

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Minute of the Meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 15 September 2020 at 10.30am.

Present: Provost Ronnie Proctor and Councillor Mark McDonald (Angus Council); Councillor Richard McCready (Dundee City Council); Councillors Alasdair Bailey, David Illingworth and Andrew Parrott (Perth & Kinross Council); Councillors Danny Gibson and Jim Thomson (Stirling Council); Heather Anderson and Bryan Doyle (Members); Anna Ronayne (Advisor).

In Attendance: M Speed (Director); N Gardiner, N Moran, J Padmore, A Roger and M Scott (Tactran); S Walker (Treasurer); S Hendry (Secretary); W Scott (Angus Council); E MacNaughton and E Gourlay (Dundee City Council); D Coyne and A Deans (Perth & Kinross Council); D Hopper (Stirling Council); M Wilkie (KPMG) for Item 3.

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Mark Flynn (Dundee City Council) and Paul Cronin (Member).

Councillor Richard McCready, Chair, Presiding

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised of the protocol regarding the virtual meeting.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 16 JUNE 2020

The minute of the meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership of 16 June 2020 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

Councillor Bailey asked if the minute was relevant since the meeting didn't take place but was conducted via e-mail. The Secretary advised although the meeting didn't actually take place, the minute was required for an audit trail to record the decisions made via e-mail on the reports circulated. It was agreed to amend introduction to minute to include note that meeting did not take place.

3. DRAFT AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2019/20 AND DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TACTRAN AND THE CONTROLLER OF AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

There was submitted a joint report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/20/27) presenting the Partnership's 2019/20 Audited Annual Accounts (unsigned) in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

The Treasurer outlined the audit process and findings and thanked KPMG colleagues for their work over the last few months.

M Wilkie was pleased to report that the 2019/20 Audit was unqualified and summarised the audit and areas of significant risk identified as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. He also thanked the Partnership's officers for their assistance in undertaking the audit.

Provost Proctor joined the meeting.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the contents of KPMG's Draft Annual Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2020, as attached at Appendix 1; and
- (ii) To approve the 2019/20 Audited Annual Accounts at Appendix 2 and authorises the Partnership Chair, Director and Treasurer to sign them.

4. GENERAL FUND RESERVE

There was submitted a joint report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/20/28) seeking approval from the Board to operate a General Fund Reserve as outlined in the report following legislative changes.

Councillor Bailey asked if the reserve fund amount was benchmarked against other RTPs. The Treasurer advised that benchmarking against other RTPs was not possible this year as this is the first time reserves can be generated for RTPs, but it had been benchmarked against local government best practice. Benchmarking would include the other RTPS in future updates.

Resolved:

- (i) To approve the reserves policy as detailed at appendix 2; and
- (ii) To approve that the Partnership creates a non-earmarked General Fund reserve of £5,000 in the current year.

5. 2020/21 BUDGET AND MONITORING

There was submitted a joint report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/20/29) provides a monitoring update on the Partnership's Revenue and Capital expenditure and seeking the Partnership's approval of a revised 2020/21 RTS Revenue Programme.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the position regarding Core Revenue expenditure as at 31 July 2020 as detailed in Appendix A;
- (ii) To note progress on and approves the 2020/21 RTS Revenue Programme and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendices B and C;
- (iii) To note progress on the 2020/21 Capital Programme and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendix D; and

- (iv) To delegate authority to the Director and Treasurer to agree projects and reallocate award of Regional Active Travel Development Fund funding.

6. DIRECTORS REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Director (RTP/20/30) asking the Partnership to consider and approve a response to Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy consultation and to delegate authority to the Director to consider and approve the annual submission for Public Sector Climate Change Duties Reporting. The report also provided updates on non-Councillor Member recruitment; rail issues, National Transport Strategy Delivery Plan and Strategic Transport Projects Review; National Planning Framework 4; and Cycling Scotland initiatives, which the Partnership is asked to note.

The Director noted that since producing this report Transport Scotland have published a Consultation on Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 which has a consultation deadline of 1 December 2020. The Director recommended delegating authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to the consultation.

The Director also advised the vacancy for a Non Councillor Member had closed and 3 applications have been received. The Director recommended delegating authority to the Executive Committee to interview all 3 candidates and appoint any successful applicant.

Resolved:

- (i) To consider and approve a response to Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy consultation, as contained in Appendix A;
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director to consider and approve the submission of Tactran's Public Sector Climate Change Duties Reporting for 2019/20;
- (iii) To note updates on non-Councillor Member recruitment; rail issues, National Transport Strategy Delivery Plan and Strategic Transport Projects Review; National Planning Framework 4; and Cycling Scotland initiatives;
- (iv) To delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to Transport Scotland's consultation on 'Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030' by 1 December 2020; and
- (v) To delegate authority to the Executive Committee to progress the appointment of new Non Councillor members.

7. REGIONAL TRANSPORT TRANSITION PLAN

There was submitted a report by the Senior Partnership Manager (RTP/20/31) asking the Partnership to note and discuss the development of a Regional Transport Transition Plan and agree to receive further updates reports at future meetings.

The Treasurer left the meeting.

N Gardiner gave a [presentation](#) on the Regional Transport Transition Plan and outlined the progress made since the last meeting. He directed members to the Issues and Actions section and asked the following questions to be considered under each of the headings:

1. Have we identified the correct issues?
2. Have we captured the required actions and are there further actions required?
3. What are the priorities?

Active Travel

Councillor Bailey was reassured the Partnership is aware of the impact the reduction of public transport in rural transport areas as this is one of the biggest inequalities as there are more challenging issues in accessing health, employment etc.

Councillor Thomson also addressed inequalities within public transport and advised Stirling Council were in discussion with bus operators. He asked if Tactran had discussed the issues with other local authorities. N Gardiner advised a Tactran Regional Transport Liaison Group (TRTLG) was held every 2 weeks with officers from local authorities attending where all issues were covered and discussed.

Provost Proctor asked how the Transition Plan will be highlighted to local authorities and public. N Gardiner noted that it was intended to discuss this at the end of the presentation.

Councillor Parrott advised he welcomed the UK government intent to trial e-scooters and e-bikes, however, noted this doesn't extend to Scotland. He asked if Tactran would support the concept of this trial and having a place in transport plans. N Gardiner advised hiring e-scooters pilot scheme extended to Scotland but was unaware the required legislation was not in place in Scotland and asked for members thoughts on them being introduced within the Tactran region. Councillor Parrott advised PKC was keen to trial e-scooters. The Director advised this item will be discussed at the TRTLG meeting scheduled for 17 September.

H Anderson asked who were the user groups being targeted for the action on "confidence to safely use bicycles"? N Gardiner advised there are a number of cycle user groups in Tactran region, details and a booklet providing information is available via the Tactran [website](#). The Regional Cycling Development Officer advised work/training is ongoing with the various cycling forums, user groups and cycle friendly employers across the 4 local authorities.

Public Transport – Bus

Councillor Parrott said he thought the issues were correctly identified but asked if there were any opportunities through the new Transport Act to help address the issues. The Director advised this route is being considered and discussions have commenced regarding the Bus Partnership Fund (BPF).

The Chair asked how to ensure bus transport is going to look in the future. Various issues such as can buses be provided on a purely commercial basis; how do we ensure the patronage on buses; is the messaging on point to ensure the public know buses are safe; ensure no cuts based on commercial decisions; ensure the public know the bus service is reliable or else people will start using other modes of transport. N Gardiner advised all transport needs to be reviewed to ensure it adapts to the “new normal”. Innovative initiatives like the MaaS project and DRT in rural areas need to be considered. There is also concern that in urban areas commercial services remain viable as councils have to date been subsidising socially necessary services. Collaboration is required with bus operators and public transport officers when considering the Bus Partnerships and Bus Partnership Fund and innovative ways to operate going forward. Before lockdown low emission zones were being progressed as the way forward but focus may change going forward, this requires a more detailed discussion. The Director advised this would be best approached over 3 phases:

Phase 1: Steadying of bus services across Scotland;

Phase 2: Development of Transition Plan and discussions with officers on how to move forward; and

Phase 3: Development of the Regional Transport Strategy over the next 2 years which will put the strategy and policies in place that are viable for our region.

Councillor McDonald noted in Angus there are varied differences with the buses in each area, the idea of being able to socially distance and use contactless is not possible on all buses and a consistent approach between operators is key.

H Anderson asked how safety is being defined and is it being monitored on buses and school transport. The Director advised school transport is classed as an extension to the classroom so there are measures in place to cover that. General public transport falls under the Government guidelines and there are capacity restrictions in place.

Councillor Gibson advised public transport very important area and Stirling Council have been exploring a community transport option and considering a council run service which would bring some services back in house. There is a concern that some of the smaller operators will not survive the pandemic which could create big questions and potential opportunities. N Gardiner agreed and advised Stirling Council officers have shared this information at the TRTLG meetings.

Provost Proctor advised DRT is a way forward. N Gardiner advised this is being considered with local authorities.

Rail

Councillor McCready advised that with the improvements being made in the rail services recently, he did not want the pandemic to mean these improvements were reversed and people going back to using private vehicles. The Director advised the Transition Plan would be continually updated to take account of these issues.

Provost Proctor noted the recent derailment at Stonehaven and its tragic circumstances and also enquired what impact this may have on future rail projects. N Gardiner advised the Aberdeen to Central Belt Project has 2026 timescales so unlikely to have an impact on this. He advised removal of the train from the track has begun but currently unable to provide a date for the line to be fully opened. A rail service is now available between Edinburgh and Montrose, with a shuttle bus service available to those travelling north of Montrose. The pandemic may impact the planned improvements to the Arbroath to Glasgow service under the Revolution in Rail initiative because of delay in driver training.

Shared Transport

N Gardiner advised he would add e-scooters in this section.

The Director advised he is in discussions with Sustran and Transport Scotland regarding developing a framework for DRT.

Private Transport

The Chair felt messaging from the Scottish Government was encouraging the use of private transport and wondered how far that was now ingrained so previous good behaviour has been lost.

Councillor Illingworth advised Perth & Kinross Council are progressing with community transport projects which was working well.

Freight

N Gardiner advised a Freight Quality Partnership will be scheduled in late November / early December and the Regional Transport Transition Plan will be on the Agenda to get comments from freight industry.

Councillor Parrott asked if alternatives to road for freight could be captured. He also advised he was delighted with progress on rail freight at Blackford and Perth harbour sea borne freight. N Gardiner confirmed although primarily a Highland Spring facility at Blackford the facility could be open to other users. N Gardiner advised alternative to road freight be considered for adding to the Transition Plan.

Travel Planning

No comments

Next Steps

W Scott suggested identifying the evidence-based requests for targeted resource and funding as Scottish Government is considering requests for transition funding.

Councillor Thomson agreed it was good to share information, but he hoped the discussions at regional levels were being co-ordinated at a national level. The Director advised he and the Chair regularly meet with other RTP Directors, Chairs and Transport Scotland. The RTPs feed into Transport Scotland regularly and into National Advisory Board. W Scott confirmed SCOTS were also aligned in the process and part of the national transition planning process which ensured the issues are being co-ordinated and discussed at a high level.

The Chair agreed with Councillor Thomson and advised Transport Scotland has been focussed on Glasgow & Edinburgh, so Tactran and other RTP regions need to get good Transition Plans in place to ensure we are in a position to take forward and make a case for resource and policy change.

The Chair advised this is ongoing work and the slides will be shared and any further comments are welcomed.

Resolved:

- (i) To discuss and note the development of a Regional Transport Transition Plan; and
- (ii) To agree to receive further updates at future meetings.

8. A NEW REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE TACTRAN REGION

There was submitted a report by the Senior Strategy Officer (RTP/30/32) asking the Partnership to approve work on producing a new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the Tactran region and to consider the potential issues to be included in the review.

J Padmore gave a [presentation](#) which outlined the reasons for writing a new strategy and the process for identifying the environmental, economic and social priorities to inform a Main Issues Report.

In considering reducing inequalities, Councillor Bailey advised it was good to capture the issue of access to transport in rural areas and record rural/urban divide. The Chair also noted there can be hidden poverty in urban areas.

Councillor Parrott said education merited specific mention given the statutory provision made for access to school, and that access to health care is at least as important.

In considering climate change action, Provost Proctor feels there a problem for recharging electric vehicles in rural areas, including at car parks provided for visitors.

Councillor Parrott advised the matter of adverse weather is an important one and in particular going forward attention needs to be more on torrential rain and flash flooding events with serious consequences for infrastructure and tragic consequences for people rather than on dealing with winter conditions.

It was agreed the December Partnership meeting would be a workshop focussed on the Regional Transport Strategy.

Resolved:

- (i) To approve work on commencing work on a new Regional Transport Strategy
- (ii) To consider the scope of issues to be explored in developing the strategy.

9. MEMBERS ISSUES AND AOCB

None

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

15th December at 10.30am