

**TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP****16 JANUARY 2007****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 progress report on Governance Issues and Policies to its meeting on 20 February 2007 ;
- (ii) agrees to receive a detailed report on the proposed 2007/08 Revenue Budget to its meeting on 20 February 2007;
- (iii) agrees to support the proposed requirement that Regional Transport Partnerships publish a Disability Equality Scheme by December 2007;
- (iv) notes the proposed transfer of Scottish Executive funding for Demand Responsive Transport to Regional Transport Partnerships from 2008/09 and receives a further report on this at a future meeting; and
- (v) otherwise notes the updates given in the report.

**2 DISCUSSION****Partnership Headquarters**

- 2.1 The Director's Report of 21 November 2006 updated the Partnership Board on progress with the Partnership Headquarters at Bordeaux House, 31 Kinnoull Street, Perth (Report RTP/06/37 refers). The internal refurbishment work on the premises was largely completed on 22 December. The only outstanding issue is the installation of the disabled access lift into the main office, which will be installed by the end of this month.
- 2.2 Delays have been experienced in progressing the communications link into the building. It is now anticipated that this work will not be completed until the end of February. As a consequence the Headquarters is unlikely to become operational until late February/early March. Arrangements are being made for temporary accommodation of staff coming into post during January within other Perth & Kinross premises.

**Policy and Governance Issues**

- 2.3 At the meeting on 19 December the Partnership Board considered a report on progress with development of corporate governance documentation by CDU Limited. (Report RTP/06/39 refers). The Board agreed to defer approval of a number of personnel policies to enable further consideration in consultation with legal and personnel advisers, with the intention of reporting back to this meeting. With the

festive holiday period, it has not proved possible to progress the papers which were deferred on 19 December. It is now proposed that these and other governance papers which CDU are working on will be submitted for consideration at the next meeting on 20 February.

### **Revenue Budget**

- 2.4 At the 19 December meeting an oral update was given on the anticipated 2006/07 Revenue Budget outturn and estimated requirements for 2007/08. It had been the intention to submit a further report, with a proposed Revenue Budget for 2007/08 to this meeting. However, as a consequence of the priority being given to work on the Regional Transport Strategy, combined with the festive holiday period, it has not proved possible to progress a report for this meeting. It is, therefore, proposed that a detailed report is submitted to the next meeting on 20 February. During the interim there will be consultation with Council Transportation and Finance officers on the anticipated Revenue funding requirements for the current and next financial years.

### **Consultation : Disability Discrimination Act 2005 – Duty To Publish a Disability Equality Scheme**

- 2.5 In the Director's Report of 19 December it was noted that a Scottish Executive consultation had recently been received, seeking comment on a proposal to require Regional Transport Partnerships to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out what they will do to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. This duty already applies to Councils, Health Boards, Police and joint Fire and Rescue Boards and a range of other public bodies.
- 2.6 This proposal specifically requires that Partnerships would publish a scheme setting out :-
- the ways in which disabled people have been involved in developing the scheme
  - the RTP's methods of assessing the impacts of its policies and practices on equality for disabled people
  - the steps the RTP proposes to take towards fulfilment of the general duty of disability equality
  - the RTP's arrangements for gathering information on the effect of its policies and practices on disabled people
  - the arrangements for monitoring the scheme and reporting on progress annually.
- 2.7 Comments are requested by 19 January. Promoting inclusion is an important element of the emerging Regional Transport Strategy and the Partnership's wider statutory responsibilities. It is, therefore, proposed that TACTRAN responds indicating its support for the proposed requirement to publish a Disability Equality Scheme by December 2007.

### **Future Funding for Rural Public Passenger Transport and Demand Responsive Transport**

- 2.8 On 10 January the Scottish Executive wrote to RTP's, Councils and Community and Demand Responsive Transport providers, advising that the existing Rural Public Passenger Transport (RPPT), Rural Community Transport Initiative (RCTI) and Rural

and Urban Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) schemes, and associated funding to Councils, Community Transport (CT) and DRT providers will end on 31 March 2008.

- 2.9 The Executive proposes that, with effect from financial year 2008/09 an enhanced DRT budget, which will include CT and DRT, will be created and managed by Regional Transport Partnerships. The aim of this budget will be to deliver more DRT services across Scotland. RTP's will be able to spend these budgets as they see fit, subject to 50% of the budget being ring-fenced for spend on DRT, including CT initiatives.
- 2.10 These recently announced proposed changes clearly have a number of operational and management implications for RTP's, Councils and existing CT/DRT providers, including arrangements for ongoing funding and developing existing and potential new services. It is likely that there will be further consultation between RTPs, their constituent Councils and the Scottish Executive on these proposals over the coming months. A report on further developments will be submitted to a future meeting.

#### **4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

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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.