

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**19 DECEMBER 2006****REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY: PROGRESS UPDATE****Report by Regional Transport Strategy Steering Group**

This report updates the Partnership Board on development of the Draft Regional Transport Strategy and seeks the Board's agreement to a revised programme for approval of and public consultation on the Draft Regional Transport Strategy.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Partnership Board :-

- (i) considers the Draft Regional Transport Strategy at it's meeting on 16 January 2007;
- (ii) agrees the revised programme for public consultation on the Draft Regional Transport Strategy as set out in the report; and
- (iii) agrees to write to the Transport Minister, advising him of the revised programme for approving and consulting on the Draft Regional Transport Strategy.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 21 November 2006 the Partnership Board approved the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) Options Report, following a Workshop to consider the outcomes of the Options Generation and Sifting stage of the RTS development process earlier the same day.
- 2.2 The Options Report recommended that the Draft RTS for public consultation should consist of a core strategy, incorporating packages of proposed interventions and measures which are considered to best support delivery of the RTS Vision and Objectives, as approved by the Board at its earlier meeting on 26 September (Report No. RTP/06/33 refers), accompanied by possible alternative strategy scenarios, which place increased emphasis on three key objectives of supporting the economy; improving accessibility and integration; and protecting and enhancing the environment.
- 2.3 The programme for preparation of the RTS had assumed consideration and approval of the Draft RTS for public consultation at this meeting. However, as Board Members have already been advised, it has not proved possible to submit a finalised Draft RTS for consideration. The MVA Consultancy is currently engaged in re-drafting the document. This report, therefore, recommends a revised programme for approving and consulting on the Draft RTS.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 A First Draft of the RTS for public consultation was submitted to the Steering Group on 1 and 4 December. This has been reviewed by the Steering Group and the MVA Consultancy are currently re-drafting the document to take account of requested revisions and amendments to the content and structure of the document, including Board members' comments on the need for clarity of presentation of the strategy and related proposals, as expressed at the RTS Workshop on 21 November.
- 3.2 The consultants have been instructed to issue a revised Draft for further consideration by the Steering Group at a meeting on 15 December. It is the intention that re-drafting of the document will be completed by the end of the calendar year, with a view to submitting the proposed Draft RTS for consideration by the Board at its next meeting on 16 January 2007.
- 3.3 This delay in submitting the Draft RTS for approval clearly impacts upon the programme for public consultation. Assuming approval of the Draft RTS by the Board on 19 December, it had previously been proposed that public consultation should take place for a period of 8 weeks, starting on 22 December. The following programme is now proposed :-
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| Consideration/approval of Draft RTS by Board | – 16 January 2007 |
| Launch of 8-week Public Consultation | – 22 January 2007 |
| Interim Report to Board on ongoing Public Consultation | – 20 February 2007 |
| Final Deadline for consultation responses | – 16 March 2007 |
| Initial Report to Board on outcome of Public Consultation | – 20 March 2007 |
- 3.4 As a consequence of this slippage in the public consultation programme it will not be possible to apply any flexibility to the 16 March final deadline for responses. The Steering Group will be giving further consideration to the detailed arrangements for public consultation at meetings on 15 December and 5 January and proposals for maximising key stakeholder and public engagement during the 8-week consultation period will be submitted for the Board's approval on 16 January.
- 3.5 At its meeting on 21 November the Board approved a programme of meetings on 16 January, 20 February and 20 March, to deal with ongoing development of the RTS during the consultation phase, and with the outcomes of public consultation. As indicated above, it is proposed that the Board receives an interim report on the ongoing public consultation at its meeting on 20 February and an initial report on the outcome of the full period of public consultation at its meeting on 20 March. It may, however, be prudent to allow for a further meeting towards the end of March, to enable consideration and approval of the finalised RTS.
- 3.6 At its meeting on 17 August 2006 the Board homologated submission of a letter dated 31 July from the Chair to the Transport Minister, confirming TACTRAN's intention to comply with the 31 March statutory deadline submission of the finalised RTS (Report RTP/06/27 refers). As reported on 26 September 2006, the Minister responded, acknowledging the special challenges facing TACTRAN in achieving the 31 March deadline, and requested that he be kept updated on the Partnership's programme for achieving submission by 31 March. It is proposed that a further letter is sent, advising the Minister of the

slippage encountered in being able to approve the Draft RTS and the revised programme for public consultation, as outlined in 3.3 above. Given the very limited time available for dealing with any significant issues or concerns arising from public consultation, it is also proposed that the Minister be asked to grant a 1 month extension of the RTS submission deadline, until 30 April, if required to deal with the outcomes of public consultation.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with Council representatives on the RTS Steering Group.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A sum of £200,000 was originally allocated to the Partnership by the Scottish Executive to fund the preparation and production of the RTS. This was subsequently increased to £240,500, to accommodate the tender price submitted by the MVA Consultancy.
- 5.2 As indicated in another report on Revenue Budget, the Scottish Executive has recently confirmed the allocation of additional Revenue Grant totalling £120,000 during the current year, which includes the above £40,500 and a further £24,500, which is available to meet any emerging costs associated with development and production of the RTS.

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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 the above Report.