

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

27 MARCH 2018

GENERAL CONSULTATIONS

REPORT BY SENIOR STRATEGY OFFICER

This report seeks approval of responses to Scottish Government consultation 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections'; informs the Partnership of the Tactran response approved for submission by the Executive Committee under delegated authority and a joint RTPs response to Scottish Government consultation on 'Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships'.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Partnership:

- (i) approves the proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections', as detailed in Appendix A;
- (ii) notes the response to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships' as approved by the Tactran Executive Committee, as shown in Appendix B.
- (iii) notes the joint response by the RTPs to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships', as shown in Appendix C.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scottish Government published consultation on ['A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections'](#) on 16 January 2018, with responses to be submitted by 27 April 2018.
- 2.2 The Scottish Government published consultation on [Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships](#) on 20 October 2017, with responses to be submitted by 12 January 2018. At its meeting on 12 December 2017 the Partnership agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve responses to this consultation (Report RTP/17/37 refers).

3 DISCUSSION

'A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections'

3.1 The Scottish Government are consulting on the draft strategy 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections' which has been developed following the last Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee Inquiry into Age and Social Isolation. The Inquiry set out a number of findings and recommendations, one being to produce a national strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness.

3.2 The strategy seeks to:

- articulate a vision of the kind of Scotland we want to see, where community connections are increased and no one is excluded from participating in society for any reason
- define what we understand social isolation and loneliness to be, and the degree to which they are prevalent in Scotland today
- highlight what the Government has heard so far in the process of engaging with stakeholders throughout the development of the draft Strategy
- set out how the Government wants communities to be empowered to lead efforts to tackle social isolation and loneliness
- highlight the Government's own work in this area and link this to the broader policy context in which we're operating
- facilitate discussion amongst organisations and individuals about what needs to be done to effectively tackle social isolation and loneliness in Scotland

3.3 The causes and consequences of social isolation and loneliness are varied. Hence in seeking to address the issue the draft strategy is inevitably wide reaching, seeking input from many partners and sectors.

3.4 The proposed Tactran response focuses on those 'transport and travel' factors which can influence social isolation and loneliness, namely:

- (i) The ability to access jobs, services, opportunities or social networks (e.g. friends, family, clubs etc.). In particular:
- The availability of jobs, services and opportunities in communities
 - The availability of transport services to enable people to access these jobs, services, opportunities and social networks
 - The cost of travel, particularly for the most vulnerable
 - The ability or willingness of people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act to use transport services. For example, this could include people with cultural barriers; people with learning difficulties; and hate crime, the latter two issues being recognised within Transport Scotland's 'Accessible Travel Framework Action Plan.'

- (ii) The physical environment, which can present barriers to people accessing services locally, or can discourage people from getting 'out and about' and hence having opportunities to improve health, confidence and chances of social interaction. In particular:
- Barriers for people with mobility difficulties using transport services
 - Barriers for people with mobility difficulties using our streets
 - The attractiveness of our environment to encourage more people to walk and cycle within their local communities

3.5 The draft strategy recognises these two basic themes and accordingly its 'Draft Performance Framework' proposes as measures of success:

- More social spaces in towns and cities
- Better transport links

3.6 The proposed Tactran response therefore focuses on the 'transport and travel' factors which can influence social isolation and loneliness and supports the inclusion of the two measures of success within the 'Draft Performance Framework'

3.7 The Partnership is asked to consider and approve the proposed response, as shown in Appendix A.

Consultation on Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships

3.8 As reported to the Partnership meeting on 12 December 2017 (Report RTP/17/37 refers) the Scottish Government has sought views on whether it is necessary to clarify the extent to which RTPs are able to retain a financial reserve and on whether any surplus or deficit carried forward from one financial year to the next should be subject to any limit. Views were also sought on what safeguards local authorities ought to have in limiting their contribution towards the expenses of a RTP.

3.9 The Executive Committee approved the proposed Tactran response, as shown in Appendix B to allow submission by the deadline of 12 January 2018 (Report RTP/17/41 refers).

3.10 This consultation was also discussed at the RTP Chairs meeting on 6 December 2017 and it was agreed that a joint RTPs response, supplementing individual RTP responses, be submitted to Scottish Government. Appendix C provides the joint response from the Regional Transport Partnerships.

4 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The draft and submitted response detailed in appendices to this report, have been prepared in consultation with other RTPs and have been informed by consultation with partner Councils.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment.

6.2 It is proposed that the response to the Scottish Government's consultation 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections' appropriately considers equality impact. While no material issues have been identified in relation to the consultation response to 'Consultation on Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships'.

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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/17/37, General Consultations, 12 December 2017

Report to Executive Committee RTP/17/41, Consultations, 21 December 2017

Scottish Government consultation on 'A Connected Scotland: Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness and Building Stronger Social Connections', January 2018

Transport Scotland consultation on 'Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships', October 2017

Department for Transport 'Consultation on the use of section 19 and section 22 permits for road transport in Great Britain', February 2018

A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections

Q1 What needs to change in your community to reduce social isolation and loneliness and increase the range and quality of social connections?

As a Regional Transport Partnership, Tactran's response to this consultation focuses on transport and travel factors that can influence social isolation and loneliness.

As more facilities are withdrawn from communities and if the trend of declining public transport (especially bus) services continues, the problem of people being 'cut off' from jobs, services, opportunities and social connections is likely to increase.

From the perspective of preventing isolation and loneliness through the ability to access jobs, services, opportunities and social connections, the following are key factors that need to be considered:

- Availability of goods, services, opportunities and social connections in communities
- The ability to access them via:
 - Transport links, for example public transport or other forms of transport link. The ability to use transport links will be influenced by:
 - Existence of transport service (whether that be public transport, community transport or other)
 - The cost of travel, particularly for the most vulnerable
 - Sense of security on public transport, including hate crime
 - Ability to use public or community transport for people with mobility or learning difficulties; and /or due to cultural barriers
 - Walking or cycling. The ability to walk or cycle will be influenced by:
 - Physical barriers to access, especially for people with mobility difficulties
 - Environments which are pleasant and encourage people to walk and cycle in, particularly paying regard to safety (including road safety) and security

It may also be useful to remember that the people that we most want to support via this strategy are harder to reach, and we may need to recognise the additional resource (time/people) that is required to engage with the target audience.

Q2. Who is key at local level in driving this change, and what do you want to see them doing more (or less) of?

Key partners are those who are best able to ensure that the changes are sustainable.

- To improve transport links, key local partners include public sector, transport providers (commercial, third sector and community), and communities.

- To improve the physical environment for walking, cycling and people with mobility difficulties key local partners include public sector, third sector and communities.

Q3. What does Government need to do nationally to better empower communities and create the conditions to allow social connections to flourish?

Whilst empowering communities to take more responsibility and deliver more initiatives both increases opportunities for social connections and builds capacity within communities, consideration perhaps needs to be given to the maximum capacity of communities to deliver as there is quite often a limited pool of people able or willing to participate. Government needs to encourage individuals to participate at a local and community level.

Q4. Do you agree or disagree with our definitions of (i) social isolation and (ii) loneliness? Please provide comments, particularly if you disagree.

It may be useful to clarify within the definition that social isolation extends beyond 'social' connections (e.g. family and friends), and that all human interaction (work, shopping, bank, post office etc.) affects social isolation.

Q5. Do you agree with the evidence sources we are drawing from? Are there other evidence sources you think we should be using?

The evidence sources referred to largely reflect the occurrence of social isolation, and are all useful in reflecting the scale of the problem. Presumably an evidence base informing the causes (and consequences) of social isolation is also being developed. From the perspective of a transport authority, we would suggest the data sets listed below. :

For the availability of goods, services, opportunities and social connections in communities and the ability to access them via transport links, the following data types may be useful:

- Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation: Access domain
- Accessibility modelling that can identify the areas/population groups who have poor access to services and opportunities (e.g. using Accession / Tracc models)
- Local development and community planning exercises identifying the level of facilities in communities
- Work on understanding transport poverty

For the ability to physically access goods, services, opportunities and social connections by walking and cycling the following data types may be useful:

- Ability of people with mobility difficulties to use not only public transport but also our streets
- Scottish Household Survey / Census data reflecting how secure people feel in their neighbourhoods and on public transport, and hence their propensity to get out and about

- Data reflecting the number / proportion of trips made by walking or cycling or public transport (i.e. when social interaction is far more likely).

Q6. Are there examples of best practice outside Scotland (either elsewhere in the UK or overseas) focused on tackling social isolation and loneliness that you think we should be looking at?

No Comment.

Q7. Are you aware of any good practice in a local community to build social connections that you want to tell us about?

One example within the Tactran Region, to be launched shortly by Dundee City Council, is the 'Blether Bus'. This initiative recognises that public transport not only links people with jobs and services as well as family and friends, but that the bus journey itself becomes a means for social contact.

Q8. How can we all work together to challenge stigma around social isolation and loneliness, and raise awareness of it as an issue? Are there examples of people doing this well that you're aware of?

With regard to improving transport links, there is perhaps the opportunity for the solutions to be available to all in society, which should reduce any stigma with regard to accessing the services. In particular, smart cards can enable all users to access solutions via the same portal and for any concessions that they receive to be only 'visible' on their account, rather than at the point of use.

Q9. Using the Carnegie UK Trust's report as a starting point, what more should we be doing to promote kindness as a route to reducing social isolation and loneliness?

No comment

Q10. How can we ensure that those who experience both poverty and social isolation receive the right support?

While it is quite right that communities play a central role in identifying and bringing forward solutions, the public sector should be conscious of ensuring support is directed at those communities most in need of support. Using census, SIMD data and accessibility mapping techniques can help identify those communities where support is most likely to be needed (whilst recognising that poverty and social isolation can and does occur at levels which are not necessarily picked up at census data levels)

Smart ticketing (especially when tied into personal accounts within a MaaS package) can enable levels of support to be fine-tuned for those most in need.

Q11. What do we need to be doing more of (or less of) to ensure that we tackle social isolation and loneliness for the specific life stages and groups mentioned above?

To better understand the issues and barriers faced by the specific life stages and groups, it is essential that those people are involved in the design of the solutions. All partners in the transport and service delivery sectors need to work together to provide the opportunity for people to access the jobs, services, leisure and social activities that reduce social isolation.

Q12. How can health services play their part in better reducing social isolation and loneliness?

Many of those who are most in need of health and social services can also be those most at risk of loneliness and isolation. The health and social service sector are therefore front line services in identifying those suffering from, or at risk of, loneliness and isolation. Sharing of data with organisations co-ordinating 'transport' solutions can help ensure that transport solutions are targeted in the right 'areas'.

The ability to physically access health services is a frequent concern, particularly for rural communities. A pilot by Forth Valley NHS concerning this issue identified not only the health benefits of taking the services to communities (rather than requiring people to travel to services) but also the potential social benefits of getting to see people who otherwise would not have seen anyone.

Tactran developed a Health & Transport Framework that provides a comprehensive long-term action plan to better address all the links between transport and health, with two strands of promoting active travel and access to healthcare of particular relevance to tackling social isolation and loneliness. Tactran has been working with Community Planning Partnerships to further develop the Framework.

Q13. How can we ensure that the social care sector contributes to tackling social isolation and loneliness?

See answer to Q12

Q14. What more can we do to encourage people to get involved in local groups that promote physical activity?

Local Authorities, Regional Transport Partnerships, and Transport Scotland, along with charities and agencies such as Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, Living Streets and Paths for All, undertake significant activity to develop active travel infrastructure and accessible public realms and also to promote active travel as part of active lifestyles. However it is recognised that there remains a significant amount of work required to improve and encourage active travel, particularly in harder to reach groups and sectors of the community. The doubling of funding available for active travel through increased Capital funding by the Scottish Government is most welcome, in terms of the ability to deliver improved Active Travel infrastructure. However, the effective encouragement and promotion of physical activity also relies on a range of "softer" measures, such as increased use of Active Prescribing, and the availability of capacity within local groups.

Key to the success in promoting active travel will be support that enables smaller, locally based third sector, social enterprise and community groups to continue to

build capacity and outreach to help people get involved in activities and groups that promote active travel as part of active lifestyles and being more physically active.

Q15. How can we better equip people with the skills to establish and nurture strong and positive social connections?

No comment.

Q16. How can we better ensure that our services that support children and young people are better able to identify where someone may be socially isolated, and capable of offering the right support?

The sharing of data by our services which support children and young people with whoever is co-ordinating 'transport' solutions can help ensure that transport solutions are targeted in the right 'areas'.

In addition, developing for example the Young Scot Card as a smartcard in association with a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) style solution could enable support to be targeted at individuals

Q17. How can the third sector and social enterprise play a stronger role in helping to tackle social isolation and loneliness in communities?

See response to Q14

Q18. What more can the Scottish Government do to promote volunteering and help remove barriers to volunteering, particular for those who may be isolated?

No comment

Q19. How can employers and business play their part in reducing social isolation and loneliness?

No comment.

Q20. What are the barriers presented by the lived environment in terms of socially connecting? How can these be addressed?

The physical environment presents various barriers that prevent or discourage social interaction, namely:

- **Physical barriers for people, especially for those with mobility difficulties.** While it is a huge task, we must strive to make our streets accessible by all. All physical works (improvements and maintenance) to our streets should maximise the opportunity to address issues for people with mobility difficulties.
- **The sense of safety and security of a place / How welcoming a place is to use and spend time in.** More can be done to design streets to encourage people to use them more either as pedestrians or cyclists. The

more people use streets, the more secure they will feel. We can address these issues both through 'retrofitting' placemaking projects, as well as ensuring new developments pay regard to placemaking.

- **Facilities to encourage more people to walk and cycle.** Funding opportunities and therefore investment in this issue has recently been largely focused on encouraging a modal shift by cycling. This is indeed a policy objective, but perhaps one that could be better balanced by focussing on enabling everyone to use the street environments. The recent changes to Sustrans community links guidance which enables walking only projects to be available for community links funding goes a significant way towards addressing this issue.

Q21. How can cultural services and agencies play their part in reducing social isolation and loneliness?

No comment.

Q22. How can transport services play their part in reducing social isolation and loneliness?

Accessing jobs, services, opportunities and social connections, is a vital part of addressing social isolation and creating a connected Scotland. The problem of physical access is undoubtedly getting worse as the trend for declining local bus services continues and rural communities have fewer local facilities (e.g. banks, post offices, schools, leisure and health services)

It is unlikely that there is a single solution which is both sustainable and addresses the varied travel demands that people have. It is therefore vital that the relevant public and third sector agencies, as well as the whole spectrum of transport providers (public transport, as well as lift share, car clubs, and bike hire etc.), and communities work together to provide a package of interventions and solutions which the user can access through a single point of contact. This won't address all travel demands, but it is more likely to ensure that awareness and usage of each service and option is maximised, thereby assisting their sustainability.

Q23. How best can we ensure that people have both access to digital technology and the ability to use it?

No comment.

Q24. Taking into account answers to questions elsewhere, is there anything else we should be doing that doesn't fall into any of these categories?

The framework broadly covers the principal 'transport' issues that play a role in social isolation and loneliness, provided that the more detailed issues summarised in Q1 and referenced throughout this response are considered in the detailed work taking the strategy forward.

Q25. Do you agree with the framework we have created to measure our progress in tackling social isolation and loneliness?

No comment.

Q26. Is there anything missing from this framework that you think is important for us to consider?

In terms of the role transport and active travel have in addressing and reducing the likelihood of social isolation it is welcomed that more social spaces in towns and cities, and better transport links are both identified as specific measures of success to support the outcome of fewer causes of isolation and loneliness. However, it is suggested that:

- (i) The concept of more sociable spaces in settlements is either extended to include or be complemented by a measure to continue to adapt our environments to enable and encourage more people to travel actively within their neighbourhoods.
- (ii) The better transport links measure, also reflects the transport poverty issue, i.e. 'better and affordable transport links'

Regarding indicators it is noticeable that the framework does not include specific indicators that track progress against the 'transport' success measures. Some suggested indicators are given below:

- **More sociable spaces in towns and cities:** Sense of security in neighbourhood exists as an indicator within the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). This data could be complemented by the number of projects where the place standard tool has been used. Alternatively, a more specific question could be introduced into a national survey (such as the SHS). Walking and cycling mode share indicators could also be used here (Census / SHS), as could use of walking as a mode of travel in last week (SHS)
- **Better transport links:** Monitoring use of individual services can indicate rates of usage. Transport Focus, Transport Scotland, the RTPs and bus operators have partnered to resource the undertaking of the Scottish National Bus Passenger Survey and there may be an opportunity to expand the scope of that national survey to include questions geared towards identifying satisfaction with transport links within the context of tackling social isolation. Awareness of transport links is just as important as the existence of the links themselves and expansion or development of the National Bus Passenger Survey or other research could offer an opportunity to provide some useful insight on this. It may also be possible to map the scope of the transport solutions available for people in identified communities through linking with the accessibility mapping approaches referenced in the answer to Q5.

**Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships
Response by Tactran**

Number	Consultation Question
1	<p>Do you think that it is necessary to clarify whether a Regional Transport Partnership is able to build up, and carryover, a financial reserve from one financial year to the next? Please use the box below to provide details.</p>
	<p>Yes. The current uncertain position is an unintended anomaly/oversight within the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 which has had the effect of placing an unhelpful constraint on RTPs' ability to manage unforeseen slippage in the delivery of projects and/or other activity across Financial Years.</p> <p>Whilst temporary accounting solutions have been employed to address this situation year on year, it is considered that the additional operational flexibility which an unambiguous power to hold and operate reserves/balances would assist and add transparency in managing RTP finances, including circumstances which may arise for reasons outwith the direct control of the RTP. It would enhance the arrangements for effective, efficient and transparent management of project delivery and related financing across Financial Years, where this proves necessary.</p> <p>As outlined in the Minister's Foreword to the consultation, reserves and balances are a long established part of the financial management toolkit available to public sector bodies. They are recognised by the Audit Commission as a necessary element of any sound financial planning and management system. The Minister's stated belief that this flexibility should be extended to RTPs, as mature public sector organisations, is welcomed and strongly supported.</p> <p>Reference is made in the consultation to SPT being significantly different to other RTPs, owing to the scale of its capital programmes. Whilst this is acknowledged, the proposed ability to carry forward balances/reserves to assist in effective and efficient management of project delivery across Financial Years should apply equally to all 7 RTPs, to ensure absolute clarity and consistency of application. This should include not only circumstances where an RTP may wish to progress from "Model 1" to "Model 3" (as noted in section 2.7 of the consultation paper) but also the potential that currently exists for any RTP to take on project delivery and financial management, either acting in its own right or on behalf of partner Councils and/or other partner agencies using powers under Sections 3 and 4 and the related Schedule 1 of the 2005 Act, irrespective of any formal transfer of functions. This could include delivery of projects directly in pursuit of the RTS but also supporting or leading on the delivery of projects/initiatives in support of Community Planning and wider outcomes.</p>

2	Should there be a limit to the amount of surplus that an RTP may carry forward into the next financial year? Please use the box below to provide details.
	<p>No arbitrary maximum financial amount or limit should be applied. The RTPs vary significantly in their organisational scale and operational budgets. As indicated in response to Q1 above, it is considered that an unequivocal power and flexibility to hold and operate balances/reserves should apply consistently across all 7 RTPs. However, given the widely differing geographic, operational and organisational scale and complexity of the individual RTPs, it is extremely unlikely that a “one size fits all” approach to determining any appropriate financial limit or amount of any surplus/balance could be sensibly applied other than in the broadest sense, such as through application of a maximum percentage of the RTPs’ individual Full Year operating budgets.</p> <p>With reference to section 2.4 of the consultation document, it is considered that the flexibility to manage and carry forward balances/reserves, for the primary purpose of efficient and effective management of project delivery across Financial Years, should apply to all RTP funding and investment for both Capital and Revenue projects, as both types of project and funding can suffer unplanned delays and slippages which may require re-profiling of funding and expenditure across Financial Years.</p>
3	Should safeguards be provided to limit the financial liability of local authorities towards RTP expenses? Please use the box below to provide details.
	<p>The current legislative provisions and protections should remain unchanged. RTPs are required to set balanced budgets and it is assumed that the flexibility proposed in relation to balances/reserves will only apply in relation to approved budgets and/or expenditure. The budgets for RTPs are approved, year on year, in conjunction and consultation with partner Councils and other appropriate funders, having regard to the availability and legal commitment of finances to support their operational needs and delivery of the RTS.</p> <p>In addition, it should be noted that RTPs operate on a “going concern” basis for financial management and annual audit purposes. External Audit acceptance of this “going concern” position is underpinned by the protections provided under Section 3 of the 2005 Act which should not, therefore, be unnecessarily altered.</p>
4	The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 applies only specific local government finance provisions to Regional Transport Partnerships. Are there any other local government finance provisions which could usefully be applied to the RTPs? Please use the box below to provide details.
	<p>Yes. It is considered that RTPs should be afforded the same range of powers and flexibilities that are available to other mature public sector bodies, as referenced in section 2.10 of the consultation document under</p>

	<p>the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975, including repair & renewal funds; insurance funds; and Capital funds.</p> <p>Again it must be recognised that, whilst the various RTPs have significant differences in terms of geographical, operational and financial scale and complexity, the proposed flexibility on reserves/balances should apply consistently across all 7 RTPs, including the ability to support and enable transitioning towards so-called “Model 3” status should future circumstances, including any potential revisions to roles and responsibilities under the ongoing National Transport Strategy review and/or agreement with local partners and Transport Scotland support such a move.</p>
Equality Impacts	Are there any likely impacts the proposals contained within this Consultation may have on particular groups of people, with reference to the ‘protected characteristics’ listed above? Please be as specific as possible.
	No specific impacts anticipated.
Children and Young People	Do you think the proposals contained within this Consultation may have any additional implications on the safety of children and young people?
	No specific implications anticipated.
Business Impacts	Do you think the proposals contained in this Consultation are likely to increase or reduce the costs and burdens placed on any sector? Please be as specific as possible.
	No specific implications anticipated. It is considered that the additional flexibility proposed will support the more effective, efficient and transparent approaches to management of funds across Financial Years.
Privacy Impacts	Are there any likely impacts the proposals contained in this Consultation may have upon the privacy of individuals? Please be as specific as possible.
	None anticipated.

Transport Scotland Consultation on the Financial Accounting Arrangements for Regional Transport Partnerships

Response by the Regional Transport Partnerships of Scotland

Do you think that it is necessary to clarify whether a Regional Transport Partnership is able to build up, and carryover, a financial reserve from one financial year to the next?

Response – Yes. The current position is an anomaly which restricts the ability of RTPs to manage unforeseen financial activity, particularly across financial years. A power to hold and operate reserves/balances, as is well established for public sector bodies, is essential for effective and efficient financial management where appropriate.

Should there be a limit to the amount of surplus that an RTP may carry forward into the next financial year?

Response – Due to the difference in scale and operational activity across the RTPs, we do not believe a limit should be applied. The flexibility to hold and operate balances/reserves should be applied consistently across all RTPs.

Should safeguards be provided to limit the financial liability of local authorities towards RTP expenses?

Response – In general, the current legislative provisions and protections in this regard are considered to have been appropriate and effective. See individual RTP responses for detailed comments.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 applies only specific local government finance provisions to Regional Transport Partnerships. Are there any other local government finance provisions which could usefully be applied to the RTPs?

Response - Yes. RTPs should have the same range of powers that are available to other public sector bodies, as referenced in section 2.10 of the consultation document under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975, including repair & renewal funds; insurance funds; and Capital funds.