

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**19 DECEMBER 2006****DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

This report updates the Partnership Board on various matters of interest and relevance to the work of the Partnership and on progress on a number of operational matters.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Partnership Board :-

- (i) agrees to receive a detailed report on Scotland's National Transport Strategy and related rail, bus and freight documents on 16 January 2007;
- (ii) agrees to receive a report addressing consultations by neighbouring Regional Transport Partnerships on their Draft Regional Transport Strategies on 16 January 2007;
- (iii) agrees to receive a report on longer term arrangements for external communications to a future meeting; and
- (iv) otherwise notes the updates given in the report.

2 DISCUSSION**Scotland's National Transport Strategy**

- 2.1 As Board Members are aware, the Transport Minister launched Scotland's National Transport Strategy on 5 December, along with three associated "daughter papers", Scotland's Railways, an Action Plan for Buses in Scotland and a Freight Action Plan for Scotland. An oral overview of these documents will be provided on 19 December. It is proposed that a detailed report on the National Transport Strategy and related rail, buses and freight documents will be submitted to the Partnership's next meeting on 16 January 2007.

Strategic Transport Projects Review

- 2.2 An important role of the TACTRAN Regional Transport Strategy will be informing and influencing the Scottish Executive's Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), which will determine national transport spending priorities in the period from 2012 – 2022.
- 2.3 The STPR is due to be completed in late summer 2008. The Scottish Executive and Transport Scotland have appointed consultants Jacobs to support development work on the STPR. A separate commission has been issued to the Faber Maunsell consultancy to complete an assessment of the options for a new Forth crossing, by the end of May 2007.

- 2.4 A number of Reference Groups have been established by Transport Scotland to help inform the STPR and offer objective and constructive comment on emerging information analysis and proposals. One of these consists of the seven RTP Lead Officers. Other groups have been established covering Planning; Enterprise, Business and Freight; Environmental Interests; and Public Transport and Mobility. The Director of Planning and Transportation for Dundee City Council sits on the Planning reference group.
- 2.5 The current consultants work programme for undertaking the STPR is outlined below :-
- (i) Analysis of existing/future network conditions – end March 2007
 - (ii) Identification of gaps and shortfalls – end May 2007
 - (iii) Option Generation and Sifting Report – end August 2007
 - (iv) Scheme Appraisal Reports – end December 2007 and June 2008
 - (v) SEA and Final Reports – end August 2008
- 2.6 A meeting between Transport Scotland, the consultants and RTP's is being held in mid-January to identify proposals and options which are emerging from Regional Transport Strategies. An oral update on that meeting will be given to the Partnership's meeting on 16 January 2007.

Regional Transport Strategy Consultations

- 2.7 A number of neighbouring RTP's have recently launched, or will shortly launch, public consultations on their Draft Regional Transport Strategies. The Transport (Scotland) Act and related RTS Guidance requires that RTP's consult each other on the content and purpose of their proposed strategies. The following invitations to comment by the response deadline indicated below have been received :-
- Shetland – 26 January
SESTRAN – 28 January
HITRANS – 31 January
- 2.8 It is understood that NESTRANS will be issuing their Draft RTS for public consultation on 14 December, closing on 8 February and that SPT are to issue their document on 20 December, with a response deadline of 14 February. A detailed report, addressing any issues arising from neighbouring RTPs' Draft Strategies, will be submitted to the Partnership's meeting on 16 January 2007.

Other Consultations

- 2.9 A number of other invitations to comment on consultations have been received.
- 2.10 **Consultation on Disabled Persons Parking (Scotland) Bill** - this is a consultation by Jackie Baillie MSP, who is seeking to introduce a Bill, with the aim of simplifying the process for enforcing and penalising abuse of disabled parking bays. Views are sought by 27 February 2007. The responsibility for providing and managing disabled persons parking remains with local authorities, therefore it is proposed that this matter is remitted to constituent Councils for consideration.

- 2.11 **Disability Discrimination Act 2005 – Duty to Publish a Disability Equality Scheme** – TACTRAN is already bound by the general duty on all public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and to promote race equality. The Scottish Executive's Equality Unit has recently invited comments on a proposal to extend these obligations by including RTP's in the list of various public bodies that currently have a duty to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out what they will do to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Under these proposals the Partnership would have to publish a scheme by December 2007. Comments on this proposal are sought by 19 January 2007. The consultation also indicates that Regulations to introduce specific duties to promote gender equality are currently being prepared and will be consulted on in due course. Promoting inclusion is an important aspect of the Partnership's emerging RTS and the principles behind the proposal to require publication of a Disability Equality Scheme are supported. It is envisaged that this matter will be discussed at the Forum of RTP Chairs meeting in early January (see below) and it is proposed that a further report on this matter, taking account of cross-RTP views, is submitted to the meeting on 16 January 2007.

Forum of Chairs of Regional Transport Partnerships

- 2.12 A forum of RTP Chairs has been established to enable cross-Partnership discussion on matters of joint interest and provide opportunities to improve transport planning and delivery, through sharing of best practice and information. The last meeting of the group was held in Aberdeen on 29 September and was attended by the Chair and Director. The Draft Minute of this meeting is included as an Appendix to this report, for information, along with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding the group has adopted. The next meeting of the group is on 9th and 10th January in Shetland and will be attended by the Chair and Director. It is proposed that the following meeting will be hosted by TACTRAN.

Partnership Staffing

- 2.13 Further to the update provided on progress on staff appointments on 21 November, the appointment of Ms Merry Scott to the post of Travel Plan Officer has now been confirmed. Merry takes up post with effect from 1 January. A report on taking forward a Travel Plan strategy and related outputs which are conditions of Scottish Executive grant funding for this post during the current and next financial years, will be submitted to a future meeting.
- 2.14 Following interviews on 30 November Ms Ashley Aird has been appointed to the post of Office Manager/PA to the Director. Ms Aird is currently employed with Scottish Power and takes up post in mid-January.
- 2.15 At its meeting on 21 November the Partnership approved an initial "Model 1" core staffing structure. Work is ongoing on developing detailed Job Descriptions for the second tier posts of Strategy Manager and Projects Manager, with a view to advertising these posts early in the New Year. Appointments to technical support posts will be progressed by both Managers, when appointed.

Corporate Identity, Website and Public Relations

- 2.16 At its meeting on 25 April 2006 the Partnership noted progress on developing a TACTRAN website, approved the TACTRAN logo, and agreed that communications and public relations support would be initially provided by Perth & Kinross Council (Report RTP/06/15 refers). It was noted at that time that interaction between TACTRAN and the media will be expected to increase, particularly once the Regional Transport Strategy and related delivery progresses, and it was agreed that external communications would be the subject of a report to a future meeting.
- 2.17 The TACTRAN website was launched in early October and appears to have been generally well received. The website is being maintained meantime by CDU Ltd., with the intention that routine maintenance and updating will become the responsibility of the Office Manager/PA when they are in post.
- 2.18 Whilst the primary focus remains on developing the RTS, establishing the Partnership Headquarters and core staffing, and compiling key policy and governance procedures, it is proposed that the current arrangements for providing public relations and media support and advice through Perth & Kinross Council is maintained for the next few months. Proposals for longer term external communications arrangements will be the subject of further discussion with the Management Team and Council Public Relations officers, prior to reporting back to a future meeting.
- 2.19 In the meantime awareness is progressively being raised by accepting and seeking invitations to engage with local groups and organisations such as Community Planning Partnerships, Council Parliamentary Fora, Chambers of Commerce and others, in liaison with Council officers.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

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Director

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NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report.

APPENDIX

Meeting of Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships

Woodhill House, Aberdeen
29 September 2006

Note of Meeting

Present:	Charles King	Chair, HITRANS
	Howard Brindley	HITRANS
	Alison McInnes	Chair, Nestrans
	Peter Cockhead	Nestrans
	Alex Macaulay	SESTRAN
	Trond Haugen	SESTRAN
	Ivor Hyslop	Chair, South West Scotland Transport Partnership
	Colin Douglas	South West Scotland Transport Partnership
	Rodney Mortimer	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
	Jim Irvine	Chair, Shetland Transport Partnership
	Michael Craigie	Shetland Transport Partnership
	Alan Livingstone	Chair, TACTRAN
	Eric Guthrie	TACTRAN
Apologies	Russell Imrie	Chair, SESTRAN
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	Alistair Watson	Chair, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

1. Chair

As Nestrans were hosting the meeting Councillor McInnes took the Chair.

2. Note of Previous Meeting

The note of the meeting held on 25 May was submitted and agreed.

In respect of matters arising under item 2 each Chair gave a brief update on progress in involving Health Boards in their RTPs. In most, a Health Board “representative” had been or was in process of being appointed to the RTP Board. The discrepancy in voting rights being accorded to non Councillor RTP Board members between RTPs, within the provisions of legislation, was noted.

Also under item 2 Peter Cockhead advised that an issue had recently arisen in Nestrans regarding the interpretation of guidance on declarations of interest of (non councillor) Board members, with a Board member who is MD of a local bus company being advised by the Clerk to leave the Board meeting when bus matters which might have a financial implication for his company were being discussed. This had led to concern from the Chair of Nestrans and the Scottish Executive as to the unreasonable limitation on the participation of Board members relating to their areas of expertise. A meeting had been arranged between Nestrans, the Standards Commission, and the Scottish Executive to explore interpretations of the guidance to enable non councillor Board members to impart their particular knowledge and expertise to Board discussions as had been envisaged in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. Councillor Livingstone welcomed the initiative being taken by Nestrans to resolve this matter. The outcome of the meeting with the Standards Commission would be advised to RTP Chairs and lead officers.

A note of the meeting convened by SPT on 10 August between the RTP Chairs and representatives of CPT had also been submitted was noted. Councillor McInnes expressed concern at the manner in which the meeting had been convened and suggested the need for future RTP Chairs meetings to have more forward planning and involve all the RTPs in the preparation of agendas.

In respect of further meetings with CPT it was suggested that the arrangements for another joint meeting might be discussed at the CPT reception on 4 August. Rodney Mortimer also undertook to circulate information on SPT's proposal, mentioned at the 10 August meeting, for a major bus conference in the autumn.

3. Association of Transport Partnerships - Revised Memorandum of Understanding

With reference to the last meeting of Chairs when it had been agreed that a less formal version of the constitution/standing orders in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding be prepared, a discussion paper was submitted which had been considered by the RTP Officers group on 14 September.

The Chairs agreed that the revised Memorandum of Understanding set out an appropriate structure for a forum of RTPs in their present stage of development and also provided for the evolution of the forum in due course, if that was desired.

It was further agreed that the first round of meetings should rotate between the locations of the seven RTPs and be chaired by the host RTP Chair. After the first round of meetings the issue of meeting venues would be reviewed, possibly moving to a convenient central

location. Any extraordinary meetings between RTP Chairs might also be held in a central location.

In respect of secretariat it was agreed that this should be held on a rotating basis between RTPs, each for a period of one year. It was proposed that Nestrans provide the secretariat for the first year.

4. **Regional Transport Strategies - Issues Arising**

Each of the Chairs provided an update on progress in the development of their Regional Transport Strategies and any issues arising:

- **SESTRAN** - Draft RTS to Board meeting on 20 October. 250 schemes still to be prioritised. Had requested extension of three months in the event of any delays in reaching consensus. Noted that discussion of additional powers would be very sensitive.
- **HITRANS** - First draft RTS to stakeholders on 13 October. Problem of matching political and technical priorities for measures.
- **SPT** - Currently undertaking consultation on optioneering. Likely to focus strategy on key themes.
- **Shetland RTP** - Consulting with Council and Council stakeholder forums. Running behind model programme but still expect to submit in March.
- **TACTRAN** - Making good progress after a late start. Objectives established. Draft RTS scheduled to go to public consultation on 19 December. Have sought an extension if required.
- **South West RTP** - On schedule. Issues and Objectives agreed after consultation and a matrix of priorities being prepared.
- **Nestrans** - Consultation on draft options just completed. Draft RTS scheduled to be considered by Board on 1 November.

It was also noted that Scottish Executive comments on interim reports had been limited and in some cases no comments had yet been received. All RTPs hoped to have their RTSs submitted by the end March deadline.

5. **National Transport Strategy - Likely Issues for RTPs**

It was understood that the National Transport Strategy was still on schedule for publication at end October/beginning November and was due to be considered by the cabinet on 4 October. "Daughter" documents on rail and freight strategies were to be published shortly following the NTS.

It was agreed that the Chairs' meeting with the Minister on 4 October provided a timely opportunity to clarify what the implications of the NTS were likely to be for RTPs and their RTSs.

6. RTP Funding Issues for 2007/2008

There was discussion about the funding arrangements for RTPs in 2007/08 and beyond.

In respect of capital, the Minister had already advised of the likely capital grant allocations to each RTP (being the same as for 2006/07). The need for the early introduction of three year funding was agreed and concern was expressed that the STPR could create a vacuum on capital allocations and decisions on funding beyond 2007/08. The operational difficulties arising from slippage in capital programmes especially where land acquisition was involved were also noted. The recent Scottish Executive confirmation of additional revenue grant for 2006/07 for feasibility studies to support future capital programmes was welcomed.

In respect of revenue budgets the Executive were committed to continue to provide match funding for core RTP costs but it was not known whether the 100% funding which RTPs were receiving in 2006/07 for the preparation of RTSs and capital programme feasibility studies would be continued. Early clarification on this was important.

7. Meeting with Minister for Transport, 4 October

The list of issues was agreed and it was further agreed that as at the previous meeting with the Minister each topic should be introduced by one of the RTP Chairs, that introduction representing the consensual position of RTP Chairs on that topic. After discussion the allocation of lead responsibilities and matters to be covered were agreed as:

National Transport Strategy and Strategic Projects Review (Shetland RTP)

Clarification of when the NTS and its "offspring" documents are going to be published and any particular matters that RTSs will need to take into account. Also seeking clarification of the process and timetable for the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), and the opportunity and mechanism for RTPs to input projects to it. Was it still the intention that the STPR will focus on "corridors", and what are they?

Long Term Funding for Transport, and Financial Provision for RTPs (Nestrans)

Enquiring as to the prospect for transport funding through CSR07 and offering RTP assistance in making a case for increased Scottish Executive transport funding. In respect of RTP funding for 2007/08 seeking confirmation of continued levels of SE funding contributions to revenue budgets, including 100% funding for RTS delivery and capital programme feasibility studies.

Regional Transport Strategies and Future Functions of RTPs (TACTRAN)

What are the Minister's views on the evolution of Model 1 RTPs to Model 3 and what expectation does he have for RTPs to set out proposals for additional functions in their RTSs? Note the likely Council sensitivities to this immediately in advance of Council elections in 2007. Probably better to postpone meaningful discussion to after the elections.

Rail Strategy/Rail Investment/Rail Utilisation Strategy (SPT)

What will be the thrust of the Scotland Rail Strategy to be issued in association with the NTS? Concern that it may be short term (linked to issues in Network Rail's Rail Utilisation Strategy in Scotland) and not take a longer term view of rail.

Bus Policy Review/Procurement of Bus Services (South West RTP)

Different views across Scotland and between RTPs as to current issues and the need for changes to powers. Some areas would wish to look at re-franchising but most are happy to work within existing powers. All recognise the need to work closely with bus operators. Interested to learn from the Minister as to the extent to which reviews being undertaken by the Department for Transport will influence Scottish Executive thinking.

Road Bridges including Future of Tolling and New Forth Crossing (SESTRAN)

Key role of estuary crossings in regional and national transport networks. Seeking clarification of the Minister's views on the future of tolling of the Tay and Forth crossings, and when announcements might be made on a new crossing of the Forth.

Relationship of RTPs to Shipping Services Advisory Committee (HITRANS)

In response to the Minister's letter of 9 May HITRANS have co-ordinated a proposal for new consultative arrangements for local and operational ferry matters to replace the previous Shipping Services Advisory Committee which the Minister is disbanding. The proposal for Tier 1 and Tier 2 forums could as requested by the Minister be in place by 1 January 2007.

8. Ferry Users Consultation Arrangements

Cllr King introduced a report which had been prepared by HITRANS in response to the Minister's request in May that they co-ordinate the preparation of proposals for new ferry user consultation arrangements to replace the Shipping Services Advisor Committees (SSACs) which the Executive was disbanding.

The proposal set out two Tiers of consultation arrangements. Tier 1 related to route by route liaison and will focus on local issues such as timetabling and integration with other forms of public transport. Tier 2 would replace the existing SSACs and would comprise three consultative Committees for; the Clyde, Hebrides, and Northern Isles. These would be chaired and administered by the RTPs and would deal with issues about ferry services which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by operators, and issues of fare structures and route and service development beyond the existing tender specification. The Tier 2 Committees would meet twice a year with meetings held in the Island Communities.

Cllr Irvine gave his support to the proposals for the Northern Isles Tier 2 Committee as did other Chairs to the general proposals. Cllr King confirmed that Nestrans would have representation on the Northern Isles Tier 2 Committee and that its meetings might occasionally be held in Aberdeen.

Despite late attempts by SSACs for existing arrangements to be retained HITRANS were convinced the new arrangements would work better.

Howard Brindley noted that one area of uncertainty with the proposals was the relationship with the Scottish Public Transport Users Committee (PTUC) and whether the new Tier 2 Committees had to report through the PTUC or direct to the Executive.

9. AOCB

No other business was raised.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Cllr Irvine reiterated the invitation to Shetland and suggested that the Chairs stay overnight to enable a visit around Shetland transport issues and the opportunity for Shetland to provide hospitality that evening which the Shetland Convener had agreed to do. The meeting will be held in January will possible dates to be circulated (subsequently agreed as 9/10 January).

Cllr Livingstone proposed and it was agreed that TACTRAN host the following meeting in Perth.

Forum of Chairs of Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships

Memorandum of Understanding

1. Members

The Chairs of the Highland & Islands, North-East of Scotland, South-East of Scotland, South-West of Scotland, Shetland, Strathclyde and Tayside & Central Scotland Transport Partnerships (respectively referred to as HITRANS, NESTRANS, SESTRAN, South-West of Scotland RTP, Shetland RTP, SPT and TACTRAN) agree to form an informal association to discuss matters of mutual interest relating to regional, local and national transport strategy and delivery. The association shall be known as the Forum of Chairs of Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships.

2. Objects

- a) To provide a forum for discussion of matters of common interest to member Partnerships and a means by which joint views may be formulated and expressed.
- b) To provide opportunities to improve transport planning and delivery in Scotland through the sharing of best practice.
- c) To disseminate and share accurate and timely information on all matters relating to transport and other relevant issues.
- d) To make available the skills of the individual Partnerships to provide a range of cost-effective services to other Partnerships in accordance with their wishes.

3. Meetings

Meetings shall be held quarterly, or as required, and shall deal with such business as may have been notified by the Chairs of the Partnerships to the Secretariat. Each Partnership shall be represented by its Chair, Vice Chair or other nominated member, accompanied by an officer if they wish. In the event of no member being available, an officer of an RTP may represent their Partnership.

4. Chair

The Chair of the Partnership hosting any meeting shall chair the meeting.

5. Secretariat

The Forum shall appoint one of its member Partnerships to provide a Secretariat which will hold office for a period of one year, following which provision of the Secretariat shall pass to another member Partnership, and so on in rotation.

The Secretariat shall ensure the timely preparation and issue of Agenda and all relevant reports that member Partnerships may wish to place before the Forum.

The Secretariat shall take a note of each meeting which, once approved in draft by the Chair of that meeting, shall be circulated to members prior to adoption at the next meeting of the Forum.

6. Withdrawal from the Association

At any time a Partnership may intimate by notice in writing to the Secretariat the withdrawal of that Partnership from the Forum with immediate effect.

7. Alteration of the Memorandum and Dissolution of the Forum

At any meeting a Partnership may propose that this Memorandum be altered or that the Forum be dissolved. Such a proposal shall take immediate effect if passed by a majority of the Partnerships in membership of the Forum at the time when the motion is proposed, each Partnership having a single vote.

8. Public Statements on behalf of the Association

Public statements will only be made in the name of the Forum by an agreed spokesperson if there is consensus to do so.