ASAM "With Policy" forecast. They have advised that development of a completely new forecast would require significant programme time and modelling effort.

For the purposes of current studies, the agreed approach is therefore to apply a regional “with policy” adjustment relative to the Reference Case.

This approach:

- Reflects current policy expectations;
- Can be applied consistently across studies;
- Maintains consistency between separate modelling commissions;
- Avoids substantial model redevelopment; and
- Is considered sufficient for strategic planning and appraisal purposes.

The adjustment is not intended to represent a wholly new ASAM forecast or the effect of any single intervention. It represents a pragmatic regional assumption informed by the evidence on the potential cumulative effects of the policy measures assessed in the main car-kilometre reduction report. This approach has been discussed and agreed with Transport Scotland.

6. Relationship with Aberdeen Rapid Transit

The revised demand adjustment is intended to provide a common policy baseline for future applications of ASAM.

This includes:

- The Cumulative Transport Appraisal (CTA);
- The Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) Outline Business Case;
- Future strategic planning studies.

The purpose of the adjustment is therefore to establish a single agreed representation of background policy effects.

ART itself will subsequently be assessed through dedicated modelling within the Outline Business Case process and through separate testing within the CTA.

Accordingly, the adjustment factor should not be interpreted as representing the benefits of ART specifically. Rather, it represents the broader cumulative influence of current transport and planning policy across the region.

Using a single common baseline will ensure consistency between the CTA and ART programmes and avoid conflicting forecasts being developed from the same model platform.

7. Policy Adjustment Applied

Reference Case (No Policy)

The Reference Case comprises:

- Population growth;
- Economic growth;
- Planned development allocations; and
- Existing committed transport interventions,

with no explicit car demand reduction factor applied.

The Reference Case therefore represents growth in car travel demand over time.

Policy Adjustment

The following regional car-kilometre reductions have been adopted relative to the Reference Case:

Year	Regional car-kilometre reduction relative to the Reference Case
2030	-3.00%
2045	-3.02%

These reductions are not forecasts or targets, nor are they point estimates directly derived from the evidence review. They are pragmatic “with policy” planning assumptions developed through consideration of the available evidence, the current policy context and professional judgement.

The assumptions are ambitious in the context of the evidence presented in the main report, particularly given the limited reductions expected from improvements to sustainable transport alternatives alone and the absence of commitments to major

new demand-management measures. However, they provide a credible and sufficiently distinct with policy scenario while avoiding continued reliance on the historic 12% regional assumption, for which the original policy basis no longer applies.

The values have been informed by consideration of:

- The findings of the 2026 studies;
- The revised Scottish Government policy position;
- Currently anticipated transport and planning interventions across the region;
- The absence of committed large-scale demand-management measures; and
- The need to provide a proportionate with policy scenario for strategic modelling.

The evidence does not provide a single definitive reduction factor for application within ASAM. It does, however, provide a clear basis for reconsidering the existing assumption. Retaining the previous reduction of approximately 12% across the region would be difficult to justify in the absence of the significant demand-management measures associated with reductions of that scale.

Conversely, applying no policy adjustment would make no allowance for the cumulative influence of continued investment in active travel, public transport, travel planning, behavioural change and planning policies supporting more sustainable travel.

The adjustments therefore sit between these positions. They provide a credible with policy scenario for strategic modelling, reflecting an informed planning judgement about the potential cumulative effect of planned and continuing interventions rather than a direct prediction of the outcome in 2030 or 2045.

Relationship Between Demand Adjustments and Policy Measures

The regional adjustment represents the potential cumulative influence of transport and planning policy across the region. The measures that could contribute to reduced car use, together with their estimated effects, deliverability and distributional implications, are assessed in detail in Reducing Car-km and Carbon Emissions: Options for the Nestrans Region.

These include investment in active travel and public transport, Aberdeen Rapid Transit, travel planning, sustainable travel promotion, mobility hubs, development planning and parking management. The modelling assumption should not be interpreted as attributing a specific proportion of the reduction to any individual measure.

Comprehensive new demand-management measures such as road-user charging, distance-based charging or a workplace parking levy are not assumed to be committed components of the with policy scenario.

Geographic Application

No separate reduction assumptions are applied to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

The modelled percentage change in car-kilometres may differ between the two areas. In particular, the longer average journeys made in Aberdeenshire may result in a larger percentage reduction in car-kilometres than in Aberdeen City. Any such difference is a model output and should not be interpreted as a separate local target or policy assumption.

8. Agreed Assumptions and Application

A regional car-kilometre reduction of 3% in 2030 and 3% in 2045, relative to the Reference Case, has been adopted for current ASAM modelling.

These values are pragmatic with policy planning assumptions developed through consideration of the available evidence, the current policy context and professional judgement. They provide an ambitious but credible with policy scenario and a meaningful distinction from the Reference Case, while avoiding continued reliance on the historic 12% assumption.

No separate reduction assumptions are applied to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. Any difference between the areas in the modelling results is an output of the regional adjustment rather than a geographically disaggregated target.

The agreed assumptions will be applied consistently across the Cumulative Transport Appraisal, the Aberdeen Rapid Transit Outline Business Case and other relevant ASAM-based modelling. The specific effects of individual interventions, including Aberdeen Rapid Transit, will continue to be represented separately where appropriate.

Nestrans RTS 2040						
Policy Headings	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
RTS actions	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
AT- Increasing the number of people travelling actively for health and the environment						
AT 1: Upgrade existing routes and develop a network of high quality and safe active travel routes across the region, focussing on the key priorities listed.	a. Safe and segregated active travel connections within and connecting to Aberdeen City Centre from the main commuter towns, in line with and to complement the objectives of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan. Wherever possible routes should be segregated and road space reallocation should also be considered to allow cyclists, pedestrians and wheelers (especially those less confident and able) sufficient space. Priority corridors have been identified opposite, some or all of which may be suitable for designation as 'Active	ii) Inverurie to Aberdeen City Centre: A96 Dyce Cycle Track - Provision of active travel infrastructure connections to provide missing link between Dyce Drive and Airport Road.	£158.9K in 26/27 (incl 38.9K c/f from 25/26) Invoiced to date = **£1.5K**	Further active travel infrastructure options from Craibstone into the city centre are being developed through the ART Outline Business Case. ACC Projects and Estates staff met with Seedpod team to discuss the project and land ask. No major issues raised. **Design progression slow due to resourcing and project conflicts and no update yet on the land agreement. Virement therefore proposed in budget report based on revised forecast.**	**Land acquisition dialogue to continue. Design to be reviewed and progressed. Surveys of drainage to be requested.**	↓
		iii) Stonehaven to Aberdeen City Centre via Chapelton, Portlethen, Cove, Altens, Torry and the South Harbour - Portlethen to Marywell	£150K in 26/27	**Project has been split into two phases, with Phase 1 being the south end - Portlethen area and Phase 2 the north end at Marywell to tie in with ACC's project. Only phase 1 path improvements in Portlethen to progress to construction this year with phase 2 Marywell improvements being taken to design stage. Virement proposed in budget report.**	**Projects Team will complete Phase 1 design layout by November and ask the local roads team to construct.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Travel Freeways' as proposed by Transport Scotland:	iii) Stonehaven to Aberdeen City Centre via Chapelton, Portlethen, Cove, Altens, Torry and the South Harbour - Marywell Cycle Route	£193.1K in 26/27 (incl £40.1K c/f from 25/26)	**ACC has advised that full budget allocation no longer able to be used this financial year due to resource constraints in the Roads Projects Team. Road Safety Audit being undertaken. Detailed design has identified a number of potential land issues which will need to considered and resolved. There may also be a need to redetermine sections of footway / carriageway that will introduce a time delay.**	**Virement proposed in separate budget report. Future activity in the coming months will encompass design check, land discussions and progression of appropriate Roads Orders.**	↓
		iii) Stonehaven to Aberdeen City Centre via Chapelton, Portlethen, Cove, Altens, Torry and the South Harbour - Wellington Road active travel improvements. City Region Deal Joint Committee on 10 June 2022 agreed to business case development for specific junctions on the A956 Wellington Road corridor which interface with External Links to Aberdeen South Harbour project.		CRD funded DMRB Stage 2 work at Hareness and Souterhead junctions by SWECO was reported to ACC NZET Cttee on 12 Nov 2024 and the preferred option is to be progressed to DMRB stage 3 scheme assessment along with an Outline Business Case. Nestrans budget to contribute to cost of DMRB stage 3 and OBC work agreed in Sept 2025. Public consultation on DMRB Stage 2 preferred option completed.	**The DMRB3 Scheme Assessment and Outline Business Case were reported to ACC NZET Cttee on 8 Sept. Further engagement instructed and to report back in 2 cycles with a holistic review of the proposals taking into consideration the feedback to date and from further engagement.**	↔

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		iv) Ellon to Aberdeen City Centre: A90 Ellon / Foveran / Newburgh. Contribution to land purchase and construction of Shared Used Cycleway / Footway	£75K in 26/27	**Nestrans budget comprised match funding towards AC's Tier 2 bid, but no Tier 2 funding received. Forecast spend therefore reduced to cover ongoing land discussions and virement proposed in budget report.**	**Land acquisition discussions ongoing with AC Legal and Estates teams for property purchase and title updates. Two valuations complete and a valuation meeting with landowners arranged.**	↑
		iv) Ellon to Aberdeen City Centre: A92 Murcar to Blackdog. ACC Finance & Resources Cttee approved the Outline Business Case on 8 May 2024 and instructed that procurements, approvals, permissions, licenses, agreements and consents to implement project within its budget be progressed.	£254.2K in 26/27 (incl £26.2K c/f from 25/26) Invoiced to date = **£6K**	ACC commenced preliminary design in Jan 2026. Work on the preliminary design had been paused while ACC redirected their attention to Shielhill. **ACC has now advised that full budget allocation will no longer be able to be used this financial year due to resource constraints in the Roads Projects Team.**	**ACC are hopeful to recommence design works in early 2027.**	↓

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	b. Support ACC and other partners, including Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and Walking Scotland, in developing a network of cycle routes and quiet routes across the city to complement actions on the priority corridors, support the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods and create a cycle friendly city.	Wellheads Cycle Link design. Detailed Design and Contract document preparation for an extension of the existing Wellheads Dr shared use path to the north, by-passing the roundabout, to connect with Farburn Terr. Also included will be design of a cut-through at the Market St closure to create a safe and coherent cycle connection with the Wellheads shared use cycle route.	£47K in 26/27 (incl £23K c/f from 24/25) Invoiced to date = **£4.2K**	Plot 1&2 Landowner contact continues with owners, though progress is very slow. Plot 4 acquired and land registration is complete. Discussions progressing with Aberdeen International Airport to acquire land within their ownership for plots 1 & 2, the Airport have confirmed through their solicitors they are undertaking their final review. This should clear the way to acquire land within their ownership. **Progress has however been slow to date.**	With regards to Shell Pension fund land, the Estates team have instructed legal to deal with CBRE directly . Legal to send offer for land. **ACC Legal are continuing to chase Shell Pension Fund solicitors/agents, but are concentrating efforts on the airport land currently as more substantial area of land for the project.** Although land acquisition is attempting to progress there is a risk that not all of the land may be acquired.	↔
		Craibstone P&R to TECA quiet route feasibility study to look at the feasibility and likely costs of developing an improved active travel link between Craibstone Park and Ride and TECA.	£19.1K in 26/27 (all c/f from 24/25) Invoiced to date = **£0.8K**	ACC staff prepared a first draft feasibility study and updated it based on feedback from internal review. **The landowners bordering Walton Road were contacted to consult with them regarding the proposal for creating a quiet, active travel route between the Park and Ride site and TECA. One of the landowners has responded back seeking some further information on the proposals, with another providing additional clarity on the landownership, but no significant concerns have been highlighted at this stage.**	**Quotes to be obtained for a topographical survey and discussions to be held with the Street Lighting team with regard to getting a street lighting design done.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Multi-modal corridor study outcomes review. ACC will review outcomes of previously commissioned corridor studies to identify those interventions not currently being progressed via the Aberdeen Rapid Transit work or where alternatives need to be considered due to constraints and develop a prioritised programme of projects for delivery	£75K in 26/27	Active travel infrastructure options on ART corridors are being developed through the ART Outline Business Case. A programme of improvements, also incorporating appropriate parallel routes has been identified via the Aberdeen Rapid Transit Cycling Strategy Technical Note and scope agreed with TS in August. **Stantec appointed to undertake option appraisal and design of parallel cycle routes (linked to the ART programme), with an inception meeting held 22 Sept and an Options workshop on 30 Sept.**	**ACC has received funding from Transport Scotland's Active Travel Infrastructure Tier 2 Fund and majority of Nestrans allocation no longer required. Virement proposed in separate budget report, with the remaining Nestrans funding to be used for traffic counts.**	↑
	c. Support AC's work with local communities, and aided by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and Walking Scotland, in their Integrated Travel Town (ITT) Project to shape more sustainable and active travel in the towns of Huntly, Inverurie, Fraserburgh, Portlethen and Ellon	Fraserburgh Strichen Road Greenway - Footway widening adjacent to Old Strichen Road. New shared use path via Kessock Park to Strichen Road/A90 junction. To provide east west shared use link providing access onto existing A90 path linking community and sports centre and completing link to town centre via Maconnochie Road scheme.	£30K in 2026/27	Complete the design of a shared-use active travel path along Old Strichen Road to establish an east-west link between the sports centre and the Boothby / A981 roundabout. Overall design cost is £200K and Nestrans budget comprises match funding towards AC's Tier 2 bid.	Aecom commissioned as designer for the initial project report; feasibility completed and **concept design ongoing**.	↑
		Torphins - Lumphanan Path - Delivery of 3km shared use path between Torphins and Lumphanan building on work done by local community groups. Nestrans budget comprises match funding towards AC's Tier 2 bid.	£135K in 2026/27	Design has been historically managed by Torphins Paths Group and designed by CRC. Project is continuing to finalise land access agreements and compile tender package. **AC received £300K ATIF Tier 2 funding, which will be used to complete the tender package and construct phase 1 - a 1km path section west of Beltie Burn.**	**Full Nestrans budget no longer required due to Tier 2 funding and virement proposed in budget report. Nestrans allocation to be used to finalise the design, seek landowner agreements and complete the tender package.**	↑

Policy Headings	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
RTS actions	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Torphins School Access Path Improvements - Complete the design and construction of a path north of Torphins Primary, to provide students safe access to Bridge Crescent and Station Road.	£56K in 2026/27	Project completed concept design and narrowed down to two options. Options are being reviewed based upon initial Road Safety Audit response and topography constraints.	**Lighting discussion being scheduled.** Project is working through design expectations to meet formal adoption standards and technical consultations.	↑
		Aberdeenshire Bothy Project - Cycling UK to again deliver this project in Aberdeenshire using this element of the People & Place grant. They will work with others to offer local businesses and individuals a wide range of cycling and walking activities and support for all abilities incl cycle loans and upskilling of volunteers.	£142.4K Capital P&P grant in 26/27 plus £86.5K Rev from AC Claimed to date = **£68.9K Cap and £42.6K Rev**	**AC to provide revenue funding for this project in 26/27, which will include school based support. Development officer for Schools in post and held family sessions over summer and Pedal Play sessions in Fraserburgh as part of Summer of Sport programme. Auchterellon Primary has started 9 week block of sessions and playground pedallers to be delivered at Arnage Primary. Regular schedule of led rides and health walks continued in Q2 with rides in Mintlaw, Insch and Chapel of Garioch to help promote the AC e-bike hire scheme and a Ranger led ride to Haddo House and a led ride as part of the Huntly Hairst.**	**Pop up events in Q2 included Wild about Aden and the Inverurie Tots in Tow. Bike loan enquiries growing and often accompany these with confidence sessions. Discussing container storage with HDT and plans for a range of maintenance sessions over winter months with the Bikery, including for e-bikes. Pedal Play sessions being planned in Huntly during Oct holidays.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Huntly Travel Hub - Huntly Travel Hub has is Grand Reopening event of Wednesday 25th March which was hosted by Huntly Development Trust. The event was well attended with partners such as Cycling UK, Aberdeenshire Council, local council, members etc. The Huntly Travel Hub will be utilised to provide good quality, convenient, and affordable active/sustainable travel options to make sustainable and active travel a viable and attractive choice for journeys in Huntly & District	£54.7K Capital and £41K Rev P&P grant in 2026/27 Claimed to date = £18.2K Cap and £13.7K Rev	**HDT were again unsuccessful in finding a suitable candidate for the Travel Hub Manager post during a further recruitment process, but have managed to keep the hub running with support from other staff members. Community minibus and co-wheels car scheme both continue to operate. An employee has undergone Health Walks training and shares leadership of the Monday Morning health walk programme.**	**Supported the installation by AC of the new bike shelter in Huntly Sq and discussing a potential new school bus park location with them. HTH premises used for Huntly Hairst. Continue to work with the Bikery on bike maintenance. Continue to discuss cycle/ped path maintenance and upgrades with AC.**	↑
	d. Direct active travel links within and between north east communities, focussing on connecting communities and employment, education, health, social care and community facilities, alongside those recreational routes which can also link up communities and enhance access to	River Deveron active travel bridge - design of a 5m wide active travel bridge between Banff and Macduff, to be located north of the existing road bridge over the river Deveron. The Walk Wheel Cycle Trust Places for Everyone funding was paused in 2024/25. Nestrans budget agreed to contribute toward package of work to take the project through to planning and detailed design phase to permit funding applications to be progressed for construction.	£450K in 26/27	**Pre-planning application completed mid-September and public engagement sessions completed early October. Due to the necessary cost of ground investigations this year to determine bridge structural design, £200k additional cost is anticipated to be required to bring the design to a full tender package and additional funding allocation proposed in separate budget report.**	**Ground investigations to run from late October through November.**	↑
	e. Improved provision at junctions and crossing points for both cyclists and pedestrians.	Pedestrian Crossings in Aberdeenshire. Budget approved for installation of new crossings	£66.7K in 26/27 (all c/f from 25/26)	**Signal installation at Balmoor Terrace, Peterhead completed and costs for civils works and Yunex signals in excess of budget allocation.**	**Additional allocation proposed in separate budget report.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
AT 2: Continue to protect, maintain and improve the Deeside Way and Formartine & Buchan Way as segregated, green transport corridors. Consideration should also be given to the creation of further green corridors and appropriate biodiversity improvements when looking at segregated active travel provision on other links.	Deeside Way corridor	Deeside Way Improvements - west of Aboyne upgrade - Upgrade 1550m section to 2.5m width unbound surface. Complete 3 civil bridge improvements between Slewdrum and Potarch. **Scope extended to include path upgrade west of Aboyne and additional allocation proposed in separate budget report.**	£148.8K in 26/27 (incl £48.8 c/f from 25/26)	Burn of Angels Bridge A - short span timber bridge south of Potarch Car Park requires re-decking (recycled plastic with grip inlay being considered). Burn of Cattie Bridge B - 10m span galvanised steel 'Aerial mast' bridge; changing timber decked ramps (51m) to stone/aggregate and culverts, bridge span 10m requires re-decking (recycled plastic with grip inlay being considered). Burn of Grennoch Bridge C - short span timber bridge east of Glennochburn House; requires re-decking (recycled plastic with grip inlay being considered).	On bridge 'B' changing the timber decked ramps to aggregate requires design input external from OACT; sourcing appropriate deck boards for each of the bridge spans 'A' 'B' and 'C'. **Procuring bridge consultant for design before completing tender package. Construction works scheduled for March completion.**	↑
	Formartine & Buchan Way corridor	Installation of timber bridges on F&B Way. Five bridge kits were purchased in 2023/24 (via RTP Active Travel Grant) and a further seven in 2024/25.	£161.1K in 26/27 (incl £31.1K c/f from 25/26)	Installation of 3 active travel bridges in 2026/27 between Longside and Buthlaw at Auchlee Creep, Strawberry Bank Creep and Faichfield Burn completed.	**Fourth footbridge scheduled for installation at Cattie Burn in October with 12 week site construction.**	↑
		Formartine & Buchan Way realignment north of Ellon - Continue completing the civil upgrade works of the Formartine & Buchan Way between Newmachar and Auchnagatt. Includes new bound surfacing, new drainage and upgraded access control points at Tarty Burn, Arnage Station and Auchnagatt.	£483.9K in 26/27 (incl 143.9K c/f from 25/26)	**Tarty Burn and Arnage station path upgrade and access sites complete. Main drainage works under NatureScot species protection licence completed 8 October with underspend. F&B Way realignment (North of Ellon) now complete. Two main corridors remain: Maud-Peterhead (design complete, construction in works), and Maud-Fraserburgh (design tbc).**	**Underspend from this project proposed to be vired in separate budget report to fund further F&B Way improvements between Peterhead and Maud.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Access Control Point Improvements as identified in the health check funded by Nestrans in 2021/22 - Complete access point improvements along the F&B Way. Includes civil improvements to the entry / exit of sections along the corridor, including bollard replacements.	£134K in 26/27 (incl £84K from 25/26)	Works in 26/27 are within in Buchan Area and include Inverugie, Mintlaw A950 and Mintlaw A952 crossings. **Peterhead - Inverugie works began mid October and will include drainage, bound surfacing and access control upgrades.**	**Should virement of underspend from realignment north of Ellon be approved, this will be used for further upgrades to Maud and include Mintlaw east, Mintlaw west and Aden to Old Deer Bridge.**	↑
		F&B Way Railway Bridge scour protection feasibility study. This former rail bridge carries NCN Route 1 and Core Path 5 over the River Don at the boundary between both Councils. A recent assessment of susceptibility to scour has shown it to be high risk, with the piers and abutments vulnerable to scour during flood events.	£45K in 26/27	**Tender returns received and costs are greater than had been expected. Inception meeting held with consultant and main risks identified to cost were weather / river levels affecting the site survey and also a possible need for additional bathymetry and topographical information.**	**Additional funding requested in separate budget report.**	↑
AT 3: Increase the provision and quality of active travel facilities across the Region.	Signage, parking/storage (on and off public transport), changing facilities and tourist/ leisure-friendly facilities.	Cycle parking and maintenance stations in Aberdeen. Expansion of the network of publicly available bicycle parking and maintenance stations in Aberdeen.	£11.8K in 26/27 (all c/f from 24/25) Invoiced to date = **£0.4K**	**One final new maintenance station still to be installed and ACC seeking a date for this with the supplier. No further stands being procured at this point due to vandalism concerns.**	**ACC to identify locations for bicycle parking racks.**	↑
		School Active Travel Infrastructure	£20K Capital P&P grant in 26/27	ACC will work with schools not covered by the 25/26 school parking and footprints funds to identify requirements within school grounds and in surrounding areas.	**Engagement was slow, but list of schools and their requirements now coming together with aim that a batch order for cycle and scooter parking will be made for delivery before end of 2026.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Secure Bicycle Storage Facilities in Aberdeen - Locations being considered include Linksfield Court, Seaton; Rose House and Davidson House, Hazlehead; Beechwood Court and Woodhill Court, Stockethill and Kincorth Land, Kincorth.	£150K Capital P&P grant in 26/27	Locations have been identified and agreed with ACC Planning teams. **The tender review process is nearing completion and order will then be placed.**	**The locations will include some new residential sites along with extensions to some of the existing lockers, installed in recent years, to accommodate increased demand.**	↑
		Public Realm Cycle Parking	£60K Capital P&P grant in 26/27	ACC to install new and / or improved safe and secure cycle parking at a range of public realm locations throughout the city such as at libraries, shopping centres, community centres, key bus stops and transport interchanges together with any other suitable locations that are identified.	**Good response from libraries and their requirements being progressed with the supplier, with delivery and installation expected to be completed by end of 2026.**	↑
		Cycle storage, maintenance and promotion. AC to instal cycle parking at schools and rural bus stops, provide more cycle parking/maintenance for public use in town centres, and roll out high quality cycle parking at country parks and leisure facilities. Information on key cycle parking locations will also be promoted via various means.	£127K Capital P&P grant in 2026/27	**School locations were identified through an application process and procurement now completed. Making arrangements for installation of requested shelters, hoops and/or scooter storage during Oct school holidays at Auchnagatt, Ballater and Uryside Primary Schools. Bike maintenance stands ordered for Alford, Inverurie and Mearns Community Campuses and Banff Academy.**	**Long list of possible locations for cycle hoops to be installed at bus stops along A93 and A947 identified and being sifted with a contract to be tendered in Q3.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Cycle Storage - Cycling Scotland will work with social housing providers, charities and community organisations in the NE to increase the availability of safe and secure cycle storage for those who currently have nowhere suitable to store a bike. **Grant variation offer accepted to include the £5K formerly offered to NHSG for the repair of the east end bike shelter at ARI.**	**£70K** Capital and 7.25K Revenue grant in 2026/27	**Working with Laurencekirk Primary to provide cycle and scooter parking with installation planned for Q3. Have identified cycle storage requirements with Tullos Training on Craigshaw Dr. Cyle storage audit completed of NHSG's Foresterhill Campus and have recommended replacing damaged shelters and installing covered secure two-tier cycle hubs to replace unused cycle lockers. Cycling Friendly Employer Award renewals are scheduled for Live Life Aberdeenshire sites in Q3 which will include progress updates from previous action plans.**	**Working with Grampian Housing to provide secure cycle storage at selected social housing sites (Market Stance, Clifton Rd, Marchburn in Abdn, Cordiner Court Peterhead and Sycamore, Banchory). Each site is being assessed and residents consulted on proposals prior to installation taking account of access, security and needs of adapted or non-standard cycles.**	↑
		Ellon Baptist Church - installation of a bespoke cycle rack	£1.7K grant via Communities Sustainable Travel Grant in 2026/27	Offer of a Community Sustainable Travel Grant made to purchase a bespoke cycle rack for installation at the church. Upfront grant provided for purchase with church to supply labour to instal the rack.	**Rack manufactured and has been installed and is being used.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Safer routes to schools.	Aberdeen School Streets Pilot	£49.6K Capital P&P in 26/27	Greyhope (Torry) agreed as the pilot school. Perceptions surveys completed by children, parents/ carers and residents. Air quality sensor installed on North Grampian Circle. **The project has been delayed due to resources issues to install the infrastructure for the signage and availability of the supplier as the signage is non-standard. The planned launch date for the School Street pilot is 1st December and the school community are being kept engaged until then.**	**Before the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) commences, an advertisement (press and street notices) will specify the commencement date and the six-month consultation period. Residents will be notified shortly about the process to obtain exemption permits.**	↑
	Improved maintenance.	Beach Cycle Infrastructure - installation of new cycle lane separators to replace the traffic cylinders that marked the cycle lane that were coming away and causing a tip hazard.	£3.1K in 26/27 (all c/f from 23/24)	ACC staff still waiting to hear from the Operations team to arrange a date for installation of new cycle lane separators.	**It is planned to use the Framework Contract for minor civils works if the Operations team are unable to schedule the installation works. A procurement document will be prepared should this be required.**	↔
AT 5: Extend and improve the walking network within all communities and the city to provide a high-quality walking environment with safe	Kennethmont to Ardmore	Detailed design and land acquisition for a shared use path to connect the settlements of Kennethmont and Ardmore	£13.5K in 26/27 (all c/f from 25/26)	**Public engagement survey and TRO to move the speed limit signs have been completed. This will allow the path to tie into the pavement along Ardmore Cottages and meet road safety standards.**	**Further design and landowner discussions to take place.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
crossing points, seating and wayfinding, which emphasises the priority of active travel and encourages walking or wheeling as the preferred option for short journeys.	CP57 design feasibility of link from Hazlehead to Countesswells	Investigating feasibility and initial design work for a path linking Hazlehead with the new Countesswells development, core path 57	£5K in 26/27 (all c/f from 23/24)	This path is owned by two landowners. One is Countesswells Ltd which is currently in administration. Planned timings for the harvesting are to begin end October/start Nov with everything felled by Christmas, but with some extraction of timber likely to run into Jan.	**ACC to progress land owner agreements and check with Environmental Services staff for their availability to design path works after the forestry works are completed.**	↔
	Kincorth and Leggart Community Centre - benches and picnic table	Upfront grant awarded for the purchase and installation of vandal resistant steel new benches on the steepest paths and a picnic table at the view point at the top of Kincorth Hill Local Nature Reserve.	£5k grant via Communities Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme	**New picnic table and benches now installed.**		↑
AT 6: All children and adults should be provided with the opportunity to learn to ride a bike and support provided to those who do not have access to a bike in order to do so.	The Bikery	Gordon Rural Action's community cycling centre in Huntly, with retail training and workshop facilities. The shop sells new and used bikes, parts and accessories, while the workshop offers servicing, recycled parts and repairs by staff and volunteers. Space also used for educational visits, work experience and learning opportunities. Aiming to build an industry leading training centre and workshop within the next 3 years.	£30.3K Rev and £142.3K Capital P&P grant in 26/27 Upfront paid to date = **£22.7K Rev and £106.8K Capital**	**Gave out 3 bikes through Abdn Youth Services. Ran 12 sessions of bike maintenance classes to 34 participants and provided each with a multi-tool. Completed checks on 13 bikes from the Gordon Schools and started work with 6 pupils to learn weekly bike maintenance skills. In Q2 bikes sold=43, affordable bike servicing=115, ran 11 bike maintenance workshops, ran 27 volunteer salvage sessions with 6 volunteers per session**	**Ran a free bike repair session at Greenmyres Hairst fund day and had 19 engagements with 4 bike checks and 2 complete services (brakes, hubs, gears). Will follow up on request for spanner sessions in the run up to Bikeability and from Keith Grammar to help them upgrade bikes.**	↑

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	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Recycled Bikes for All	Stella's Voice aim to divert as many bikes as possible from landfill and refurbish as many as they can to give to those who would otherwise be unable to obtain a bike. Trained mechanics repair each bike that can be to ensure they meet safety and quality standards and then provide them as low cost or free. Those that can't be repaired have useable parts harvested for use on future repairs.	£42K Rev and £134.6K Capital P&P grant in 26/27 Upfront paid to date = **£24.5K Rev and £78.5K Capital**	**Ongoing engagement with schools and Bikeability teams to build connections and ensure no child is unable to participate in training due to a lack of a bike and with partners such as the Foyer to identify where a bike can allow a person to get to/from work or training. Continue to get significant amount of requests for bikes from asylum seekers. In Q2 bikes donated to charities = 44, to schools =71 and asylum seekers = 199.**	**Involved in events where we teach on basic bike maintenance. In Q2 this included events led by Peterhead Area Community Trust, an RGU event to engage with students and at AC's Tots in Tow. Teaching on basic bike maintenance is a key thing we talk about at these events.**	↑
	Move It	Tyred n Cranky aim to work with other delivery partners and volunteers to support and encourage active travel.	£19.5K Rev and £130.5K Capital P&P grant in 26/27 Upfront paid to date = **£11.9K Rev and £84.5K Capital**	**National Trust project for staff/volunteer use of ebikes ongoing. Provided RGU staff and students free bike safety checks and advice. Helping Mamacita with training and identifying equipment to launch their youth project refurbishing bikes. Assisted Sport Aberdeen with repairs for the specialist hand cycle used in Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies. Equipping new city centre premises and developing what can be delivered from there.**	**Purchased 2 e-bikes for use in the micro-adventures cycling for wellbeing project pilot and tools and parts for refurbishments. Plan to keep supporting other P&P delivery partners with their events and maintenance requirements and plan to do more Brownie and Scout training.**	↑

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	Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies	Sport Aberdeen to deliver this project using People & Place grant. The aim of the Grampian Inclusive Cycling Bothies is to make adapted cycling more accessible throughout Grampian and this project seeks to establish a range of hubs across the NE.	£70.9K Capital and £34.1K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date = **£38K Cap and £3.6K Rev**	**Engagement with schools has increased with groups from Bucksburn ASN wing, Anna Ritchie and Banff Academy attend bothy sessions and GICB providing use of inclusive bikes to primary schools to enable specific pupils to try bikes or engage with bikeability. Regular programmes continue to be delivered at Peterhead, Aberdeen & Banff. Two new staff appointed and trained to fill vacancies that arose in Q2. Led rides from Ballater hub have been delayed due to need for a specific type of bike to be available on site, but hope to partner with a newly formed cycling group in area that may support more regular rides and engage more volunteers.**	**Working with Live Life Abdnshire to establish new bothy location in Banchory, but still awaiting planning permission for a storage container for the bikes. The team have worked with partners to deliver successful celebration events for the re-opening of Core Path 17, a Commonwealth Games themed festival, and delivery of inclusive cycling sessions at Grampian Disability Sports' Parasport Festival in Inverurie.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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	Rock up and Ride Inclusive Communities in Aberdeen City with Sport Aberdeen	Scottish Cycling will deliver cycling skills and led rides to under represented groups using a bike library and accessories (3 sessions per week with Sport Aberdeen at Aulton Pavillion for approx. 15-20 participants of all ages). A new bike library also to be introduced in Torry. Will provide opportunity to up to 8 volunteers to qualify as British Cycling Leaders or Cycle Coaches.	£68.5K Capital and £13.9K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date =**£34K Cap and £4.7K Rev**	**Weekly sessions at Tullos, Manor Park and Westpark. Worked with Family Learning and Transition Extreme on a free taster session on the pump track with further session planned for Oct. Worked with ACC using Summer in the City funding to deliver 4 BMX sessions at Torry skatepark. Have also linked with the Fersands & Fountain Community Project to deliver led rides to the beachfront and a visit to the cycle hub to try BMXing and use of the GICB adapted cycles.**	**Continue to work with new Adult Learn to Ride participants, some of whom may be able to progress soon to join the Thursday morning Women's Led Ride. Have met with Student Union at Aberdeen Uni to discuss bike safety and cycling sessions that aim to start in early Nov.**	↑
	Rock up and Ride Inclusive Communities in Aberdeenshire with Ythan Cycling Club	Scottish Cycling will continue to partner with Ythan Cycling Club to implement an adaptive bike library in Ellon and use the Wheel Park facility. Aim to support those with disabilities by providing inclusive cycling activities to around 10 - 20 participants a week. Will work with other delivery partners and upskill up to 8 local volunteers by offering inclusive training with Scottish Disability Sport and opportunity to qualify as British Cycling Leaders.	£39.8K Capital and £13.6K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date =**£13.2K Cap and £4.6K Rev**	**The weekly adaptive cycling sessions at Ellon Wheel Park are continuing to grow in popularity, with 234 attendees in Q2, which consists of 94 individual participants to date this year. Looking to develop a new club logo specifically for the inclusive sessions. New straps for foot and wrist security for those using some adaptive bikes have been purchased.**	**Plan to purchase another adaptive bike and discussions underway with Scottish Cycling for sourcing it and also to put on a Ride Leader course for the Ythan volunteers.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Connecting Communities Aberdeen	Cycling UK to deliver this. Based at the Aberdeen Cycle Hub at Aulton Pavilion, Seaton the Development Officer will respond to local needs and priorities and aim to offer a wide range of cycling and walking activities for all abilities, short and long term cycle loans to help people find the cycle that works for them, support for local organisations with active travel and upskilling volunteers to deliver activities in communities and maintain bikes.	£84.6K Capital and £25K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 plus £20.35K Rev from ACC Claimed to date = **£47.1K Cap and £15.9K Rev (with further £10K reclaimed from ACC)**	**New fleet loan of 4 e-bikes and one standard bike, panniers, helmets and locks made to SRUC at Craibstone for use by staff and students to travel between their 2 campuses or for commuting from home. Pop up event being planned to launch this and will include offer of route planning and cycle training. Plan to engage with NE Scotland College and offer support. Pedal Play sessions were offered as part of the Summer of Sport programme and adult cycle training sessions took place at the Hub. A Showcase Event was held at Seaton Community Centre in Sept and included a led ride and walk to the Cycle Hub and along the Esplanade.**	**Programme of led rides continues to be developed and those along the Deeside Way have proven popular. Themed led rides being planned (eg nature, local history, mindfulness). A pop up event was held at NHSG Foresterhill at end of Sept offering Bike Dr advice and loans of the NHS owned e-bikes Cycling UK are managing. Led ride and Bike Dr event held with SAMH.**	↑
	Learn to Bike, Bikeability Level 1 and Bike Doctor sessions	Sport Aberdeen and Adventure Aberdeen delivering bikeability level 1, learn to bike and dr bike sessions	£72.6K Capital and £9.5K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date = **£18.3K Cap and £2.4K Rev**	**In Q2 there have been a total of 18 learn to bike, 6 bikeability level 1 and 5 bike doctor sessions delivered with attendance totals of 85 for learn to bike (resulting in 43 successful cyclists), 62 for bikeability level 1 and 163 bikes seen at bike doctor sessions.**		↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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	Supporting children cycling	AC aim to promote active travel to young children and those starting school with an aim to embed behaviour change at a young age.	£2K Capital P&P in 26/27	**AC contracted Everybody's Cycling who organised and coordinated the Tots in Tow event at Kellands Park, Inverurie in September. The event brought together 8 delivery partners offering bike try-outs, repairs, balance bike course and showcasing bike attachments and modifications for young children. The event saw over 700 engagements**	**AC will look to organise more in the future following a similar format without external support, leaning on local partners.**	↑
	Aberdeen Cyrenians Staff E-bike scheme pilot	Aberdeen Cyrenians- Sustainable Travel Grant application approved and offer of £4.8K grant made in 24/25 and paid June 2025 as match funding grant to enable the purchase of 7 E-bikes and accessories (bags, locks, helmets) and cycle training for seven staff members.	£4.8K grant via Sustainable Travel Grant budget paid June 2025	New bid received for £10K for purchase of further E-bikes based on success of those already received. Application approved in principle and discussions underway regarding exact costs and use of funding prior to formal grant offer being made.	**Aberdeen Cyrenians advised that they have no need for purchasing more e-bikes this financial year.**	↑
AT 7: Work with partners, including Transport Scotland, Local Authorities, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust, Cycling Scotland and Paths for All to ensure the funding models for active travel improvements can help us deliver the priorities for the north east.	Scottish Government	Active Travel Transformation Fund is a new fund with an anticipated budget in 2023/24 of £20M-£25M to support delivery of eligible construction ready AT schemes, or support partners in progressing towards successful applications in future years.		**Both local authorities submitted bids to ATIF Tier 2 for 26/27 and have received awards. Of the £68m allocated ACC received £1.475M, which will mostly be used for Ashgrove Connects with the remainder for ART parallel routes. AC received £0.792M for construction projects that will be used for Stonehaven Promenade Pedestrian Safety Improvements, Torphins to Lumphanan Ph 1 and Inverurie Corsemanhill Dr-Davah Wood Path.**	**AC also received £125K for Tier 2 Design funding that will be used for Lumphanan to Dess path and Newtonhill to Cammachmore path.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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	Nestrans Active Travel Action Plan	Review of Nestrans Active Travel Action Plan. Final report approved by Board on 27 Nov 2024 and has been designed and published on Nestrans website.	£10K in 26/27 (incl £8.8K c/f from 24/25)	Intention is to use the 2026/27 budget for the production of online cycle maps supporting the regional strategic context, as well as for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.	**Aecom appointed to develop an interactive ESRI StoryMap with a comprehensive and accessible overview of infrastructure across the region.**	↑
RL - Developing the rail network						
RL 1: Due to the high proportions of long-distance business and leisure travel by rail to and from the north east, the highest priority should be investment in improving the quality of InterCity services, ensuring reliability and performance, adequate capacity and improved on- board	Serco Caledonian Sleeper Contract	Serco Caledonian Sleepers Limited has been advised that its proposal to rebase the Franchise Agreement with Scottish Ministers for the provision of Caledonian Sleeper rail services has been rejected on the grounds of not representing value for money to the public. A notice was served on 5 October 2022 that confirms Scottish Ministers will terminate the Franchise Agreement on 25 June 2023.		On 2 March 2023 the Minister announced that from 25 June 2023, Caledonian Sleeper services will be provided by an arm's length company owned and controlled by S Gov in line with the Gov's statutory Operator of Last Resort duty. Staff will transfer to the new S Gov owned entity, with their terms and conditions protected. Since January 2026, the Caledonian Sleeper offers connectivity to Birmingham International improving connectivity between the region and the second largest city in the UK.	**A working group established to explore Caledonian Sleeper links to mainland Europe with the group expected to report its findings to Ministers later this year.**	↑
RL 2: The provision of improved access to the railway network by considering opportunities for additional stations, better integration of	Undertake a review of the Cross Aberdeen local rail corridor (Montrose-Aberdeen-Inverurie) and previous Crossrail business case to determine whether there remain markets	South Aberdeen to Laurencekirk Corridor Study.	£100K in 26/27 (all c/f from 25/26)	Brief developed to procure further appraisal of rail related elements from the Detailed Option Appraisal stage of the multi-modal corridor study (see Bus 4 below) following Council consultation. Carry forward of funding to 26/27 agreed in February.	New Scotland Excel framework is live. **Brief on hold due to competing staff priorities.**	↓

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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local services with InterCity services, full access for all and improved access to stations by non-car modes.	that may be appropriately served by improved access to rail. Development of business cases for additional stations to enhance the viability of the local cross Aberdeen rail service, with new stations providing access to the railway for an increasing proportion of the north east population, with delivery of additional stations where a viable business case is proven.	Laurencekirk / Mearns Area – Wider Connectivity Measures. This project aims to identify opportunities to improve connectivity within the area that do not rely on car-based travel. Further work will explore opportunities to enhance sustainable transport options in the area. This work will be funded via ACRD using Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Transport Appraisal budget.	Costs will be recharged to ACRD-STA Cost to date = **£70.2K**	Arup appointed via a direct award under the SCAPE framework. Study is in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership (Tactran), and Angus Council. **A progress update was presented to the Nestrans Board in Sept. Public consultation now concluded, with positive feedback received from communities across the study area, including comprehensive engagement with young people. The study is now progressing through the options appraisal stage, with consultants assessing the long list of transport, access and service delivery interventions against the study objectives, developed personas and practical delivery considerations.**	**The options appraisal stage will inform the development of a prioritised Action Plan, providing an evidence base for future investment decisions, business cases and funding applications, and guiding the delivery of connectivity improvements across the study area.**	↑
	Keep under review how changing circumstances may influence the case for rail line re-openings within the region.	Strategic Studies	£20K Revenue in 26/27 (incl £15K c/f from 25/26) Invoiced to date = £9.9K	Budget to be used to assist with looking at accessibility options, particularly at Insch and a review of Nestrans Rail Action Plan.	**Review of Nestrans Rail Action Plan still to be commissioned, delayed due to competing staff priorities.**	↔

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Travel plans to be developed and updated for all stations across the north east to consider and improve access to stations by all modes.	Travel plans for Dyce, Inverurie and Stonehaven were done in 2019 and have identified a need for additional car parking at each. The Strategic Development Plan also identifies a requirement for additional car parking at Huntly, Portlethen and Laurencekirk rail stations. In line with the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, we will investigate options for improving links by all modes, starting with pedestrian and cycling links and then consider the need for additional parking beyond this. We will encourage the rail industry to consider improved management options for their car parks, so that spaces are used appropriately for rail related uses.		Nestrans commissioned a study in 2015 to consider options to increase parking at Dyce Station. In addition to the travel plans undertaken by ScotRail, Nestrans commissioned a study into future forecasts for station usage in the Mearns area (Laurencekirk, Stonehaven and Portlethen) that considered options for car park extensions, which was also completed in 2019. Both Nestrans studies published on website.	John Lauder is now permanently working for Scotland's Railways on a active travel links to Railway Stations in Scotland. **Meeting to be held on 10 Nov with Network Rail and John Lauder to discuss Stations Classifications. The workshop will seek to agree which stations they see as filling anchor or gateway roles.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
ART - Aberdeen Rapid Transit						
ART 1: Develop the principle of an Aberdeen Rapid Transit scheme, through engagement with the Bus Alliance partners, ...	....with a view to an additional public transport option providing express service journey times, frequency and reliability to encourage a mode shift.	The Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party draft shared policy programme agrees to work with Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils on the feasibility of a mass rapid transit system for the region.		Proposals for ART are included as a national project within NPF4, and also as a specific recommendation within the STPR2 report. Scottish Government budget is pausing Bus Partnership Funding in 2024/25. The City Region Deal Joint Committee has agreed an allocation of £1,740,000 between 2024/25 and 2026/27 for progressing work on ART and the associated corridor studies as an element of the Strategic Transport Appraisal workstream. On 11 June 2024, ACC Net Zero Environment and Transport Committee approved a desired network of ART routes as well as a restructure of the BPF programme of projects to halt the multi-modal corridor studies at the end of Detailed Options Appraisal and bring the elements that align with the desired ART routeing, into the ART programme. The ART Strategic Business Case was endorsed by ACC NZET Committee, Aberdeenshire ISC and Nestrans Board in June 2025 and reported to ACRD Joint Committee in September 2025.	**Infrastructure proposals to deliver the preferred option have been developed and are now informing modelling, costings and appraisal as part of Programme level Outline Business Case to be reported by the end of the 26/27 financial year. A range of technical notes have been developed to inform the OBC and the associated parallel cycle routes workstream. Ongoing engagement with Equalities Groups, using outputs from the Demo Vehicle visit in June is informing the Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the OBC.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
ART 4: Develop complementary bus priorities and city centre traffic management which improves the city centre environment whilst providing suitable priority for ART and buses.		Successful Bus Partnership Fund award includes funding for the delivery of South College Street as an enabling measure for further bus priority measures in the city centre. Bus Partnership Fund working group established with the remit to oversee the BPF work and ensure alignment with other city centre workstreams.		ACC NZET Cttee on 24 May 2023 agreed that £272K Bus Lane Enforcement funds be used to support the management of the Bus Partnership Fund project over the next 3 years, with any underspend put back into the Bus Lane Enforcement programme. Aberdeen City Council has led on comms around the implementation of the bus priority measures supported by press release from the Bus Alliance. The Transport Minister visited the city centre bus priority measures (funded by the BPF) on 24th October 2023 and a comms campaign to support their implementation was delivered through the Bus Alliance.	The Council agreed to make the order permanent subject to the removal of the ban on right turns from Union Terrace onto Rosemount Viaduct. The right turn ban from Union Terrace to Schoolhill has now been removed. **Requirements for any future complementary measures being considered as part of wider Local Transport Strategy development, informed by the ART Programme Outline Business Case.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
BUS - Improving the region's bus network						
BUS 1: Continue to be a key partner of the North East Bus Alliance and ensure a strong partnership continues for the benefit of the north east.	North East of Scotland Bus Alliance	The North East of Scotland Bus Alliance has been approved by both Councils and the operators and has been signed. The Bus Action Plan produced by the Bus Alliance and based on the State of the Network Report was published on the Nestrans website in April 2020 and is updated and reported to the Bus Alliance Board every 6 months. Bus Alliance bid to Bus Partnership Fund awarded over £12M, but was paused in 2024/25.	£70.9K in 26/27 (incl £44.8K c/f from 24/25) Invoiced to date = **£0.7K**	Details of the Bus Infrastructure Fund awards for 26/27 given in full in separate report on agenda, but comprise Tier 1 ACC=£0.385m, AC=£1.311m and notional Tier 2 award of £0.5m for the North East. A special meeting of the Bus Alliance was held to which all operators in the region were invited, recognising that this has evolved as reported to Board in Sept 2026. **Nestrans has issued a mini-competition under the Scotland Excel Framework (closing 17 Nov 26) to procure consultancy support to conduct a bus passenger satisfaction survey in the region in early 2027.**	**This commission is to be advanced through two separate surveys. One focusing on the urban/inter-urban network and the other the rural network. This work will be funded through a Scottish Government Bus Infrastructure Tier 2 grant award and Nestrans Bus Action Plan funding.**	↑
BUS 2: Develop and deliver the actions contained within the Bus Action Plan, in partnership with the members of the North East Bus Alliance. Our priorities being: a) bus journey times and reliability	New bus priority (with a focus on providing continuous provision) on all key radial routes into the city and linking to Park & Ride provision and to support plans to develop Rapid Transit corridors (see also Aberdeen Rapid Transit).	**Upgrade to the ACC Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) System to enable the provision of bus priority by linking existing regional real time passenger information, specifically automatic vehicle location data from on vehicle electronic ticket machines and service schedule data with Aberdeen City Council's traffic control system SCOOT.**		**This upgrade will allow late running bus services to be identified by the UTMC system on approach to signal controlled junctions, and subsequently trigger a control strategy that will reduce their delay at the junction by either extending the green phase to allow the bus to pass or recalling the green phase to reduce the wait time at a red signal.**	**Upgrade to the ACC Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) Common Database (CDM) now live, funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Infrastructure Fund. Ongoing configuration now taking place.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
BUS 2: b) information, marketing and promotion	Roll out of digital timetables at bus stops, focussing initially on the priority radial corridors.	Installation of Real Time Passenger Information e-paper battery powered bus stop flags/displays	£50K in 26/27	Aberdeenshire Council to continue to deliver RTPI opportunities to rural communities (off grid solutions)	**AC has received a Bus Infrastructure Fund grant that will be used to deliver this project in 2026/27. Virement proposed in separate budget report.**	↑
BUS 2: d) Affordability and accessibility:	Explore options to reduce transport poverty by working in partnership with bus operators to look at fare structures, special fares and other incentives.	**Scottish Government wish to roll out a £2 bus fare, which they aim to implement Scotland wide by the end for current Parliament term.**		**This was introduced as a pilot within Hitrans/ZetTrans regions in 2026 and has now been rolled out in the SPT region.**	**The First Minister announced plans to roll this out in Nestrans region from April 2027. Further details in separate report on agenda.**	↑
BUS 2: e) Interchange between bus services and with other modes:	Seek improvements to Aberdeen Bus Station to provide a high quality passenger experience, improve accessibility and provide a fit for purpose operating environment.			Stagecoach have implemented changes within the bus station to improve stance allocation and circulation.	**New real time departure boards installed supported by 14 new e-paper timetable stance information screens, funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Infrastructure Fund.**	↑
BUS 2: f) Bus stop infrastructure:	Work with the two local authorities to upgrade bus stop infrastructure across the region to ensure it is high-quality, fit for purpose, safe and accessible.	Installation of Bus Stops in Rural Areas. Civils costs to aid in delivery of rural bus stops - hardstanding and/or connecting path(s) to bus stops.	£88.8K in 26/27 (incl £13.8K c/f from 25/26)	Construction starting at Benholm to install a new footpath and bus stops to allow all bus types to stop. Inchmarlo safety audit complete and design with landowner for review. Engagement started with Horseback UK landowner over plans to install new bus stops to formalise current hail and ride stopping point.	**AC has received a Bus Infrastructure Fund grant that will be used to deliver this project in 2026/27. Virement proposed in separate budget report.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
		Bus Stop Upgrades in Aberdeen - budget agreed for upgrades to bus stop infrastructure (est approx. 15 bus shelters per year) to replace existing infrastructure which has reached the end of its useable life	£22.5K in 26/27 (all c/f from 25/26)	Eleven shelters upgraded in 2025/26. ACC has issued list of proposed locations for shelter replacement in 26/27 to supplier. Site visits undertaken to enable supplier to fully cost each site and **ACC still awaiting quotations and continuing to chase supplier for this.**	Once Symology received PTU to liaise with roadworks team to approve location and timing of works. **Likely this may now slip to early 2027.**	↔
BUS 5: Secure funding for the delivery of improvements to bus services and infrastructure…	... In the first instance this will be through a bid, alongside partners of the North East Bus Alliance, to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund.	Nestrans appointed Jacobs following tender for bus partnership fund bid support and ART development. BPF bid submitted by 16 April.		SEE ART 2, BUS 2a and BUS 4 above. The Bus Alliance submitted a bid to the S Gov's Bus Partnership Fund that was successful and was awarded over £12M funding. BPF funding was however paused in 2024/25. TS invited the NE Bus Alliance to submit a Tier 2 bid to the 2025/26 Bus Infrastructure Fund and grant of £995K awarded. Approved projects were UTMC system upgrade for bus priority £490K, Design of upgrade of St Machar Dr/King St from roundabout to signals with bus priority £50K and RTPI upgrade and expansion across the region £455K.	**A submission to the 26/27 BIF has been successful with £465K awarded for the following projects as agreed by Board in Sept for endorsing by the NE Bus Alliance : Wellington Road further engagement, Union Square Bus Station enhancements, Baseline Monitoring and Future Technologies Review.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
P&R - Maximising the benefits of Park & Ride						
P&R 3:□ Work with both ACC and AC to ensure that we optimise the use of Park & Ride facilities across the region.	In the short term, Nestrans will support the creation of a footpath link from the P&R car park at Bridge of Don to the mainline bus stops on Ellon Road, increasing the number of bus services accessible to P&R users.	Kingswells Park & Ride - Resurfacing of the most used part of the lower car park and the access road by this section, which is most affected by poor road condition and pot holes.	£39.5K in 26/27 (all c/f from 25/26)	Major defect & pothole repairs completed. Total area resurfaced = 570 m^2 and ten gullies reset. On-site meeting with PTU & Roads Operations held to assess further surface repair requirements,	**ACC PTU has again requested a cost and timescale for additional works from Roads, but due to competing priorities no quote has been received yet and revised timescale for construction in early 2027 now proposed.**	↔
BC - Encouraging behaviour change						
BC 1: Continue to support the Getabout Partnership and development and roll out of a Regional Sustainable Travel Promotion Strategy to encourage people to travel by active and sustainable modes.	Getabout	Getabout launched 24/4/2009 and continues to be promoted as the Sustainable Transport Brand for the NE.		The new Strategic and Operational groups for Getabout continue to meet. The relationship between GetAbout and the Transport to Employment (TtE) grant has been considered and it is planned to use part of the grant funding to undertake a new series of projects to strengthen and modernise GetAbout to help more people, especially those facing barriers to work, access employment through better travel information, employer support, and targeted engagement. Work will include focus group research with communities and employers, as well as work to identify the main barriers to travelling to work, and use that insight to shape practical resources and messaging.	The project will then develop and roll out a long-term GetAbout toolkit, (including web content, employer resources, adverts and multimedia materials) to support sustainable travel and improve access to employment across the North East. **Invitation to tender for this work issued with submissions due 30 Oct. Further details in separate report (item 5.3 Nov 2026)**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	People & Place Marketing	Nestrans/ACC/AC to deliver this project region wide using this element of the People & Place grant. P&P project information for 2025/26 added to the Nestrans website with links to partner websites as relevant	£4.7K Rev and £5K Cap P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date = **£2.2K Rev**	Information on the projects awarded funding in 2026/27 has been published on the Nestrans website. **Event took place in Aberdeen at Pittodrie and the Cycle Hub to showcase some of the 2026/27 P&P projects and enable networking.**	**Feedback from the event including the presentation slides, summary of outcomes from the workshop and suggestions for future events and ongoing networking circulated.**	↑
BC 2:□ Continue to use the Getabout sustainable travel brand to promote cultural and behaviour change initiatives across the north east with	Radio Advertising	Radio advert booking contract with Original 106fm for 12 x 20 second ads per week has been renewed for a year to Dec 2025.	Costs met from Travel Planning budget unless otherwise stated.	**October radio adverts promoted THInC - Transport to Health and Social Care Information Centre.**	**November and December adverts will run a refreshed 40 second advert for the Winter Road Safety Campaign, Be Bright at Night.**	↑
BC 3: Encourage and support more organisations to develop and implement travel plans, including workplaces and schools across the region.	Travel Planning support	TravelKnowHow continue to provide assistance to companies to develop travel plans.	£30K in 26/27 Invoiced to date = **£7.3K**	Travelknowhow Scotland website and Getabout website continue to provide travel planning advice. **In 2026/27 the bespoke travel planning advice for the North East provided by Shona Drummond Marketing has been allocated to support NHS Grampian with the redevelopment of the Active and Sustainable travel resources on their staff facing intranet**		↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
BC 4: Continue to support the Nestrans Sustainable Travel Grant to help organisations promote and encourage active and sustainable travel.	Sustainable travel grant schemes (STGS)	Combined budget approved to continue to provide Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme and Community Sustainable Travel grant in 2022/23. Details on Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme criteria and guidance and the new Community Sustainable Travel Grant approved by Board in June 2021 can be viewed on the Nestrans website.	£55.8K in 26/27 (incl £25.8K c/f from 25/26) Claimed to date = £21.3K	Full details on any projects now delivered given in individual updates within the progress report along with details of grant payment. Upfront grants paid in 2026/27 to Rotary Club of Aberdeen Deeside Trust, Bridge of Don CC, Kincorth & Leggart CC and Ellon Baptist Church. **The Ellon Baptist church cycle parking and Kincorth benches and picnic table now installed.**	Belhelvie Community Council completed the path upgrade between Old Road Balmedie and the Sensory Garden and STGS contribution claimed. (see AT1d and AT3 for details on the individual projects).	↑
BC 5: Continue to support The Travel Know How Scotland website and toolkit and other travel planning initiatives.	Travel Know How Scotland	Travel Know How website launched on 22 September 2016 to help organisations create travel plans. Promotional leaflets and business cards have been produced on behalf of Transport Scotland and Nestrans have started to distribute these.	Costs to be met from travel planning budget	National level support for Travelknowhow Scotland will continue to be funded by all RTPs in 26/27 but be replaced with a focus on local, bespoke solutions at RTP level thereafter.	**Q2 invoice received and Nestrans has subsequently recharged the agreed contributions to this from each RTP.**	↑
BC 6: Continue to support and promote shared transport initiatives, including Car Sharing, Car Clubs and bike hire schemes as useful tools to encourage behaviour change.	Aberdeen Car Club	Aberdeen first launched a car club on 2 April 2012 with Co-wheels and become the first car club in Scotland to introduce electric vehicles and the first in the world to trial hydrogen vehicles. Although no longer the main contract supplier for the City Council, Co-wheels continue to operate car club vehicles in NE. Following a tendering process, ACC chose Enterprise and contract started on 1 June 2022 for 3 years with option to extend for a further 2 years .	£5K in 24/25 (all c/f from 23/24) Invoiced to date = £4.7K	Car Club Members can book a car, via an app or the internet and are charged on a pay-as-you-drive basis. Enterprise also provide ACC employees with managed pool cars for work purposes. A further £7K has been allocated to this project from the Local Authority Direct Award funding.	**ACC starting to develop tendering process prior to the current contract ending in May 2027.**	↑

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BC 9:□ Utilise increased access to data and enhanced digital capabilities to improve provision of information on journey options, live journey	RTPI E-paper Major Component Replacements	Due to the move to renewable energy/low powered displays, there is a requirement to replace parts such as solar panels, batteries etc. Component life is estimated at present so this is principally a contingency budget based on best judgement	£36K in 26/27	Project was funded via People and Place grant in 2025/26 and Aberdeenshire Council ordered majority of major component replacements through Pindar with some costs via Vix. Nestrans budget approved for 2026/27.	**AC has received a Bus Infrastructure Fund grant that will be used to deliver this project in 2026/27. Virement proposed in separate budget report.**	↑
BC 10:□ Enhance data gathering, including conducting a region-wide travel survey to provide comprehensive data on how people in the North East of Scotland travel and how they potentially could travel in the future. This will allow Nestrans to focus our work on removing barriers to sustainable travel and improving walking, cycling and public transport in the North East as well as providing us with a baseline from which to monitor delivery of the RTS.	Regional response to national traffic demand targets	Jacobs undertook study into what may be considered realistic for the NE given measures being considered for implementation nationally and regionally and to define the regional offers and asks of Gov and other stakeholders in relation to contributing to the national car km reduction target and transport decarbonisation aims. Final report published on website in July 2023.	£32K in 26/27 (incl £24K c/f from 25/26 Invoiced to date = £10K	Jacobs has been commissioned to update previous study by refreshing baseline evidence with latest data , incorporating emerging carbon and vehicle-km reduction targets and revising the assessment of potential impacts of different options. An initial draft on the assessment of the impacts of various demand management options has been reviewed and workshop was held with Council officers to discuss this.	**Final draft report received and subject of separate report on agenda (item 6.2). Findings being used to support development of revised future year "with policy" scenarios for the ASAM strategic model.**	↑
	People & Place Monitoring	Nestrans/ACC/AC to deliver this element of the People & Place grant	£8.5K capital P&P grant in 26/27	Nestrans continues to work with Transport Scotland and RTP colleagues in development of a future Monitoring & Evaluation framework and a new projects register and metrics reporting tool issued by TS on 12 June. Nestrans arranged an online briefing on 12 Aug with delivery partners to enable TS to outline the new reporting requirements.	**New format has been used by delivery partners for Q2 reports.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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	People & Place monitoring and evaluation	At the special meeting in May, the Board agreed to use of £30K revenue from general reserves to support the creation of an effective evaluation and monitoring framework for the People and Place 2026/27 programme and general evaluation activities.	£30K in 26/27 Invoiced to date = £4.7K	2025/26 P&P Evaluation report submitted to TS and approved by Board in Sept for publishing on Nestrans website.	**Aecom commissioned to prepare Integrated Impact Assessments for the 26/27 People & Place and Transport to Employment Programmes.**	↑
RD - Maintaining and improving the region's road network						
RD 1: A90(N) and Ellon to Peterhead and Fraserburgh route action	a) Dualling the Ellon bypass to Toll of Birness including upgrades to roundabouts b) Junction upgrade at Toll of Birness to an at-grade roundabout c) Provision of sections of 2+1 lanes on the A90(N) and A952 between Toll of Birness and Peterhead & Fraserburgh d) Targeted safety improvements to the A952, including a roundabout at Cortes junction.	Initial STAG appraisal work has already been carried out to identify and assess the options on this section of the corridor. This strategy will build on the initial work to further develop and deliver a preferred option for each of the above, taking into account the results of the appraisal carried out to date, in particular the environmental constraints associated with the crossing of the River Ythan which has designated areas of nature conservation associated with its estuarial waters and should be protected. The City Region Deal Joint Cttee agreed in June 2022 that a review of previous appraisals be undertaken and highlight any material changes. The report on this review was completed in May 2023 and is published on the Nestrans website.	Commission being funded via City Region Deal.	Stantec and Aecom appointed to undertake a study into short to medium term options funded via City Region Deal. Case for Change, Preliminary Options Appraisal, a specialised HGV survey at Toll of Birness and Detailed Options Appraisal published on the Nestrans website. Aberdeenshire Council now progressing the DMRB stage 3 for the Toll of Birness and Cortes Junction junctions using ACRD funding. Arcadis appointed via SCAPE framework and Nestrans part of client team. ACRD Joint Cttee on 4 Sept approved use of procurement savings from other STA projects being used to support additional design development work at Cortes.	Public consultation closed on 18 Sept with good level of responses received. **Consultants continuing to progress the DMRB Stage 3 Design and Report, with submission scheduled for early 2027. Following approval of material change requests by UK / Scottish Govs, additional design and engineering assessment work at Cortes Junction has been commissioned.**	↑

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RD 11: Work with the Councils and Scottish Government to monitor, review and seek an appropriate funding mechanism to mitigate the cumulative impacts of development on the transport network where deemed necessary.	Regional Transport Impacts of Renewable Energy Transition	Assessing the cumulative transport impacts of energy transition projects. This work will be funded via ACRD using Aberdeenshire Council's STA budget.	Costs will be recharged to ACRD-STA Invoiced to date = **£43.1K**	Tender returns assessed and contract awarded to a Systra led consortium, which includes MDS Transmodal, Connected Economics and Beckett Rankine). ACC and AC staff form part of the client team with Nestrans. **Following completion of the engagement and project-sifting stages, the applied methodology, project longlist and shortlist, including the rationale for shortlisting, were shared with stakeholders as part of Decision Gateway 1 on 8 October.**	**The study is now progressing to infrastructure capability and constraints assessment to identify potential pressures on strategic transport networks and inform future infrastructure requirements.**	↑
	Peterhead / Fraserburgh / Ellon – Future Scenarios Study	Creation of future development scenarios and assessment of their related transport demand. This work will also be funded via ACRD using Aberdeenshire Council's STA budget.	Costs will be recharged to ACRD-STA Invoiced to date = £14.7K	Draft tender documentation approved by Transport Scotland and discussed with AGCC. Tenders returned in June and following evaluation awarded to Aecom with inception meeting held at start of August. Logic mapping workshop held at end of August. **Stakeholder engagement underway, with research focusing on barriers and constraints to future growth, connectivity and accessibility across the Buchan corridor.**	**Interviews, focus groups and targeted freight engagement are being undertaken to inform future scenarios and provide evidence on how transport and connectivity can support long-term economic growth and community wellbeing.**	↑

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RD 12: Consolidated asset management and prioritisation system:	b) Climate change adaptation and mitigation;			**Reporting for 2025/26 is being prepared and will be agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair before submission to the Sustainable Scotland Network by 30 November 2026. Details will be reported for information to the next Board meeting in Feb 2027.**	**A full report was not possible to bring to the Board for consideration on 11 Nov due to awaiting details of energy use at ASH from landlord and staff absences impacting on preparation and completion before papers circulated on 3 Nov.**	↔
	e) Improved adaptability to climate change; and	Strategic Infrastructure climate resilience	£20K in 26/27	Nestrans signed the Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland (CRIS) Forum Memorandum of Understanding in May 2025. **The Forum is looking to commission a study to assess climate-related risk interdependencies between critical infrastructure Systems in Scotland to enable effective planning, prioritisation and investment in adaptation and resilience measures. This work is being co-ordinated by Network Rail and led by Glasgow University. Nestrans has signed up to the collaboration of partners and will contribute £10K in 26/27.**	**Nestrans is also supporting a research bid with RGU and Hirtrans to consider the application of mobile phone and network monitoring data to issues of asset management and climate resilience on the strategic rural road network. Bid has been successful and final project set up and funding contributions to be arranged.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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FR - Facilitating the movement of freight						
FR 1: To continue to facilitate a North East Freight Forum to provide a voice for freight interests and an avenue for dialogue between business and decision-makers.	Freight Action Plan and Freight Forum	Finalised Freight Action Plan and Freight Forum meetings can be viewed on Nestrans website alongside HGV route maps for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire areas and Civitas Portis funded assessments and evaluations.	£17.4K in 26/27 (incl £7.4K c/f from 25/26) Invoiced to date = £5.3K	Freight Forum meeting held on 12 March 2026 disseminating latest work on Battery Electric Vehicles as part of the agenda. Final report on Building Confidence in eHDV project was reported to Board in June and is now published on Nestrans website.	**Nestrans to continue with engagement, knowledge sharing and facilitation across the sector.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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FR 5: To promote the opportunities for less environmentally damaging practices, by supporting the use of cleaner vehicles...	... such as through the ECO Stars programme, encouraging mode shift to railfreight or maritime where appropriate, break bulk and effective last mile solutions where there is a demonstrated need.	Brief prepared for a study into the technical and economical feasibility of the transition to Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) Heavy Goods Vehicles in the North East of Scotland and associated infrastructure requirements. Tender submissions reviewed and consultants (Systra) procured. Inception meeting held 21 Mar 2025.	Commission being funded via City Region Deal.	Stages 2 (analysis of freight and logistics patterns unique to the North East) and 3 (assessment of market readiness and infrastructure barriers) are complete. Stage 4 focuses on developing a scenario-based roadmap for the rollout of battery electric vehicle (BEV) HGV charging infrastructure in North East Scotland over the short (1–3 year) and mid-term (3–5 year) periods. Stage 5 outlines standardised infrastructure requirements for public HGV charging hubs and depot-based charging site designs, including both private and shared depot configurations. Study shows most NE HGV movements are short, depot based trips, making them well suited to early BEV adoption. Current BEV uptake remains very low, with costs, grid constraints and lack of HGV appropriate public charging as key barriers. Standard charging hub designs have been developed and findings validated through operator engagement, Study complete and published on Nestrans website.	**While the hydrogen refuelling and complementary BEVs feasibility study have concluded, the work continues to provide value beyond the completion of the projects. Recent discussions with TS's ZE HDV Energy Infrastructure Team highlighted the relevance of the BEV study, with findings being used to inform ongoing national-level work on zero-emission heavy vehicle infrastructure planning, demonstrating the wider applicability of the evidence base developed through the studies and contribution to informing future infrastructure investment and policy development.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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FR 6: Support the uptake of cargo bikes and alternatively fuelled smaller vehicles for shorter distance internal freight movements within the region.	E-cargo bikes	ACC awarded funding for cargo bikes through £10.3M for S Gov for LEZ schemes in 2019/20 and Nestrans undertook the procurement on behalf of the Council of 6 E-cargo bikes (4xChristiana, 2xRiese and Muller) and accessories.		Nestrans managed the pilot trial that offers businesses in Aberdeen city centre a bike for up to a year for last mile deliveries. The bikes have been serviced by Edinburgh Bike Co. and this is the final service within the 5 year plan purchased via the original grant award. Now that ACC is outwith the 5 year disposal of assets clause within the original grant offer, they have received confirmation from Transport Scotland that they have no objection to the bikes being donated to delivery partners that have time and resource to ensure they are used to full potential.	**Officers have had a request from an organisation interested in using a cargo bike for deliveries and are also in discussion with existing P&P delivery partners around potential usage.**	↑
AS - External air and sea connections						
AS 1: Nestrans will continue to work closely with Aberdeen International Airport to maintain and enhance …	... connectivity to international hubs (particularly London Heathrow, Amsterdam Schiphol and Paris Charles de Gaulle).			**EasyJet has announced the launch of two new routes from Aberdeen next summer. Flights from Aberdeen to Barcelona will launch on 31 March 2027, operating twice weekly on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Flights to Mallorca will begin on 3 May 2027, operating twice weekly on Thursdays and Sundays.**		↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
RS - Road safety and casualty reduction						
RS 1: Nestrans will work with local authorities, Police Scotland and others through the Road Casualty Reduction Partnership, Road Safety North East Scotland, ...	... to prioritise safety within transport policy and seek to achieve ambitious targets for reducing casualties and eradicating fatalities in our transport systems.	Road Safety North East Scotland is a partnership consisting of Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, NESTRANS, NHS Grampian, North Safety Camera Unit, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, who seek to promote road safety and road casualty reduction across the North East of Scotland.		The RSNES Twitter account is: https://twitter.com/roadsafetynes	**The next meeting of the RSNES operations group will be 3 Dec. Transport Scotland published the Finalised road casualty statistics for 2025 on 28 Oct 2026**	↑
RS 4: Work with the Roads Authorities to identify routes and locations where enhancements or speed restrictions	B999/Shielhill Road junction improvement	Contribution towards the detailed design development, data collection, land ownership and permissions activities for a road safety improvement on this strategic route.	£623.6K in 26/27 (incl £193.6K c/f from 25/26) Invoiced to date = **£88.3K**	**Four tenders returned and were evaluated, with tender now awarded and site works commenced.**	**Additional contribution to project proposed in separate budget report.**	↑
RS7: Nestrans will continue to engage with the public and other partners, including Road Safety North East Scotland, to raise	Road Safety North East Scotland (RSNES)	Getabout regularly participate in safety campaigns in partnership with the Road Safety North East Scotland partnership and Police Scotland.	£10K in 26/27	Work ongoing through the RSNES Strategic Group to identify joint working opportunities to promote road safety in the region. **Be Bright at Night campaign again being run with Getabout.**	**Police Scotland preparing costs for consideration by the partners for a winter safety policing campaign.**	↑
RU - Improving accessibility in rural areas						
RU 4: Explore opportunities to develop an enhanced demand responsive transport network, …	...open to all, that expands provision for journeys to work and education as well as shopping, health and social trips.	Opportunities to enhance existing services in rural areas (including DRT) to be looked at by AC Public Transport Unit. Interventions to be considered that have a legacy beyond this funding and will seek to establish a case for service retention of any enhancements beyond grant funding period	Costs to be met from Travel to Employment grant	It has been agreed to allocate £5K to Banffshire Partnership to extend the Foggie to Banff service by an extra bus in the morning and evening to better connect with no 35 Ab/Elgin service and £35K to AC PTU to provide another bus either end of day for the A2B central bus service.	**Further details in separate Transport to Employment report.**	↑

Policy Headings	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
RTS actions	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
RU 5: Encourage and facilitate the trial of new models of rural public transport provision, including :	Demand responsive transport, MaaS journey planning and transport integration opportunities, new start entrepreneurs and community led initiatives, maximising technological and digital opportunities with partners such as Cairngorms National Park and others.	See RE5 - Scoping of Live Lab proposals. The themes suggested for exploration through the live labs commission include Mobility Hubs and Rural Mobility as a Service Applications.	Commission being funded via City Region Deal Invoiced to date in 26/27 = **£120.8K**	Aecom appointed following tender process for the detailed design and preparation of the OBC for a mobility hub at Ballater alongside the City Mini Hubs (see BC 7). Work on the Ballater Mobility Hub and Coach Parking facility continues to advance. An interim progress update on the Church Square Mobility Hub OBC was reported to the Nestrans Board in Sept 2026. **The coach parking element has now reached RIBA Stage 3, in alignment with the wider mobility hub proposals. Of the two initially identified sites, a high-level flood assessment has identified the location north of the A93 as the preferred viable option, and work is continuing to progress this site.** **Work also continues to explore funding opportunities and delivery pathways beyond the Deal programme**	**Discussions with CNPA and AC are ongoing to explore opportunities to further advance the Church Square mobility hub design. The coach parking scheme has now reached RIBA Stage 3 with the coach parking OBC is expected to be completed in January 2027 and reports on both elements scheduled for consideration by the Nestrans Board and Joint Committee in February 2027.**	↑
		Silver Circle Hospital Volunteer Driving Scheme and Weekly Community Bus Projects in Upper Strathdon	£0.5K Capital and £25K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date = **£12.8K Rev**	Grant combined for provision of both projects in 2026/27 and grant offer letter issued. **Q2 claim for costs incurred from Jul - Sept received and paid.**	**Continuing to provide a weekly community bus and hospital volunteer driver scheme for the community.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
HE - Improving access to health						
HE 1: Continue to work with partners, including the NHS, Health and Social Care Partnership, Scottish Ambulance Service, Community Transport Association and Local Authorities, to further develop and deliver the Health and Transport Action Plan.	Health & Transport Action Plan	HTAP works being progressed by HTAP support manager and sub groups. Further funding approved for 2022/23 to continue part funding of the HTAP Programme Support Manager and general HTAP actions.	£31.1K in 26/27	The HTAP Steering Group meet every 2 months. **Minute of the last Steering Group meeting on 17 Sept is appended to the Director's Report, with next meeting scheduled for 1 Dec 2026.**	The Programme Manager has established three project groups with the aim of achieving objectives set out in the refreshed HTAP Plan. The groups are: (i) Developing a Sustainable Model for Community Transport; (ii) Creating a Centre of Excellence; and (iii) Health & Transport Data Sharing Group.	↑
HE 2: Continue to work with our partners in the Health and Transport Action Plan to provide advice, guidance and support for people accessing appointments whether travelling to a hospital or GP or accessing an E-clinic, telephone or video appointment.	THInC In The City	The two wheelchair accessible vehicles operated by Buchan Dial A Community Bus and booked via THInC have been funded by Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership.	£10K Rev P&P grant in 26/27 Claimed to date = **£7.4K**	Top up funding provided through P&P to enable further meeting of demand for the THInC in the City service in Aberdeenshire North and Aberdeen City. Buchan Dial A Community Bus took delivery of 2 new electric minibuses at end of March that are now being used for THInC Services in Aberdeen once they had been branded and barring the time for the safety checks that must be carried out every 6 - 10 weeks.	**Continue to provide services integrated with the THInC booking system. Due to oversubscription, it is targeted at aiming to improve connectivity for low income households without access to a car and those attending health appointments and preventative social care classes.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
HE 3: Continue support for THInC, to provide advice and sign posting for transport to health and social care appointments.	THInC, Public Transport Units and Support to the NHS/Patient Transport Service.	Patient transport requests for hospital appointments, hospital discharge and COVID-19 tests were directed to THInC from NHSG, the PTS, the Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub and direct from members of the public. THInC staff liaised with transport operators including private operators contracted by NHSG, community/voluntary transport organisations and Councils to arrange transport.	£13.9K in 26/27	THInC continues to be funded by Nestrans, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council. THInC is included within vaccination appointment letters. A new webpage for THInC has been created and is hosted as part of the Nestrans website account. The address is: https://thinc-hub.org Costs advised for 2026/27 and Nestrans share = £13.9K and matches budget allocation.	Nestrans and NHSG continue to promote the service. **Radio adverts currently airing on Original 106fm to advertise THInC.**	↑
AF - The affordability of transport						
AF 1: Work with bus operators and local authorities, through the North East Bus Alliance, to expand the availability of fares capping technology across all bus services in the north east,	providing passengers with a guarantee that they will always pay the best price for their travel. First in Aberdeen already offer 'Tap and Cap' payments across their fleet ensuring that no matter how many times a passenger uses their services, they will only pay the cost of a day or weekly ticket.	Applications opened on 10 Jan 2022 for 5-21 year olds living in Scotland to apply for an national entitlement card (NEC) or Young Scot NEC to enable access to free bus travel, with the under 22s free bus travel scheme going live on January 2022.		**Scottish Government wish to roll out a £2 bus fare, which they aim to implement Scotland wide by the end for current Parliament term. (see BUS 2). This was first introduced as a pilot within Hitrans/ZetTrans regions in 2026 and has now been rolled out in the SPT region.**	**The First Minister announced plans to roll this out in Nestrans region from April 2027. Further details in separate report on agenda.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
AF 8: Enhance the network of safe and secure cycling and walking links, focussed on connecting communities currently experiencing higher levels of inequality and …	… explore opportunities for cycle training, enhance secure cycle parking, bike maintenance initiatives and bike hire opportunities, to remove some of the barriers to cycling for those on lower incomes.	Bike Reuse and Recycling project is continuing as part of the People and Place 2026/27 grant, with Stella's Voice and Gordon Rural Action (The Bikery) upcycling bicycles to either sell at reduced cost or be referred for free for those who would otherwise not be able to afford a bike. (see AT 6)	Costs to be met from P&P and Travel to Employment grants	Access to bikes and adult cycle training will also be supported in 2026/27 via the Transport to Employment grant and delivered through existing People and Place delivery partners. Details on the 2026/27 People and Place projects have been added to the Nestrans website.	**Further updates on the 26/27 P&P and Transport to Employment Programmes in separate reports on agenda.**	↑
AA - Improving access to the transport network for all						
AA 1: A programme of access for all improvements at all key public transport points, and within urban areas and town centres, to benefit those who have mobility difficulties.	b) Work with Aberdeen City Council and the owners of Aberdeen Bus station to upgrade facilities to include enhanced waiting facilities, seating, information and support staff where appropriate.			**As noted under BUS2e above - new real time departure boards installed at Aberdeen bus station, supported by 14 new e-paper timetable stance information screens, funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Infrastructure Fund**		↑
	f) Upgrade facilities at Peterhead bus station to improve access and operation of services within the site.	Opened July 2007. Redesign of Site to include waiting room minor refurbishments, footpath improvements, bus shelter replacement and upgrade of RTI to E-paper Displays and a mural completed 31 July 2023	£20K in 26/27	Small infrastructure project to improve pedestrian access around Peterhead bus station; includes installation of tactile paving and additional lighting.	**AC has received a Bus Infrastructure Fund grant that will be used to deliver this project in 2026/27. Virement proposed in separate budget report.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
AA 3: Work with bus operators and local authority partners to improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services in order to make this a more ...	... Reliable mode of transport, thus reducing levels of uncertainty and anxiety for many when travelling (further details on this are contained within the chapter 'improving the region's bus network').	See actions under ART and BUS.		**Upperkirkgate and Broad Street road closures are in place for the Winter Festival from 6pm on 30 Oct 2926 to 10pm on 17 Jan 2027 and details of diversions for affected services during this period are on bus operators websites.**	**Details of closure being displayed on real time passenger information (RTPI) boards on Broad Street and through service updates broadcast on RTPI boards at other sites.**	↔
AA 6: Work with partners, including groups representing the range of protected characteristics, …	... to better understand the needs of people who find it difficult to access the transport network, in order to better inform design and decision making.	Part of Transport to Employment grant being used for desktop research to understand travel to work barriers with a focus on transport poverty and to identify a shortlist of interventions that implementation will assist with tacking child poverty.	Costs to be met from Travel to Employment grant	Tender brief developed and issued via Scotland Excel framework on 3 July with a closing date for submissions of 3 Aug 2026. Stantec appointed. **Interim Evidence and Delivery report work rapid review completed and further details in separate Transport to Employment report on agenda.**	**Microsoft Power BI data model to be further developed to assist identifying future priority areas for intervention.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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PP - Planning and designing places for people						
PP 1: Provide support and input to the development planning process at a national, regional and local level, in line with the key priorities of this strategy.	Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM) - Nestrans manage and maintain the strategic regional model to ensure it provides a suitably robust tool for transport and land use appraisal	Nestrans in partnership with TS, AC, ACC and SDPA appointed Systra in July 2019 following competitive tender to update ASAM to a 2019 base year with 2022, 2027, 2032, 2037 and 2042 forecast years. Significant data collection exercise undertaken in autumn 2019 to update and calibrate the base model to 2019 and to reflect change in traffic patterns as a result of the AWPR. PBA appointed as auditor through Transport Scotland's Latis framework. Info from the national land use model used to develop forecast years under high and low growth scenarios in accordance with the national model.	£10K Revenue in 26/27 towards management and maintenance of ASAM	Model development report completed and auditor has finalised the audit. ASAM19 data continuing to be requested and provided for a number of studies that have been commissioned by Nestrans and the Councils. Memo of Understanding being signed with Transport Scotland regarding support for future Management and Maintenance of ASAM via Latis. TS procuring updates to national and regional models, including reviews of active travel, fares, land use updates, infrastructure assumptions and forecast year scenarios. Updates to ASAM this year have either been funded by TS or via ACRD funded projects accessing the model and carry forward of some unused budget to 26/27 approved.	Jacobs consultants appointed by TS to undertake updates to ASAM and Nestrans to support this work as required. Access to ASAM data agreed for ART Outline Business Case and for the Cumulative Impact Assessment work to help inform the Council's LDPs. Access to ASAM now also agreed for Wellington Road Junction Improvement modelling. **Methodology for update to the "With Policy" future year forecasts agreed with TS and commissioned.**	↑

Policy Headings	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
RTS actions	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
	Development Plans	Further cumulative transport appraisal works in support of LDP MIR allocations completed and supplementary draft CTA report with option testing based on LDP allocations reported to Board in June 2019 and now published on Nestrans website. Scottish Ministers have approved the Aberdeen City & Shire Strategic Development Plan subject to modifications. Nestrans commissioned baseline transport data from ASAM19 and draft LDP transport evidence report received and shared with Planning and Transport officers within both Councils in 2024.	Costs to be met via ACRD Strategic Transport Appraisal. Claimed in 25/26 = £53.6K Invoiced to date in 26/27 = £17.3K	Nestrans working in partnership with both Councils in relation to the cumulative transport appraisal for their Local Development Plans (LDPs). Consultants (Stantec) appointed following tender appraisal. A connectivity dashboard has now been finalised, incorporating enhanced functionality following feedback from both Councils, and updated to include additional sites submitted through Call for Sites / Call for Ideas processes. Both Councils are continuing to use the Connectivity Tool to assess all individual sites and feedback on local living tool positive. Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) have now been agreed and have been submitted to Transport Scotland for review and approval. The cumulative transport appraisal will inform the identification of a preferred spatial strategy to underpin both LDPs and the preferred strategy will be fully appraised using the ASAM19 strategic transport model.	Currently have AC's preferred sites. **The "with policy" forecast assumptions have now been agreed and are set out in Report 6.2: Car Reduction Evidence. A proxy dataset has been agreed with ACC to address outstanding site assessment information, enabling the initial ASAM19 "without policy" model run to commence in Nov. While future consultation may result in changes to preferred spatial strategies and require further modelling, the ACRD contribution continues to provide a robust evidence base for the current stage of plan preparation.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
PP 5: Work with our partners to communicate the vision and overarching ambition for our places, particularly our city and town centres and ...	.... in line with existing plans such as the City Centre Masterplan, to build support and understanding for the actions that will be needed in terms of traffic management and reprioritisation of road space to more active and sustainable modes.	Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan Streetscape. ACC is to receive £20million from the UK Levelling Up Fund which will be used towards the development of Union Street Central and the new market building. Streetscape works began on 29 April 2024 to widen pavements and create new cycle lanes. Construction of the new Aberdeen Market will be progressed in tandem. Bus services are being rerouted between Market St and Bridge St via Guild St and Schoolhill. Access for pedestrians and deliveries still in place.		**Essential overnight works will begin on Union Street Central on Monday 2 November until Friday 13 November as part of the completion of the streetscape project in time for the Christmas Parade on Sunday 15 November.**	**Further contribution to this project this financial year is proposed in separate budget report.**	↑
NT - Future impact of new technologies						
NT 2: Identify opportunities, in partnership with the Councils and bus operators, to use City Management Operations and the data sensor network…	… to enhance priority for public transport, for example through signal control junctions, early identification and management of congestion and appropriate routeing of traffic.	**Upgrade to the ACC Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) System to enable the provision of bus priority by linking existing regional real time passenger information, specifically automatic vehicle location data from on vehicle electronic ticket machines and service schedule data with Aberdeen City Council's traffic control system SCOOT. (See BUS 2a above)**		**Upgrade to the ACC Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) Common Database (CDM) now live, funded by Transport Scotland's Bus Infrastructure Fund.**	**Ongoing configuration now taking place.**	↑

Policy Headings	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
RTS actions	Project/Action	Description	Budget	Current Status	Future Actions	
NT 4: Support and facilitate the introduction of trials of new and emerging …	...transport technologies in the region e.g. Connected and Autonomous Vehicles.	Drones / Airspace / Automated Logistics Study - This will examine how drone and automated logistics operations can be safely integrated with regional transport and aviation systems. This will include consideration of airspace interactions, infrastructure requirements, and potential site options, ensuring the region is positioned to support emerging logistics technologies.	Costs will be recharged to ACRD-STA Invoiced to date = **£54.6K**	Tender window closed on 6 May 2026. Tender evaluation completed and the preferred bidder (Frazer Nash) appointed and contract has been signed. Stage 2 (Policy and Technology Review) has been completed, with the draft report submitted and feedback gathered through a well-attended stakeholder workshop in early August. The project has now progressed to Stage 3, with work continuing to identify and assess key constraints, opportunities and future scenarios. **Engagement with the Net Zero Technology Centre has helped inform the assessment of opportunities and constraints associated with the development of its ACRD-funded Unmanned Aerial Systems Hub in Aberdeenshire, while the study is also considering lessons from other emerging initiatives, including the Tay Cities Region Deal-funded Montrose Drone Port.**	**The 3rd stakeholder workshop is scheduled for 7 Oct and study due to complete in Jan 2027. Stakeholders have highlighted the study's potential to support future innovation, investment and funding opportunities across the region. Following approval of the relevant Material Change Requests by the UK and Scottish Governments, procurement savings have been reallocated to support delivery of the Investment Prospectus 2045.**	↑

Policy Headings RTS actions	Current Actions/ Progress			Future Actions/ Progress		Status
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NT 5: Work with Community Planning Partnerships, our partner local authorities and …	... Universities to identify the potential for and provide support to enhanced awareness around opportunities and future skills in the transport sector.	Nestrans are statutory partners of the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships, contribute financially and attend appropriate meetings.	£10K in 26/27 Invoiced in full	Membership costs for both Community Planning partners in 2026/27 paid. **Supported Uni of Abdn MSc student has completed their Achieving Modal Shift in North East Scotland - Enhancing Community Confidence in the Public Transport Network project. Director gave a guest lecture to students of the Sustainability Transitions MSc course on 2 Nov.**	**Will be working with RGU on research bid considering the application of mobile phone and network monitoring data to issues of asset management and climate resilience on the strategic rural road network. (see RD 12 e)**	↑

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