

**TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP****23 OCTOBER 2007****REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE****Report by Director**

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

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1.1 That the Partnership Board :-

- (i) notes the current position on Ministerial approval of Regional Transport Strategies;
- (ii) delegates authority to the Director to agree a revision of the existing contract with the MVA Consultancy in relation to publication of the Finalised Strategy and to conclude alternative arrangements for publishing the Strategy;
- (iii) notes progress on the 2007/08 work programme for developing the Regional Transport Strategy and agrees the revisions set out in section 3.15 to 3.29 of the report;
- (iv) agrees to suspend Financial Regulation 12 and approves purchase of the "Accession" accessibility mapping package, at a cost of £19,000;
- (v) remits the Director to enter into discussions with constituent Councils on Strategy delivery arrangements and related functions; and
- (vi) receives a further progress report to its meeting on 16 December 2007.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meetings on 19 June and 21 August 2007 the Partnership received reports, updating Members on progress in securing Scottish Executive approval of the finalised Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), as submitted to the Transport Minister on 30 March 2007 (Reports RTP/07/22 and RTP/07/27 refer).
- 2.2 At the meeting on 19 June the Partnership also approved a proposed programme of work to develop elements of the RTS during the current financial year, utilising funding allocated by the Scottish Executive for this purpose.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

#### **Ministerial Approval**

- 3.1 As reported on 21 August 2007, it had been anticipated that the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change would pronounce on submitted RTSs in September. As is referred to in the Director's Report to this meeting, senior Scottish Government transport officials met with the Joint RTP Chairs Group on 27 September 2007, at which time it was indicated that Ministerial approval of strategies had been further delayed, pending progress on the Comprehensive Spending Review. It was also indicated that Ministerial approval is likely to be given in respect of the strategic content of RTSs, but not for specified Interventions within the Strategies.
- 3.2 At the time of writing no further information on the likely timescale for receiving Ministerial comment on the submitted RTS is available. Any further developments will be reported orally.

#### **Publication of Finalised Strategy**

- 3.3 Upon receipt of Ministerial approval, the Partnership is required to publish the finalised RTS and make copies generally available. In light of the above comments regarding the approval status of Interventions within Strategies, it may be that sections of the current document have to be re-drafted or deleted prior to publication. The detailed arrangements for publication of the Finalised RTS, including agreement of a cover cost for the document, will be the subject of a report to the Partnership's next meeting on 16 December 2007.
- 3.4 The contract with the MVA Consultancy for preparation of the RTS included a provision of £15,000 for publication of 1,000 copies of the approved RTS. To date payments totalling £216,293 have been made to MVA, in accordance with contracted activity and subsequent variations for optional activity and other additional work. A retention of 15% (£35,400) of the original contract price remains to be paid upon receipt of Ministerial approval of the Strategy.
- 3.5 MVA have requested that an element of the contract relating to publication of the Finalised Strategy, and an associated budget of £15,000, is removed from the contract. Discussions are taking place with constituent Councils on the potential for one of their Graphics/Printing services adopting this work, within the contracted amount of £15,000. If an alternative publishing source for the document can be obtained, it is proposed that the contract with MVA be varied to delete the requirement to publish the Finalised Strategy, with their final payment reduced by £15,000 accordingly.

#### **RTS Delivery/Business Plan**

- 3.6 RTS Guidance states that RTPs need to produce a Delivery or Business Plan, which sets out a 3-year implementation plan for the RTS, which is updated annually to reflect local and central government planning and funding cycles, and includes plans for Revenue and Capital spending and borrowing.
- 3.7 Pending the outcome of Scottish Government's Spending Review, the future Revenue and Capital funding for RTPs and their Strategies is unclear. At present it is anticipated that Scottish Government's spending plans will be known in early to mid-November. A meeting is being held between RTP Lead

and Finance officials and Scottish Government officials on 13 November, at which time it is hoped that further information on Government's future funding arrangements for RTPs will be available. Subject to the outcome of the Government Spending Review, it is intended that a Delivery/Business Plan for the period 2008/09 – 2010/2011 will be the subject of a report to the Partnership early in the New Year.

- 3.8 During the interim the Indicative Delivery Plan, which sets out the currently anticipated Revenue and Capital consequences of delivering the RTS over its 10 – 15 year implementation period, as approved by the Partnership on 24 April 2007 (Report RTP/07/21 refers), will be reviewed and refined, in consultation with Councils and other Key Stakeholders, as an early work priority for the recently appointed Strategy Manager and Projects Manager.

### **Delivery Arrangements and Functions**

- 3.9 The RTS Guidance indicates that Strategies should include comment on how the RTP's functions will be exercised so as to fulfil the RTS and, if the RTP considers the conferring of further functions necessary, what those functions are. During the RTS Assurance Process, Scottish Executive officials acknowledged that it was unrealistic to undertake and complete the necessary consultations, with Councils and other delivery agencies, on issues relating to any transfer of functions or powers to RTPs, within the timescale available for development and submission of finalised RTSs.
- 3.10 As further development work is progressed on the Delivery/Business Plan for 2008/09 – 2010/11, it will be necessary to identify delivery responsibilities, and any associated conferring of delivery powers and functions, within this. The Indicative Delivery Plan states that this will be the subject of detailed consultation with constituent Councils and other relevant agencies.
- 3.11 Given the delay in receipt of Ministerial approval of the RTS, coupled with the need to progress development of the Delivery/Business Plan for 2008/09 – 2010/11, it is proposed that discussions now be entered into with constituent Councils on the detailed RTS delivery arrangements, including the need for and merits of transferring powers and/or functions to the Partnership, in support of fulfilling the RTS.
- 3.12 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 provides for the transfer of additional powers and functions from Councils or Scottish Government to RTPs, by means of a Transfer of Functions Order, which requires the approval of Scottish Ministers. The process for this requires formal consultation with constituent Councils prior to seeking Ministers approval for the relevant Order. Before making any Order Scottish Ministers must also consult constituent Councils and any other interested parties. Legislation allows for the complete transfer of powers/functions from Councils to RTPs or for concurrent adoption of powers/functions by Partnerships and Councils. The relative operational and delivery merits of both approaches need to be considered.
- 3.13 The submitted RTS contains a number of strategic proposals and related Interventions, for which delivery responsibility may more appropriately sit at a regional level. Examples include:-
- (i) Strategic Transportation Planning and Modelling;
  - (ii) Development of national and regional cycling network;

- (iii) Travel Planning and Awareness (extension of existing role);
- (iv) Regional Car Parking Standards;
- (v) Travel information strategies, including Bus, Real Time etc.;
- (vi) Traffic Regulation Conditions and Bus Priorities;
- (vii) Park & Ride developments;
- (viii) Public transport infrastructure, including bus shelters, bus stations etc.;
- (ix) Quality Bus Partnerships and Quality Contracts;
- (x) Development of Demand Responsive Transport (anticipated role);
- (xi) Integrated Ticketing;
- (xii) Freight Quality Partnerships;
- (xiii) Regional freight hub developments and infrastructure;
- (xiv) Liaison with rail industry and Transport Scotland on rail service and infrastructure matters;
- (xv) Regional Road Safety planning;
- (xvi) Strategic Trunk Road network liaison with Transport Scotland.

3.14 The above list is not exhaustive and provides examples, for illustrative purposes, of the sorts of functions which it might be appropriate to consider operating at a regional level, subject to agreement with Councils.

#### **RTS Development Programme 200708**

3.15 On 19 June the Partnership approved a programme for developing the RTS during the current year, utilising funding of £320,000 which has been allocated by Scottish Government for this purpose. Progress on the various elements of this work programme is outlined below.

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

3.16 Project Briefs for all of the above have now been agreed with input from the Transportation Officers Liaison Group; Public Transport Officers Liaison Group; and Sustainable Travel Group, and are about to be issued to a selected list of consultants to tender for the undertaking and completion of all of these projects by the end of the financial year.

3.17 As a result of refinement of the Project Tender Briefs, adjustments have been made to the indicative budgets for the Buses Strategy (increased from £35,000 to £55,000); Park & Ride Strategy (increased from £20,000 to £30,000) and the Walking & Cycling Strategy (reduced from £50,000 to £30,000).

#### Tay Estuary Rail Service

3.18 A Brief for the STAG Level 2 “refresh” of this RTS Intervention is under preparation and will be issued to suitably experienced consultants, following agreement on the scope and content with First ScotRail, Network Rail and Transport Scotland. The intention is to have this work element completed by the end of the financial year.

#### Freight Quality Partnership

3.19 As previously reported this work element will be progressed through the Regional Freight Stakeholders Forum. It is planned to have the inaugural meeting of this group before the end of the calendar year.

### Accessibility Mapping

- 3.20 Alternative accessibility mapping packages are available. As part of the contract for developing the RTS, the MVA Consultancy produced an accessibility mapping model using their "Accession" package. Consultations with other RTPs had identified that most have purchased or intend to purchase this version of accessibility mapping software. Given that the previous RTS work has been based upon an "Accession" model, combined with the fact that neighbouring RTPs are also developing accessibility mapping using the same package, it is proposed that the "Accession" package is purchased.
- 3.21 A current provision of £10,000 exists to purchase an accessibility mapping capability. A quote has been received from MVA, which provides for updating of the existing RTS "Accession" Model, provision of licences, training and future maintenance. Discussions are ongoing with Councils on the joint use of accessibility mapping. It is proposed to acquire up to 6 "Accession" licences, one per Council plus two for TACTRAN, to enable a consistent regional approach and closer integration of transport and land use planning. The cost of purchasing 6 licences, training for up to 12 people, plus updating of the existing RTS "Accession" Model is approximately £19,000 plus ongoing software maintenance costs of £2,750/annum.
- 3.22 It is proposed that Financial Regulation 12 is suspended to enable purchase of the "Accession" accessibility mapping package.

### Freight Through Ports Study

- 3.23 A provision of £20,000 exists for development of the outcomes of a study undertaken on behalf of Scottish Enterprise Tayside into the potential growth of freight and the more sustainable movement of related traffic by rail instead of road, to/from the ports of Dundee, Montrose and Perth. Further work on this element requires detailed discussion with SET and Councils on the findings of the SET commissioned study.

### Dundee Station Improvements Study

- 3.24 A provision of £10,000 exists to contribute towards an ongoing study into modernising Dundee Station, linked to the Dundee Waterfront development. Following a meeting to consider progress on this project on 14 August, consultants are undertaking further work on an outline option for station enhancement, to which TACTRAN's contribution of £10,000 has been committed. It is expected that the outputs from this further work will be reported on by the end of the year.

### A90 Survey Data Analysis

- 3.25 A provision of £5,000 was allowed for analysis of traffic survey data collected in March 2007, to inform development of the Transport Model for Scotland (TMfS). This work has been completed at a final cost of £6,500.
- 3.26 Transport Scotland is currently updating TMfS as part of the work associated with the Strategic Transport Projects Review. It is understood that Transport Scotland will deliver regional sub-models of TMfS to RTPs as part of this updating of the national model. The data provided by TACTRAN will assist in

delivering a more robust regional sub-model, which can be used to inform future modelling and appraisal of projects and other elements of the RTS.

ConFor Timber Transport Study

3.27 The Partnership previously agreed, at its meeting on 24 April 2007 (Report RTP/07/20 refers) to contribute towards a proposed national study into the potential for transporting more timber by rail instead of road. TACTRAN's approved contribution towards this study is £5,000/annum in financial years 2007/08 and 2008/09. Allowance has been made for the current year contribution to be funded from the RTS Development Programme budget.

Tay Bridge South Park & Choose Study

3.28 At the meeting on 19 June the Partnership approved a contribution of £10,000 towards a jointly funded appraisal of a Tay Bridge South Park & Choose facility, in partnership with SEStran. This has now been allowed for in the work programme. A draft Study Brief is awaited from SEStran, who will lead on the work as the proposed facility lies within their area.

Revised Programme Budget

3.29 As a result of development and refinement of individual projects a number of adjustments have been made to the financial programme previously approved by the Partnership on 19 June 2007, as summarised below :-

<b>Approved Projects</b>	<b>Estimated Revised Cost</b>	<b>Cost</b>
RTS Appropriate Appraisal	£ 5,000	£ 3,500
Buses Strategy	£35,000	£55,000
Park & Ride Strategy	£20,000	£30,000
Tay Estuary Rail Service STAG 2 Refresh	£65,000	£65,000
Regional Travel Information Strategy	£50,000	£50,000
Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy	£55,000	£35,000
Accessibility Mapping Software	£10,000	£19,000
Freight Quality Partnership	£20,000	£20,000
Freight Through Ports Study	£20,000	£20,000
Dundee Station Improvements Study (contribution)	£10,000	£10,000
A90 Survey Data Analysis	£ 5,000	£ 6,500
ConFor Timber Transport Study (contribution)		£ 5,000
Tay Bridge South Park & Ride (contribution)		£10,000
Contingency/Unallocated	£ 25,000	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£320,000</b>	<b>£329,000</b>

3.30 The Partnership Board is asked to approve the above revised programme.

#### **4 CONSULTATIONS**

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

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The costs of developing the submitted RTS, with consultancy support, have been met from Scottish Executive grant allocations for this purpose, totalling £265,000 in 2006/07.
- 5.2 The revised 2007/08 programme of RTS development work will be largely delivered through procurement of consultancy support. Preliminary consultancy support costs, currently amounting to £3,351, associated with development of Project Briefs, have been met from slippage in the approved Core Budget for Staffing.
- 5.3 Subject to the outcome of tendering, the updated projected cost of completing the approved RTS development work programme for 2007/08 is £329,000. It is proposed that a resultant overspend of £9,000 against the allocated RTS Development Budget of £320,000 is met through virement from a projected underspend in the 2007/08 Core Budget for Staffing, as reported in a separate report on Revenue Budget Monitoring.

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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 and 21 August 2007 on Regional Transport Strategy : Progress Update