

## TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

14 MARCH 2017

## NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY REVIEW

## REPORT BY DIRECTOR

This report seeks the Partnership's approval of a proposed response to the National Transport Strategy Early Engagement.

**1 RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 That the Partnership approves the proposed response to the National Transport Strategy (NTS) Early Engagement, as detailed in Appendix A.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 6 December 2016 the Partnership noted publication of a Refresh of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and the intention that a full review of the NTS would be undertaken after the May 2017 local government elections (Report RTP/16/39 refers). The Minister for Transport and the Islands had confirmed the planned review of the NTS and STPR in alignment with the National Planning Framework (NPF4) in a letter on the Scottish Government's 2016/17 Programme for Government.
- 2.2 In line with the process for the previous NTS Refresh, Transport Scotland has re-established a National Transport Strategy Review Partnership Group of key stakeholders to inform and support the review. As with the previous NTS Refresh group, RTP interests are being represented by colleagues from Hitrans and SPT.

**3 DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The National Transport Strategy (NTS) sets the long term vision for national transport policies. It was first published in 2006 after the Scottish Government consulted the public, interested individuals and a wide range of organisations on their views for the future of transport in Scotland. The NTS was refreshed in 2016 and recommended a fuller, collaborative review of the NTS in the following Scottish Parliamentary term. The Minister for Transport and the Islands subsequently announced the inception of this full review of the NTS on 22 August 2016.
- 3.2 The review of the NTS will set out an updated vision for transport in Scotland in 20 years' time. It will look at how the strategic challenges facing the transport network can be addressed and advantage can be taken of the opportunities that present themselves. It will also inform the review of the Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR2) by providing a clearly defined set of strategic transport objectives.

- 3.3 Transport Scotland is seeking to gather views at an early stage to shape the key themes of the NTS review and has prepared an online survey to collect responses to five “high level” questions regarding transport and the National Transport Strategy, with consultation ending on 31 March 2017. The questions and proposed responses are detailed in Appendix A.
- 3.4 Transport Scotland will build on the early engagement activities from summer 2017 onwards with a wide programme of in-depth engagement, including stakeholder events and online/digital channels, which will culminate with a public consultation.

#### **4 CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 This report has been developed in consultation with the Transportation Officers Liaison Group, Public Transport Officers Liaison Group and Chief Officers Liaison Group, who are in agreement with the proposed response.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report has no additional financial or other direct resource implications.

#### **6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment and no major issues have been identified.

**Eric Guthrie**  
**Director**

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#### **NOTE**

The following 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:

Report to Partnership RTP/16/39, Director’s Report, 6 December 2016

**National Transport Strategy Early Engagement: Proposed Response**

*Have you used, or referred to, the 2006 National Transport Strategy (NTS)?*

Yes, it was used in the development of the original Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) 2008 – 2023 to ensure that the RTS aligns with and supports the NTS. Connections were made between the RTS and national objectives/outcomes and detailed “mapping” undertaken to ensure full consistency between the two. The RTS Objectives were developed under six broad themes - Economy; Accessibility; Equity and Social Inclusion; Environment; Health and Well-being, Safety and Security; and Integration corresponding to the NTS High Level Objectives of - Promote economic growth; Promote social inclusion; Protect our environment; Improve health; and Improve integration.

The RTS 2015 – 2036 Refresh, which was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2015, emphasised specific policy and key strategic outcome linkages with a number specifically referring to working with Transport Scotland to deliver STPR projects and to deliver NTS Strategic Outcomes including, for example, the following policies :

SC1: Work with Transport Scotland to deliver STPR Projects 6: Further Extension of Rail Electrification; 15 Edinburgh to Glasgow Rail Improvements; 17: Highland Main Line rail improvements; and 23: Aberdeen – Central Belt Rail Improvements;

SC6: Work with Transport Scotland to support delivery of STPR Projects 16: to upgrade the A9 between Dunblane and Inverness; and 29: to improve the A90 through/around Dundee;

HT3: Improve air quality within any designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to a point where the AQMA is revoked;

HT7: Improve equality of access to healthcare; and

HT9: Make transport to healthcare accessible for all, physically, socially and financially.

The original Tactran RTS and RTS Refresh contain detailed sub-strategies that are aligned with the NTS “daughter” documents, the Action Plans for Buses and Freight, and the Scotland’s Railways document.

The RTS Delivery Plan 2016-2021 aligns with all relevant national, regional and local strategies, including the NTS and the STPR.

*The current strategy sets out the three key strategic outcomes of improved journey times and connections; reduced emissions; and improved quality, accessibility and affordability. Do you think each of these will still be relevant over the next 20 years?*

These will probably still be relevant, though it is difficult to forecast the impact of disruptive technologies, such as Uber, or technological innovation including driverless vehicles and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and what implications these will have for the strategic outcomes.

On a point of detail, it is critical that reduced emissions should account for both greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollutants to avoid potential for repeating the conflicting outcomes of policies in recent years.

There is a fundamental issue regarding the relative emphasis, prioritisation (implicit or explicit) and conflict within and between the strategic outcomes. These need to recognise and be sensitive to the national, regional and local role and function of transport generally and modes specifically, e.g. the problem of reduced intercity journey times between Aberdeen/Inverness and the Central Belt can conflict with enhancing local rail connectivity/provision at other stations, including in the Tay Estuary area. Also, the inherent/implicit tensions between and within what are presented as “three key strategic outcomes” but are in reality more than that, with sometimes conflicting priorities and outcomes – again the example of reduced intercity journey times being a constraint on improving local rail connections even though these are, in theory, addressing the same strategic objective. The third strategic outcome, *improved quality, accessibility and affordability*, embraces more than one objective and the reality is that there is very often a trade-off, both commercially and in policy terms, between quality, accessibility and affordability.

*If there was one thing that needs to change substantially now in transport, what would that be?*

It is overly simplistic to focus on one thing that needs to change. The delivery of effective, efficient and attractive transport infrastructure and services underpins the Government’s key objective of sustainable and inclusive economic growth nationally, regionally and locally. A range of complementary priorities and measures are required. It is important to ensure that efforts to encourage modal shift, particularly addressing the difference in perceived and actual cost and time of car travel relative to public transport and other greener modes are fully addressed. There is a need for increased emphasis and action on delivery of effective multi-modal integration, including seamless travel, hard and soft infrastructure including ticketing, information/marketing.

Underpinning all of that there is a clear need for a review of transport governance and accountability nationally, regionally and locally, linked with creation of a cohesive, coherent and consistent, statutorily backed, strategic policy framework.

*What do you think are the main transport challenges and opportunities over the next 20 years?*

The challenges are likely to be similar to those pertaining currently, including issues such as the ageing population profile, addressing accessibility to services in rural areas, ensuring that solutions are for the whole community and do not exclude non-IT accessible/literate sectors of the population, and continuing to achieve integration between transport modes and between transport and land use planning. Opportunities may arise to address these through the application of disruptive technologies and technological innovation, as outlined in the answer to the second question.

*How would you like us to engage with you during the development of the future strategy that will lead to a formal public consultation?*

There is a need to recognise the statutory role of Tactran and RTPs generally and the statutory relationship between the NTS and RTS(s). Reflecting this RTPs need to be fully engaged and consulted as key stakeholders, both individually and collectively, throughout the NTS review process, including both in advance of and during the formal public consultation stages of the review process. The RTP Chairs have made a positive offer to the Minister for Transport and the Islands to co-sponsor the NTS review and this should be recognised and considered.