

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**19 JUNE 2007****REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY : PROGRESS UPDATE****Report by Regional Transport Strategy Steering Group**

This report updates the Partnership on developments following submission of the finalised Regional Transport Strategy to the Scottish Executive and seeks the Partnership's approval of a programme of work for developing the Strategy during the current year.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Partnership Board :-

- (i) notes developments in the process for approval of the Regional Transport Strategy, as outlined in the report;
- (ii) approves the programme of work for developing the Strategy as set out in sections 3.9 – 3.13 and Appendix A; and
- (iii) agrees to suspend Financial Regulation 22 and delegate authority to the Director, in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group and Treasurer, to procure arrangements for undertaking the proposed work programme, using existing Council Framework Agreements, Council staff resources and/or competitive tendering, as appropriate.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 27 March 2007 the Partnership considered the draft Finalised Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), as amended in light of public consultation during early 2007, and agreed to delegate authority to the Chair and Director to approve the finalised document for submission to the Transport Minister by 31 March (Item 3 refers). The Finalised RTS, as submitted to the Transport Minister on 30 March, was endorsed by the Partnership at its subsequent meeting on 24 April 2007 (Report RTP/07/20 refers).
- 2.2 At the meeting on 24 April the Partnership also approved for submission to the Scottish Executive the RTS Consultation Report, which outlines the process of consultation undertaken in developing the Strategy, and the RTS Indicative Delivery Plan, which sets out the currently anticipated Revenue and Capital implications of delivering the Strategy, pending further detailed appraisal work and consultation with Councils on delivery.
- 2.3 The Finalised RTS and related Consultation Report and Indicative Delivery Plan are all available for inspection on the Partnership's website at www.tactran.gov.uk.
- 2.4 On 31 March 2007 the Scottish Executive confirmed the allocation of £320,000 to TACTRAN to support development of the RTS during the current financial year.

- 2.5 This report updates the Partnership on developments since submission of the RTS and the anticipated process for Ministerial approval of the Strategy, and also seeks the Partnership's agreement to a proposed programme of Strategy development work utilising the allocated funding for this purpose.

3. DISCUSSION

RTS Approval Process

- 3.1 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 provides for Ministerial approval, or return, of submitted strategies within 3 months of submission – i.e. by the beginning of July 2007. Scottish Executive officials have advised the following anticipated timetable for approval of strategies :-
- (i) 18 May – 15 June – ongoing discussion with RTP's regarding any revisions
 - (ii) 15 June – 22 June – submission to Transport Minister for approval
 - (iii) 29 June – RTP's informed of Minister's decision
- 3.2 Following submission of the Finalised RTS on 30 March there has been ongoing discussion with Scottish Executive officials on the content of the document and the process for gaining Ministerial approval. Executive officials have requested review and consideration of development/revision to three areas of the Strategy :-
- (i) **Strategic Environmental Assessment** – the need for more detail on Appropriate Assessment of specified Interventions in the RTS;
 - (ii) **Equality Impact Assessment** – need to include appropriate statements and commitments on compliance with statutory EIA requirements; and
 - (iii) **Monitoring** – need for specific reference to proposed monitoring arrangements within the core RTS document.
- 3.3 The first two issues above have been raised in respect of all seven Regional Transport Partnership's strategies.
- 3.4 On the issue of SEA Appropriate Assessment, the finalised RTS included additional comment in response to recommendations by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) during consultation on the Draft RTS. Over recent weeks further work has been undertaken by the Partnership's SEA consultants, Natural Capital, in order to satisfy increasingly stringent requirements regarding Appropriate Assessment of the potential environmental impacts of specified RTS Interventions on sites of European nature conservation importance. Three such Interventions were identified by SNH :-
- (i) IV_I2 – new crossing of the Tay near Perth linking A94 and A9;
 - (ii) IV_I3 – provision of new Stirling link road between A84 Kildean and A9; and
 - (iii) IV_J2 – improved road links to Ports of Montrose, Dundee and Perth Harbour
- 3.5 At the time of writing discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Executive and SNH on a revised form of wording within the core RTS and inclusion of an additional Appendix, setting out in more detail the potential environmental impacts of the above Interventions and their possible mitigation. Further developments will be reported orally.

- 3.6 The submitted RTS includes explicit statements on satisfying the requirements of Equality Impact Assessment as each RTS Intervention is developed. It had been anticipated that the current wording would satisfy this aspect of RTS Guidance. Discussions are also ongoing on this and further developments will be reported orally.
- 3.7 Monitoring of progress towards achieving intended outcomes of the strategy is a key part of the RTS. The proposed arrangements on this were included within the Indicative Delivery Plan, on the understanding that this approach satisfied the requirements of RTS Guidance. The Executive has now indicated that the core RTS document must also include a specific section on Monitoring and discussions are continuing on this. Once again further developments will be reported orally.
- 3.8 Scottish Executive officials confirmed at the recent Transport Partnerships Liaison Group (TPLG) meeting on 4 June that it remains their intention to secure Ministerial approval of submitted RTS's by the end of June.

RTS Development Programme

- 3.9 Based on the 39 Interventions and associated 79 Actions contained in the Finalised RTS and associated Indicative Delivery Plan, proposed priorities for utilisation of the allocated funding of £320,000 have been identified in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group.
- 3.10 A number of the early action Interventions within the RTS and Indicative Delivery Plan involve developing sub-strategies, which will set out in more detail the policy and delivery framework for specific strands of the RTS – e.g. Buses Strategy; Walking and Cycling Strategy, etc. Various proposals for enhancements to the strategic road and rail network are likely to be considered as part of the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), and cannot be progressed ahead of the Options Generation and Sifting stage of the STPR, which is due for completion in the autumn (e.g. improvements to A90 through/around Dundee and a number of rail enhancements).
- 3.11 A work programme, based on early development of sub-strategies and other key elements of the RTS, to ensure that these are sufficiently developed to enable consideration at relevant stages of the STPR and other funding processes, is set out below, with project summaries given in Appendix A :-

Proposed Projects	Estimated Cost
RTS finalisation	£ 5,000
Buses Strategy in 2 stages. Stage1 – audit of service provision (inc. CT/DRT/Health etc.); Stage 2 – production of Buses Strategy, including consultation.	£ 15,000 £ 20,000
Park & Ride Strategy	£ 20,000
Tay Estuary Rail Service STAG 2 Refresh	£ 65,000
Regional Travel Information Strategy	£ 50,000
Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy	£ 55,000
Accessibility Mapping Software	£ 10,000
Freight Quality Partnership	£ 20,000

Freight Through Ports Study	£ 20,000
Dundee Station Improvements Study (contribution)	£ 10,000
A90 Survey Data Analysis	£ 5,000
Contingency/Unallocated	£ 25,000
Total	£320,000

- 3.12 The above proposals reflect the programming and estimated costs contained in the approved Indicative Delivery Plan, with some costs adjusted to reflect available funding. In the majority of cases costs are necessarily “best estimates” and a contingency of £25,000 has been included to cover any variances. It is recommended that the Director is granted delegated authority to progress these proposals, in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group, with progress being reported back at regular intervals.
- 3.13 In the event that any of the above priorities cannot be advanced, or there is the potential to accommodate additional work within budget, it is recommended that the Director also be authorised to bring forward other projects from the list set out in Appendix B.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group and Treasurer, who are in agreement with the proposals.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The core costs of developing the RTS, with consultancy support, have been met from Scottish Executive grant funding totalling £265,000 which was allocated by the Scottish Executive in 2006/07 for this purpose. The costs of undertaking additional work on finalising the RTS, including in relation to SEA Appropriate Appraisal, are anticipated to be in the order of £5,000 and will be met from the 2007/08 allocation of £320,000 for RTS development.
- 5.2 It is envisaged that the proposed programme of RTS development work will be largely delivered through procurement of consultancy support. This work will eventually be managed by the TACTRAN Strategy Manager and Projects Manager when these staff are appointed.
- 5.3 In order to enable work to proceed pending appointment of “in-house” staff, it is proposed that authority be delegated to the Director, in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group, to determine the most efficient and effective way of delivering the proposed work programme within the allocated budget and available resources. This might include awarding of contracts through existing Framework Agreements between constituent Councils and term consultancies on agreed rates; invitation of competitive tenders; and/or allocation of work to constituent Councils to progress on a “lead” basis, with associated staff costs being met from approved TACTRAN budgets. It is proposed that the Partnership agrees to suspend Financial Regulation 22, relating to competitive tendering for contracts, to enable the proposed programme of work to be progressed in the most efficient and timeous manner.

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NOTE

Background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report :-

TACTRAN Regional Transport Strategy

PROPOSED RTS DEVELOPMENT WORK PROGRAMME : PROJECT SUMMARIES

Buses Strategy – RTS Intervention IV_E1

The Scottish Executive requires that Buses are a strong element of all RTS's. The proposed TACTRAN Buses Strategy will provide the policy framework for more detailed development and delivery on the Buses elements of the RTS. It is envisaged that work would be tendered as a two-stage project, consisting of an initial regional audit of service availability, covering all forms of bus passenger transport provision (e.g. Registered Local Bus Services; Community Transport; Demand Responsive Transport; Patient Transport etc), followed by production of a Buses Strategy.

Estimated cost £35,000 in total.
Delivery timescale 6 – 8 months.

Park & Ride Strategy – Interventions IV_G1 and IV_G5

A number of proposed Park & Ride locations, were subject to “high level” Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) assessment as part of the RTS appraisal process. Proposals for expansion of Park & Ride seek to build on previous initiatives within the TACTRAN area, particularly at Perth, Stirling and, most recently, Kinross. The new Executive's Manifesto indicates an intention to require Cities to produce Park & Ride strategies within the first 6 months of their coming into power. Any such strategy is likely to raise cross-Council boundary, and possibly also cross-RTP issues, which would most effectively be taken forward on a regional basis. The Manifesto commitment suggests that expansion of Park & Ride will be a priority for the new Executive and early development of a regional strategy on Park & Ride, particularly in relation to Dundee, Perth and Stirling, would maximise TACTRAN's potential case for early action/funding.

Estimated cost £20,000
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months

Tay Estuary Rail Service (TERS) STAG 2 Refresh – Intervention IV_F4

An earlier Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) assessment of the case for introducing additional rail services between Arbroath – Perth, with links across the Tay to Fife, was undertaken by Councils. The RTS develops this previous proposal to promote an additional “semi-fast” hourly service between Arbroath – Dundee – Perth – Stirling – Glasgow, with the potential for additional stations on the route at various locations. There has been preliminary discussion with First ScotRail, who have indicated support in principle. Work on refreshing the earlier STAG assessment, based on the revised proposals contained within the RTS, should be commenced soon, to enable consideration as part of Network Rail's and First

ScotRail's planning for early action on existing Network Rail Route Utilisation Strategy proposals for service enhancements on the Aberdeen – Edinburgh/Glasgow and Inverness – Edinburgh/Glasgow routes. This work will also assist in influencing the current reconsideration of transport priorities by the new Executive, who have indicated support for rail improvements.

Estimated cost £65,000
Delivery timescale 6 – 8 months

Regional Travel Information Strategy – Intervention IV_B1

Work on developing a variety of travel information projects is already being supported in Angus (at-bus stop Real Time Information) and Dundee (Variable Message Signing upgrade) through the 2006/07 and 2007/08 TACTRAN Capital Programmes. Perth & Kinross Council are reviewing their traffic information needs, which could be extended to cover a regional approach. The RTS proposes development of a Regional Travel Information Strategy covering all modes. Further development of Travel Information initiatives would benefit from early consideration and development of a regional framework, which would seek to build upon and share/extend current “best practice” within the constituent Councils.

Estimated cost £50,000
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months.

Walking and Cycling Strategy – Intervention IV_D1

Similar to the Buses Strategy, the Walking & Cycling Strategy will provide the policy framework and “best practice” guidance for further development and implementation of RTS walking and cycling proposals and measures.

Estimated cost £55,000
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months

Accessibility Mapping – General Analysis and Monitoring

There has been increasing emphasis by both the Department for Transport and the Scottish Executive, through the National Transport Strategy, on adopting Accessibility Mapping as a means of more effectively and objectively identifying, analysing and addressing transport needs. The MVA Consultancy's work on the RTS produced an accessibility model for the TACTRAN region, which was used to assess accessibility gaps, such as access by public transport to hospitals and other key services, using their Accession mapping software. The development of a regional TACTRAN Accession model was part of the RTS contract, but the Accession software package, which underpins and enables future development and analysis of the model, was not part of the contract. Most RTP's have either purchased or have plans to purchase an Accessibility Mapping capability, to assist future analysis and monitoring of RTS outputs. A number of similar products exist and consultations are taking place with other RTP's and the Executive on the future use and compatibility of Accessibility Mapping software.

Estimated cost £10,000.
Delivery dependent upon selection of product.

Freight Quality Partnership – Intervention IV_J1

As with the National Transport Strategy Buses Action Plan, work on the NTS Freight Action Plan is progressing. This has led to calls for RTP's to undertake early work on the establishment of Freight Quality Partnerships (FQP's). The Freight sector also requested that this be an early action during consultation on the RTS. An FQP would assist in identifying cross-modal priorities , in conjunction with other activity and studies/work on freight .

Estimated cost £20,000 for initial establishment and development work .
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months.

Freight Through Ports Study – Interventions IV_J2 and IV_J3

Scottish Enterprise Tayside has recently funded a study which aims to provide an initial assessment of the opportunities for developing inter-modal freight through the ports of Dundee, Perth and Montrose. This is due to be reported on by the end of June. It is likely that this will recommend further detailed study(ies) of options for early action and possible “quick wins”, through development of opportunities to improve road and/or rail access to ports. Further detailed appraisal of any such opportunities would be required to demonstrate the case for funding.

Estimated budget £20,000
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months.

Dundee Station Improvements Study – Intervention IV_G2 Dundee City Council previously commissioned consultants McLean Hazel to undertake an initial appraisal of options for improving Dundee Station as part of the Dundee Waterfront development. An approach has been made to TACTRAN for part funding to take a preferred option forward to more detailed design appraisal, at a total cost of @ £30,000.

Estimated cost £10,000 (part contribution)
Delivery timescale 4 – 6 months.

A90 Survey Data Analysis

TACTRAN funded traffic surveys on the A90 north and west of Dundee during March of this year, to provide information on the use of the Trunk Road for travel through/around Dundee. Up to date information was needed to inform future appraisal work on related RTS Interventions and also current modelling work on behalf of Transport Scotland feeding into the Strategic Transport Projects Review. It was necessary to undertake this work in March to avoid a prolonged period of traffic disruption associated with developments adjacent to the A90/Forfar Road in Dundee, which is scheduled to run beyond critical phases of the STPR appraisal process. The raw survey data gathered requires refining prior to inclusion within the Transport Model for Scotland, which will inform the STPR, and related appraisal of options for improving the A90 and other related TACTRAN Interventions.

Estimated cost £5,000
Delivery timescale by end of June.

Appendix B

Other Development Work Options	Estimated Cost
Strategic Parking Policy Framework	£ 25,000
Tay Bridge south Park & Choose appraisal (part contribution)	£ 10,000
Safer Routes to School Best Practice and Inventory	£ 10,000
Best Practice on Transportation in Development Management	£ 15,000
Integrated Ticketing and Timetabling Strategy	£ 30,000
Regional Road Safety Plan	£ 10,000
National Parks Access Strategy	£ 20,000
Review of TaxiCard scheme expansion	£ 5,000
Regional Transport Model Appraisal	£ 30,000