

**TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP****30 JANUARY 2008****REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE****Report by Director**

This report updates the Partnership on the position on Ministerial approval of the Regional Transport Strategy and on the programme of work for developing the Strategy during the current year.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1.1 That the Partnership:-

- (i) agrees to review the Regional Transport Strategy in accordance with the response received from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth at Appendix A;
- (ii) agrees to receive a further report on detailed proposals for reviewing and re-submitting the Regional Transport Strategy, within the context of the Concordat between Government and Local Government and Council Single Outcome Agreements, to its next meeting on 29 April 2008;
- (iii) agrees to make a final payment of £20,400 to the MVA Consultancy in respect of development work on the submitted Regional Transport Strategy;
- (iv) agrees, subject to the Scottish Government agreement, to carry forward £15,000 of the original RTS Development budget allocation to fund anticipated publication of the strategy in 2008/09;
- (v) notes that constituent Councils are considering a request to allocate specified Capital Grant funding totalling up to £10.2 million to support delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy in financial years 2008/09 – 2010/11;
- (vi) notes progress on the 2007/08 work programme for developing the Regional Transport Strategy as outlined in the report and Appendix B;
- (vii) agrees to reallocate a contribution of £5,000 towards the proposed ConFor project on sustainable timber transport to fund a study of regional opportunities for sustainable timber transport in partnership with the Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group;
- (viii) agrees, subject to the Scottish Government agreement, to carry forward uncommitted 2007/08 Grant in Aid totalling £104,000 to enable completion of work on the TERS; Freight Quality Partnership; and Freight Through Ports projects in 2008/09; and
- (ix) agrees to invite the Director of Network Rail to a future Partnership meeting to discuss rail issues of joint interest.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At successive meetings over recent months the Partnership has received progress reports, updating Members on the position on gaining Ministerial approval of the finalised Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), as submitted to the Transport Minister on 30 March 2007.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 19 June 2007 the Partnership approved a proposed programme of work to develop elements of the RTS during the current financial year, utilising funding allocated by the Scottish Government for this purpose (Report RTP/07/22 refers). Progress on this was reported to the subsequent meeting on 23 October 2007, when a number of revisions to the development programme were approved (Report RTP/07/33 refers). At the following meeting on 18 December 2007 the Partnership endorsed the award of contracts to consultants for the development of various sub-Strategies (Report RTP/07/38 refers).

## **3. DISCUSSION**

### **Ministerial Approval**

- 3.1 As reported to the Partnership on 18 December 2007, the RTP Chairs, along with CoSLA, met with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth on 11 December to discuss how RTPs and their Strategies can assist in delivering the Programme for Government, in the context of the new partnership agreed between Scottish Government and local government in the Spending Review announcement on 14 November 2007.
- 3.2 Following the meeting on 11 December, the Cabinet Secretary wrote to all RTP Chairs on 7 January 2008. A copy of this letter was forwarded to Partnership Board members and is attached at Appendix A. This confirms that the Cabinet Secretary foresees RTPs playing a positive role in improving Scotland's transport infrastructure and services, working in partnership with their constituent Councils and coordinating regional delivery of transport services across local authority boundaries.
- 3.3 On RTS approval, the Cabinet Secretary has indicated that he is not content to approve strategies containing interventions. He has requested that revised strategies should be prepared and re-submitted in the form of "high-level" documents, focussing on the strategies necessary to support the Government's key objectives. Interventions are to be addressed through refined Delivery Plans, which prioritise interventions within the context of available finance and the Scottish Government/Local Government Concordat.
- 3.4 The process for re-submission and approval of the revised RTS is currently unclear. Advice is being sought from Government officials on the technical and procedural expectations and requirements of re-submitted strategies. Further developments will be reported orally.

### **Publication of Finalised Strategy**

- 3.5 The Partnership is required to publish the Finalised RTS and make copies generally available. At its meeting on 23 October 2007 the Partnership delegated authority to the Director to revise the contract with the MVA Consultancy, who

had asked to be released from their requirement to publish the Finalised RTS, and to conclude alternative arrangements for publication.

- 3.6 Discussions have been held with Stirling Council and Perth & Kinross Council, who offered assistance with publication of the Finalised RTS. On the basis of outline design submissions from both, Stirling Council's Design and Print Unit has been invited to progress a detailed proposal for production of the Finalised RTS, and an associated "house style" for related publications.
- 3.7 Whilst design work can be progressed, further work on publication and printing of the RTS is meantime suspended, pending clarification of statutory compliance requirements by Scottish Government.
- 3.8 The contract with the MVA Consultancy included a 15% retention of the original tender price of £236,000, which was to be paid upon Ministerial approval of the Finalised RTS. This was expected to be given in June/July 2007. The delays which have culminated in receipt of the Cabinet Secretary's letter of 7 January are not related to the quality of work provided by the consultants. Given the lengthy delay in receiving Ministerial opinion on the submitted strategies, which will now have to be reviewed and re-submitted, the Director and Treasurer are of the view that MVA's final payment of £20,400 should be released, representing the original 15% retention of £35,400 less £15,000 for publishing the Finalised RTS. The Partnership is asked to agree to making this payment.

#### **RTS Delivery/Business Plan and Delivery Funding**

- 3.9 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2006 and associated RTS Guidance requires RTPs to produce a Delivery or Business Plan, setting out a 3-year implementation programme for the RTS, which is updated annually to reflect local and central government planning and funding cycles.
- 3.10 An Indicative Delivery Plan, setting out anticipated Revenue and Capital costs and delivery timescales for the identified RTS Interventions was approved for submission to Government officials by the Partnership on 24 April 2007 (Report RTP/07/21 Refers). This document requires to be substantially refined in light of the Cabinet Secretary's letter of 7 January and further advice from Scottish Government officials on the detailed implications of this.
- 3.11 Associated work on delivery priorities over the next 3 years, 2008/09 – 2010/11, must also take account of anticipated available Revenue and Capital funding, as a result of the Spending Review and, in the longer term beyond 2011/12, Transport Scotland's ongoing work on the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR).
- 3.12 On 18 December 2007 the Partnership noted the currently known outcomes of the Government Spending Review and remitted the Director and Treasurer to consult with Councils on how delivery of the RTS can assist in achieving Councils' Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) (Report RTP/07/42 refers). Further detail on the outcome of the Spending Review was received by Councils in late December. Within this there are identified Capital Grant allocations under the heading of "Regional Transport Partnership Capital Grant" totalling £3.407 million in 2008/09, which is broadly equivalent to the 2006/07 and 2007/08 Capital Grant allocation which TACTRAN has distributed to Councils.

- 3.13 Discussions have been held with Council Finance officers and the Chief Officers Liaison Group on the principle of preserving these allocations to generate a joint Capital Programme budget totalling up to £10.2 million across 2008/09 – 2010/11, to support delivery of the RTS, based upon a prioritised Programme which would be agreed with Councils. Initial officer discussions have indicated a willingness to seek agreement to this pooled Capital Grant delivery funding arrangement through Council Budget setting processes.
- 3.14 The treatment of Capital Grant funding will be considered by Councils when setting their overall Budgets for 2008/09 – 2010/11 during mid-February, although Councils' 5-year Capital Programmes are unlikely to be confirmed until sometime later. In the meantime work will continue on refining the current Delivery Plan, in consultation with Councils' Transport and Finance officers and also in the context of development of Council SOAs. Similar discussions will be required in relation to future Revenue funding of RTS delivery priorities.
- 3.15 It is hoped that a revised Delivery Plan for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11 can be submitted for consideration by the Partnership on 24 June 2008. Progress on this will be reported to the next meeting on 29 April 2008.

### **Delivery Arrangements and Functions**

- 3.16 On 23 October 2007 the Partnership remitted the Director to enter into discussions with constituent Councils on RTS delivery arrangements and related functions, with a view to identifying and agreeing with Councils those RTS delivery functions which might appropriately be exercised by the RTP, either by creation of concurrent powers, or by transfer of powers/functions to the RTP.
- 3.17 Initial discussions have taken place with members of the COLG. These will continue in parallel with development of the Delivery/Business Plan for 2008/09 – 2010/11 to enable identification of delivery responsibilities and any associated transfer of delivery powers and/or functions to the RTP within the finalised Delivery Plan. It would be the intention to seek to include the outcome of these discussions within the revised Delivery Plan for reporting to the meeting on 24 June.

### **RTS Development Programme 2007/08**

- 3.18 Further progress on commitment of various elements of the work programme approved by the Partnership on 23 October 2007 is summarised in Appendix B, with progress and proposals in relation to a number of specific projects outlined below.

#### Sub-Strategies on Buses; Park & Ride; Walking & Cycling; Travel Information

- 3.19 On 18 December 2007 the Partnership endorsed the appointment of consultants to develop these four sub-strategies.
- 3.20 Inception meetings have been held with all 4 consultants during December and January and all have confirmed that the Draft Final sub-strategies will be published, as required, by the end of March 2008, for consideration by the Partnership at its meeting on 29 April 2008.
- 3.21 Each of the commissions involves consultation with key stakeholders. The opportunity is being taken with work on the Buses Strategy (which incorporates

development of a Community Transport and Demand Responsive Transport Action Plan) and the Walking and Cycling Strategy, to combine stakeholder consultation workshops with inaugural meetings of the respective Regional Buses Forum and Regional Walking & Cycling Forum. This has the benefit of allowing members of the Forums to be involved in strategy development, whilst providing a focus for the first Forum meetings. Meetings are programmed for the combined stakeholder consultation workshop/Bus and CT/DRT Forum on 6 February and for the Walking and Cycling Forum/stakeholder consultation event on 18 March.

- 3.22 Stakeholder consultation with Councils, transport providers and users on development of the Travel Information and Park & Ride sub-strategies is also being undertaken during January and February. In order to minimise consultation fatigue, the consultants are undertaking joint consultations where significant overlapping stakeholder interests exist – e.g. the workshop/forum on 6<sup>th</sup> February will involve all three consultants working on Buses and CT/DRT, Travel Information and Park and Ride strategies.

#### Tay Bridge South Park & Choose Study

- 3.23 A contribution of £10,000 is being made towards a jointly funded Cross Tay Sustainable Transport Project that includes appraisal of the scope for delivering a Park & Choose facility at the south end of the Tay Bridge. This project is being led by SEStran. Tenders were returned on 21 January and the Projects Manager is involved in the Assessment Panel and Steering Group for award and management of this contract. The intention remains to complete the study before the end of the financial year. The identity of the successful tenderer will be reported orally.

#### Tay Estuary Rail Service

- 3.24 A brief for a STAG level 2 “refresh” of earlier work on the scope for enhancing regional and local rail services remains under preparation. Progress on taking this project forward, in consultation with Transport Scotland and the rail industry, has been delayed by work associated with the above Sub-Strategies and 2007/08 Capital Programme (Report RTP/08/06 refers).
- 3.25 It is the intention to consult with Transport Scotland and the Rail Industry during early February, with a view to inviting tenders for completion of this work before the current Financial Year end. Subject to agreement with Scottish Government officials, it is proposed that the £65,000 “Grant in Aid” allocation for this project in 2007/08 is carried forward to enable completion in early 2008/09.

#### Rail Forum

- 3.26 It is proposed to establish a regional Rail Forum to assist in the development and progression of regional rail issues and proposals, including the Tay Estuary Rail Service (TERS). Arrangements are in hand for organisation of the first meeting to be held during March 2008.
- 3.27 Officials met with the Director of Network Rail on 14 January. It is proposed that the Director of Network Rail is invited to a future meeting of the Partnership to discuss joint development of rail priorities within the RTS and refined 2008/09 – 2010/11 Delivery Plan. Dates for the 2008 Partnership meetings have been passed to Network Rail with a view to their Director attending a meeting in the later part of the year, or as progress on rail aspects of the RTS develops.

### Freight Quality Partnership

- 3.28 As previously reported, this work element will be progressed through the Regional Freight Stakeholders Forum. Arrangements are in hand for holding the inaugural meeting of this group on 14 February 2008, at which time development of a Regional Freight Quality Partnership will be discussed. It is also proposed that the £20,000 allocation for this project in 2007/08 is carried forward to enable completion in 2008/09.

### Freight Through Ports Study

- 3.29 Comments on the draft findings of a Scottish Enterprise Tayside sponsored study into the potential growth of freight through the Ports of Dundee and Montrose and Perth Harbour have been submitted to SET. Subject to further discussion with SET and Councils on the issues raised by this work, it would also be the intention to seek to carry forward the 2007/08 provision of £20,000 which exists for this work to enable completion in 2008/09.

### ConFor Timber Transport Study

- 3.30 On 24 April 2007 the Partnership approved a contribution of £5,000 per annum in 2008/09 and 2009/10 towards a proposed national study into the potential for transporting more timber by rail. It has now been confirmed that this project is unlikely to go ahead.
- 3.31 At a recent meeting of the Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group (S&TTTG) there was discussion on the possibility of this funding being re-directed to support extension of consultancy work currently being undertaken on behalf of S&TTTG, looking at timber transport developments. The TACTRAN funding would be used to undertake a regional study into the potential for moving more freight by rail, and other opportunities for improving timber transport facilities through the national Strategic Timber Transport Fund. The Partnership is asked to agree to this re-direction of funding.

### Accessibility Mapping

- 3.32 The "Accession" accessibility mapping package has been purchased and installed on computers at TACTRAN, the four constituent Councils, NHS Forth Valley and NHS Tayside. Staff training for all the organisations was provided during the first half of January. It is proposed to form a regional user group to coordinate updating of base data and use of the software, together with providing the opportunity to discuss future application of the software in the region. The cost of purchase and training has been contained within the budget of £19,000, as approved by the Partnership on 23 October 2007.

### Dundee Station Improvements Study

- 3.33 An allocation of £10,000 has been made to an ongoing study into modernising Dundee Station, being led by Dundee City Council. The outcome of this work is awaited and will be reported to the Partnership when available.

## **4 CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Chief Officers Liaison Group.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The costs of developing the submitted RTS have been met from Scottish Executive grant allocations for this purpose, totalling £265,000 in 2006/07. At this stage it is assumed that costs associated with further review/refinement and re-submission of the RTS and associated Delivery Plan will require to be met from the Partnership's Core Revenue Budget for 2008/09 and an anticipated Scottish Government Grant allocation of around £400,000 for "non-Core" activity in 2008/09, as referred to in a separate report on the 2008/09 – 2010/11 Core Revenue Budget.
- 5.2 The approved 2007/08 programme of RTS development work is being met from the RTS Development Budget of £320,000, which has been augmented by a contribution of £25,000 from Dundee City Council towards the Buses Strategy and CT/DRT Action Plan. Some £240,946 of this is now committed to be spent by the end of the Financial Year, as indicated in Appendix B.
- 5.3 Subject to agreement with Scottish Government officials it is proposed that currently uncommitted Grant in Aid totalling £104,000 is carried forward into 2008/09, to enable completion of planned work on TERS STAG Level 2 "refresh"; Freight Quality Partnership; and Freight Through Ports.

**Eric Guthrie**  
**Director**

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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

TACTRAN Indicative Delivery Plan

Reports to Partnership on 19 June 2007, 21 August 2007, 23 October 2007 and 18 December 2007 on Regional Transport Strategy : Progress Update

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07 January 2008

## **TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Thank you for attending the meeting the Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change and I held with Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships and CoSLA on 11 December 2007. Prompted by the joint Chairs letter of 8 October, I convened the meeting to hear views directly from the RTPs and COSLA about the value of retaining RTPs to help deliver local and regional transport planning in co-operation with local government under the terms of the Concordat which this Government has agreed with CoSLA.

I was encouraged to hear examples of the added value that RTPs can bring and pleased to hear COSLA's support for the RTP role within the wider local authority family. Both the RTP Chairs and CoSLA representatives recognised that the RTPs could play a useful role in assisting their constituent councils to plan and implement transport provision on a regional basis. RTPs also provide an opportunity to co-ordinate the delivery of services which cross an individual local authority boundary.



Against that background, I would confirm that I can foresee the RTPs playing a valuable part in improving Scotland's transport infrastructure and services. I would encourage you and your colleagues to work closely with your constituent councils as they develop their plans for single outcome agreements.

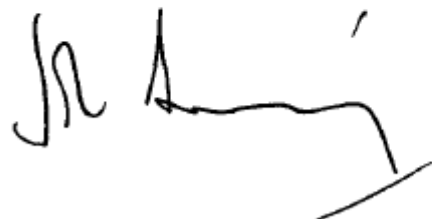
With regard to approval of the regional transport strategies, I made clear that I consider ownership of the TACTRANS strategy is rightly a matter for you and the 4 constituent councils as those best placed, collectively, to deliver the outcomes contained therein at the local level.

I also stated that Regional Transport Strategies should be strategic, high-level documents that focus on the transport strategies necessary to support Government's key objectives and the single outcome agreements of the constituent local authorities. The current draft strategies fulfil that role in part, but also contain interventions which I believe would be best addressed in delivery plans.

Such a delivery plan, agreed by the Partnership and its constituent councils, would take account of all necessary requirements to prioritise interventions including, under the new arrangements, funding in the light of the resources likely to be available as agreed by the Partnership and its constituent councils.

I would be grateful if your Board could consider these comments and submit a revised strategy in due course.

Yours truly



**JOHN SWINNEY**

## Appendix B

### Regional Transport Strategy : Progress Update

#### 2007/08 RTS Development Programme

Approved Projects	Approved Budget	Projected Outturn Cost
RTS Appropriate Appraisal	£ 5,000	£ 3,500
Buses Strategy and CT/DRT Action Plan (£55,000 plus £25,000 from Dundee City DRT)	£80,000	£79,800
Park & Ride Strategy	£30,000	£28,995
Tay Estuary Rail Service STAG 2 Refresh	£65,000	£ 0
Regional Travel Information Strategy	£50,000	£44,986
Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy	£35,000	£33,765
Accessibility Mapping Software	£19,000	£18,400
Freight Quality Partnership	£20,000	£ 0
Freight Through Ports Study	£20,000	£ 0
Dundee Station Improvements Study (contribution)	£10,000	£10,000
A90 Survey Data Analysis	£ 5,000	£ 6,500
ConFor Timber Transport Study (contribution) Reallocated to Regional Study with Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group	£5,000	£ 5,000
Tay Bridge South Park & Ride (contribution)	£10,000	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£354,000</b>	<b>£240,946</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>£345,000</b>	<b>£345,000</b>
Tactran budget £320,000 + Dundee City Council £25,000		
<b>Variance/Uncommitted</b>	<b>(£ 9,000)</b>	<b>£104,054</b>