TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

15 SEPTEMBER 2015

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

This report informs and updates Members on various transport policy and delivery matters of interest and relevance to the work of the Partnership.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Partnership :-

(i) endorses the finalised joint RTPs/Scottish Government/CoSLA Working Group paper which forms Appendix B to the report;

(ii) notes the arrangements for refresh of the National Transport Strategy and agrees to receive a progress report on this at its next meeting;

(iii) agrees to seek a meeting with the Minister for Transport and Islands to discuss the Partnership’s TERS rail strategy proposals, as discussed and outlined in 2.10 to 2.12 and Appendix C of the report;

(iv) affirms its support for the bid by Flybe to the Regional Air Connectivity Fund for support to introduce a Dundee – Amsterdam air service, as outlined in 2.20 and 2.21 of the report;

(v) agrees to endorse officer input regarding the potential for exploring provision of enhanced and segregated active travel facilities as part of the A9 dualling project, as outlined in 2.27 to 2.29 of the report;

(vi) notes the enactment of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, as outlined in 2.30 to 2.37 of the report, and agrees to receive further reports on implementation of the Act;

(vii) remits the Director to undertake a review of the Partnership’s future staffing requirements, in consultation with partner Councils, and to report with proposals to a future meeting;

(viii) agrees to delegate authority to conclude renewal of the lease on Bordeaux House to the Director, Treasurer and Legal Officer, in consultation with the Partnership Chair; and

(ix) notes the various other updates and information provided in this report and accompanying appendices.
2 DISCUSSION

RTP Chairs Forum

2.1 The RTP Chairs Forum next meets in Dundee on 16 September 2015. The Draft Minute of the previous meeting held in Edinburgh on 4 June 2015 is attached at Appendix A for information. Further progress and developments on a number of matters being developed through the RTP Chairs Forum is discussed below.

Joint RTPs/Scottish Government/CoSLA Working Group

2.2 At its meeting on 17 June 2014 the Partnership endorsed the draft joint RTPs/Scottish Government/CoSLA Working Group report (Report RTP/14/18 refers) and has received periodic updates on progress towards seeking formal joint approval of the report within subsequent Director’s Reports. As reported orally on 16 June 2015, a number of revisions have been made to the report to reflect discussion between the RTP Chairs and the Minister for Transport and Islands at their meeting on 11 June 2015.

2.3 The finalised report is now attached at Appendix B to this report. The main revisions have been to amend text to reflect further discussion on the RTP role in Development Planning and Management (page 8 of Appendix B refers) and general updating to reflect progress on initiatives such as integrated ticketing; rail franchising; active travel; inclusion of a specific focus on helping make door to door journeys for older and disabled people more accessible in line with the vision for Independent Living in Scotland and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and increased emphasis on supporting low carbon transport measures and the national Low Emission Strategy, when it is published. There is also increased emphasis on the role of RTPs in contributing proactively to Community Planning to reflect the new Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, as discussed in more detail below.

2.4 On 1 September 2015 Transport Scotland officials confirmed that the Minister for Transport and Islands has now approved the Working Group report. The Partnership is asked to endorse the finalised report at Appendix B. The finalised report will inform the ongoing refresh of the National Transport Strategy, as discussed below.

National Transport Strategy Refresh

2.5 As reported on 16 June (Report RTP/15/24 refers) and referred to in the separate report on approval of the Regional Transport Strategy 2015-2036 Refresh, the Minister for Transport and Islands has instructed Transport Scotland officials to undertake a “light touch” refresh of the National Transport Strategy (NTS), to be completed by the end of 2015. As confirmed in the letter advising Ministerial approval of the Tactran RTS Refresh 2015-2036, it is understood that this will include clarifying existing roles and responsibilities of the various transport authorities and agencies.

2.6 A Stakeholder Group has been established to inform the NTS Refresh, which includes RTP officer representation. This group meets for the first time on 7 September 2015 and further progress and developments will be reported orally to this meeting, and reported to the Partnership’s next meeting on 8 December 2015.

2.7 An invitation has been extended to the Minister for Transport and Islands to attend the RTP Chairs meeting on 2 December 2015 to discuss progress on the NTS Refresh.
Roads Collaboration Programme

2.8 On 4 June 2015 the RTP Chairs agreed to write to Council Leaders and Chief Executives regarding work being undertaken by the Improvement Service, under the auspices of the Roads Collaboration Programme Board, on the development of governance options for collaborative/shared services arrangements in roads and transport.

2.9 A letter was subsequently sent to Council Leaders and Chief Executives, under the signature of the Chairs of Tactran, Hitrans, Nestrans, SEStran, Swestrans and ZetTrans, as copied previously to all Partnership Board members and partner Council officers. Further developments will be discussed at the RTP Chairs meeting on 16 September and will be reported back to the Partnership's next meeting on 8 December.

Rail Issues

Tay Estuary Rail Service

2.10 At its meeting on 16 June 2015 the Partnership agreed to write to the Minister for Transport and Islands requesting Scottish Government support for implementation of the Tay Estuary Rail (TERS) service proposals on the Arbroath to Glasgow corridor and commitment to retention of cascaded rolling stock which will become available upon completion of the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Project (EGIP) (Report RTP/15/21 refers).

2.11 The letter sent to the Minister on 16 June 2015 and his response dated 23 July 2015 are attached at Appendix C. The response reaffirms a number of service and rolling stock proposals contained within the Abellio bid for the ScotRail franchise and appears to confirm that Scottish Government is committed only to supporting those service enhancements which are built in to the ScotRail franchise agreement with Abellio ScotRail. Whilst Tactran's work on and aspirations for developing the TERS proposals was referenced in the Invitation to Tender for the renewed franchise, as outlined in the letter from the Chair to the Minister on 16 June, it is extremely disappointing that, unlike other bids for the franchise, the selected Abellio bid did not include provision for progressing TERS.

2.12 It is proposed that the Partnership seeks a meeting with the Minister to discuss the response and Tactran's proposals for enhancing local, regional and national rail connectivity through TERS, which includes supporting Scottish Government proposals for enhancing services between Aberdeen/Inverness and the Central belt under the Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Community Rail Partnerships

2.13 At its meeting on 10 March 2015 the Partnership noted progress in developing Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) in the Tactran region and agreed to delegate authority to confirm Partnership support for future CRP applications to the Director. (Report RTP/15/09 refers).

2.14 Previous applications for CRP status on the Highland Main Line including all stations north of Perth and south of Inverness, and on the West Highland Line including all 19 stations between and including Crianlarich and Mallaig, have been approved by Scottish Ministers.
2.15 Work has continued on the development of a Strathallan CRP, covering Gleneagles, Dunblane and Bridge of Allan Stations. In accordance with the delegation of authority granted on 10 March 2015, the Partnership's support for an application to establish the Strathallan CRP, as detailed in Appendix D to this report, has been confirmed.

2.16 Under the new ScotRail Community Rail Partnership initiative Abellio ScotRail is developing an updated Charter for CRPs and has introduced a CRP funding programme, under which all approved CRPs will be allocated £20,000/annum during the first 2 years from their commencement, and a further £10,000/annum for the duration of the current rail franchise. At the time of writing 7 designated CRPs plus the Strathallan CRP, when it receives formal designation, are eligible for this funding. The funding will be available to support the agreed aims and objectives of each CRP and a range of specified purposes, including promoting rail safety; encouraging the use of rail and tackling social exclusion; developing community goodwill and involvement in the railway; developing integrated transport links to and from the railway; improving the built and natural environment and physical access to stations; reducing carbon footprint; supporting business growth in the community; enhancing tourism and leisure; and promoting access to education and skills.

2.17 Prospective CRPs continue to be required to develop proposals in consultation with RTPs and applications for formal CRP designation continue to require to be supported by RTPs.

Dundee Airport

2.18 The RTS Refresh 2015-2036 reaffirms the Partnership’s support for maintaining and developing regional air connectivity in support of tourism and export-related businesses, as stated in the RTS Strategic Aim “work with relevant authorities to promote flights from Dundee and improved facilities at Dundee and other Scottish Airports” and in Strategic Connectivity policy SC12 : support the continuation and development of direct routes from Dundee Airport to London and other destinations.

2.19 As reported on 10 March 2015 (Report RTP/15/12 refers) the Partnership is represented on the recently re-formed Dundee Airport Consultative Committee, which considers opportunities for promoting and developing the regional airport and air connections.

2.20 Earlier this year Flybe, operator of the current Dundee – London Stansted service, submitted an application to support the introduction of a Dundee – Amsterdam service through the UK Government’s Regional Air Connectivity Fund (RACF). The proposed service would provide a daily return flight.

2.21 In August it was announced that the proposed Dundee – Amsterdam service was amongst a number of services which have been short-listed for potential approval of funding. At the time of writing a decision on the allocation of RACF funding is awaited and any further developments will be reported orally. The Partnership is asked to affirm its support for the bid to secure RACF funding for the Dundee - Amsterdam service.
A90/Laurencekirk Junction Study

2.22 Nestans, in partnership with Transport Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council previously commissioned consultants to undertake a study investigating options for improving the A90 and improving access at Laurencekirk. Given that the study and its findings included consideration of, and will impact on, connectivity to/from north Angus and the Tactran region generally, Tactran officers were involved as part of the project Steering Group.

2.23 On 16 June 2015 (Report RTP/15/24 refers) it was reported that the study, which has been undertaken in accordance with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1, had been recently completed and was to be reported to the Nestans Partnership meeting on 17 June 2015. The study concluded that there would be positive network efficiency and safety benefits from upgrading the A90/A937 south junction at Laurencekirk through provision of a grade-separated junction. The study also identified opportunities to improve safety at nearby junctions on A90 through closures or access restrictions. The optimum solution will require to be determined through more detailed design work. An Executive Summary of the study is included at Appendix E.

2.24 At its meeting on 17 June 2015 the Nestans Board noted and approved the principle of the findings within the draft study and remitted the study to Transport Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council for their consideration with a recommendation that further, more detailed appraisal should be undertaken to develop and implement a preferred solution.

2.25 It is understood that the study has been the subject of further discussion between the Minister for Transport and Islands and Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council and a number of other stakeholders and businesses, with a view to informing further development and delivery of proposed solutions.

A9 Dualling

2.26 As Members are aware Transport Scotland is progressing dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness as a key priority within the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) and Scottish Government’s Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP). Officers are involved in a number of stakeholder groupings which have been established by Transport Scotland and which meet periodically to inform and receive updates on progress and development of the project.

2.27 In responding to an earlier consultation on A9 dualling, the Partnership commented that the project should be progressed recognising the multi-modal function of the A9 corridor and having regard to associated multi-modal user needs and facilities. Officers continue to articulate this view in ongoing discussion through the various A9 stakeholder groups.

2.28 At a recent meeting on Non-Motorised Users needs officers highlighted the potential opportunity which the dualling project offers, in terms of improving adjacent links and making provision for segregated off-carriageway facilities for cyclists and walkers. Concerns regarding accommodation of local and long distance cycling on A9 (e.g. Land’s End - John O’Groats) have been raised at a recent Perth & Kinross Community Safety & Environment Community Planning Partnership meeting.

2.29 The Partnership is asked to endorse officer input regarding the potential for exploring provision of enhanced and segregated active travel facilities as part of the A9 dualling project.
Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

2.30 At its meeting on 9 September 2014 the Partnership endorsed a joint RTPs response to consultation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill (Report RTP/14/29 refers). The Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament in June and received Royal Assent as an Act in July 2015. No commencement dates have been set for the new Act but it is currently envisaged that implementation is likely within 12 months of Royal Assent (i.e. by July 2016). The key aspects of the Act which are likely to affect the Partnership are outlined below.

2.31 The new Act provides a statutory framework and purpose for Community Planning focused on improving outcomes. Part 2 places Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) on a statutory footing and gives specific duties to CPPs around improving local priority outcomes and acting with a view to tackling inequalities of outcome across communities. In particular CPPs are required to:

- prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) which sets out the local outcomes which the CPP will prioritise for improvement;
- identify which geographical areas have communities that experience the poorest outcomes and to prepare and publish annual Locality Plans to improve outcomes on agreed priorities for these communities; and
- review and report publicly on progress towards their LOIP and Locality Plans and keep the continued suitability of these plans under review.

2.32 RTPs have an existing statutory duty to engage in Community Planning under the Transport (Scotland) 2005. This role is reinforced by the designation of RTPs in the new Act as defined:

- Community Planning Partners – with responsibility to participate in, and work collaboratively with other partners, to contribute to and support Community Planning under Part 2 of the Act;
- Public Service Authorities – with responsibility to have regard to any participation request by a community participation body to a public service authority to participate in any outcome improvement process under Part 3 of the Act; and
- Relevant Authorities – in respect of any Asset Transfer request which is made under Part 5 of the Act.

2.33 As a regional strategic transport authority it is anticipated that the majority of the Partnership’s future input and activity will relate to its general role as a Community Planning Partner and related duties and responsibilities under Part 2 of the Act.

2.34 As a designated Community Planning Partner the Partnership has a duty to work collaboratively with other partners in carrying out Community Planning; to take account of LOIPs in carrying out its own functions; to contribute such funds, staff and other resources as the CPP considers appropriate to improve local outcomes in the LOIP; and to secure participation of community bodies in Community Planning. These specific duties will guide, and be taken into account in, the ongoing work on review and updating of the RTS Delivery Plan, as outlined in a separate report, and in determining future resource and delivery prioritisation for the Partnership.
2.35 The Act extends the public sector bodies that are subject to the above duties to include a number of bodies which are also key stakeholders with whom Tactran already actively engages in the development and delivery of the RTS and associated activity, including National Parks, SNH, SEPA, Visit Scotland and boards of regional colleges.

2.36 Under Part 1 of the Act Scottish Ministers must determine National Outcomes for Scotland, which must have regard to the reduction of inequalities of outcomes which result from socio-economic disadvantage. Before doing so Ministers must consult on the preparation of draft outcomes. Reference is made above to the ongoing refresh of the National Transport Strategy (NTS), which the Minister for Transport and Islands has indicated will include a stronger emphasis on supporting Community Planning. It is assumed that the NTS Refresh will have regard to the new duty placed on Scottish Ministers with regard to determination and review of National Outcomes under the Act.

2.37 Implementation of the provisions of the new Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and specifically inputting to the development and resourcing of LOIPs and other associated Locality Plans through the 4 CPPs covering each of Tactran’s partner Council areas, will be an important focus and responsibility for the Partnership moving forward.

**Partnership Staffing**

2.38 The Partnership’s Strategy Manager has applied for Flexible Retirement commencing in June 2016. Under the Perth & Kinross Council Retirement Scheme, which the Partnership adopts, eligible employees can apply for Flexible Retiral, whereby they can reduce their hours and/or step down to a less demanding role. Applications require to be submitted not less than 6 months before the planned date of Flexible Retirement.

2.39 The Strategy Manager has applied for Flexible Retirement based on a reduced working pattern of 4 days/week from 1 June 2016 until 31 January 2017. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation powers in relation to staff appointments and management the Director has, in consultation with Proper Officers, approved this application for Flexible Retirement.

2.40 In addition to the planned Flexible Retirement of the Strategy Manager during 2016/17 a number of other matters potentially affecting the Partnership’s ongoing staffing requirements, including the need to review the ongoing position beyond the initial period of temporary appointment of an embedded Active Travel Officer with Sustrans, and any implications of the planned review of transport roles and responsibilities as part of the NTS Refresh, as referred to above, will require to be considered. It is proposed that the Director is remitted to undertake a review of the Partnership’s future staffing requirements, having regard to managed and other emerging internal or external influences on the role and responsibilities of the Partnership.
Partnership Office Accommodation

2.41 As has been reported previously the current lease on the Partnership’s office accommodation at Bordeaux House, Perth expires in November 2015. At the time of writing negotiations are continuing with the landlord, with support from Perth & Kinross Council’s Estates and Legal Services departments, whilst also having regard to alternative accommodation options.

2.42 It had been hoped that this matter would have been concluded to enable reporting to this meeting of the Partnership. As negotiations are ongoing the Partnership is asked to delegate authority to conclude a renewed lease on Bordeaux House to the Director, Treasurer and Legal Officer, in consultation with the Partnership Chair.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report has no direct equalities implications.

Eric Guthrie
Director

For further information email ericguthrie@tactran.gov.uk or tel. 01738 475771

NOTE

The following 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 this Report :-

Report to Partnership, RTP/14/18 Director’s Report, 17 June 2014

Report to Partnership, RTP/14/29 Director’s Report, 9 September 2014

Report to Partnership, RTP/15/12 Director’s Report, 10 March 2015

Reports to Partnership RTP/15/21, Rail Issues Update and RTP/15/24 Director’s Report, 16 June 2015

Reports to Forum of RTP Chairs on 4 June 2015 : Various
Regional Transport Partnerships Joint Chairs Meeting

Held in the Macdonald Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh on 4th June 2015 at 9am

Minute of Meeting

Present:  
Cllr Russell Imrie, SEStran  
Cllr James Stockan, HITRANS  
Cllr Ramsay Milne, Nestrans  
Cllr Tom McAughtrie, SWestrans  
Cllr John Kellas, Tactran

In attendance:  
Ranald Robertson, HITRANS (RR)  
Derick Murray, Nestrans (DM)  
Alex Macaulay, SEStran (AM)  
Eric Guthrie, Tactran (EG)  
Neil MacRae, HITRANS (Minutes)  
Ewen Milligan, Transport Scotland (EM)  
Tom Davy, Transport Scotland (TD)  
George Eckton, CoSLA (GE)  
Harry Thompson, Swestrans (HT)

Apologies:  
Cllr Michael Stout, Chair, ZetTrans (Chair)  
Michael Craigie, ZetTrans (MC)  
Cllr Will Dawson, Tactran  
Cllr Tom McAughtrie, SWestrans  
Cllr James Coleman, SPT  
Bruce Kiloh, SPT

Item  
Action

1. Welcome and Apologies  
Cllr Imrie welcomed everyone to Edinburgh and noted the apologies received above.

2. Presentation by Abellio Scotrail and Network Rail  
A presentation was provided by Phil Verster MD Abellio ScotRail / Network Rail Alliance. He was also joined by Rob Shorthouse and Nigel Wunsch of ScotRail / Network Rail Alliance. PV outlined the key principles and structures behind the Abellio franchise including key target of growing passenger figures from 91 million per annum to 129 million by the end of the 10 year franchise. Cllr Imrie welcomed Phil Verster’s offer to engage closely with RTP’s and discuss how suitable regional forums may be established to help tackle strategic issues.

Action – RR to contact Rob Shorthouse to discuss structure of Regional Forums and other levels of engagement  
RTP Chairs to invite Phil Verster to a RTP Chairs meeting on an annual basis

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2014  
The minutes were approved subject to the following amendment:  
Item 3 (1), Page 2 – The sentence beginning ‘Tactran have underlying concern…….’ be amended to read ‘There was a general underlying concern…….’
Matters Arising

(i) TEN-T
EG reported that Gavin Roser had made contact with Peter Balazs of TEN-T who confirmed that he would be available to attend the RTP Chairs meeting scheduled for 16 Sept 2015. EG also confirmed that Brian Simpson of Motorways of the Sea would be available to meet with RTPs on 10 November 2015. Members agreed that both should be invited to attend future meetings on the dates proposed.

Action: EG to invite Peter Balazs and Brian Simpson to the forthcoming RTP Chairs meetings as per above

Items for Discussion/Decision

4. Roads Collaboration Board / Improvement Service
AM provided an introduction to the enclosed paper including a legal view on RTP's role in Roads collaboration and Other Shared Services. It was agreed that once a shared RTP position on the legal view can be established then a joint letter from the RTP Chairs should be sent to Council Leaders and Chief Executives, copied to appropriate officers within each Local Authority.

Action: AM to provide the contact details for the legal representatives who had signed off the legal view tabled in the meeting papers.
Action: RTP Secretariat to draft letter for circulation to each Local Authority under signature of the Chairs.

5. Items for discussion with the Minister for Transport and Islands
   (i) National Transport Strategy (GE)
   (ii) RTP/SG/CoSLA Working Group Paper
GE provided an introduction to the enclosed paper summarising the proposed refresh of the National Transport Strategy. GE stated that while his understanding was that the Ministers preference was for a high level refresh within a short timeframe COSLA had highlighted the need for a complete review and would be recommending that a full review take place by 2018 notwithstanding the proposed refresh this year. GE highlighted the need for the NTS to address the Scottish Government's wider objectives of tackling inequality and delivering economic growth as well as improving the links between transport and land use.

Discussion followed on how the recommendations of RTP/SG/CoSLA Working Group Paper would be impacted / feed into the NTS refresh and the impact of the NTS refresh on the approval process for those Regional Transport Strategies which were awaiting Ministerial sign off. EG questioned whether it would be possible for NTS refresh to meaningfully review transport governance, as had been suggested initially, within proposed timescale.

DM highlighted importance of close relationship not only between NTS and Regional Transport Strategies but also Strategic Development Plans. The anticipated focus of the NTS refresh on improving transport delivery through Community Planning Partnerships and the RTP’s key role within these partnerships both in the past and going forward was highlighted. EM confirmed that while there was no objection to the content of the joint
Working Group paper it would be appropriate to delay finalising the document given announcement on NTS. A request for the close involvement of RTP’s in the NTS refresh was highlighted.

**Action:** RR / EG to pull together short paper / slides with key themes from the RTP/SG Working Paper for circulation in advance of the meeting with the Minister on 11 June 2015.  

6. **Active Travel / Behaviour Change Issues**  
EG reported that he had met with Sustrans and Cycling Scotland and agreed the need to develop stronger relationships between the different organisations.

**Action:** EG to liaise with Cycling Scotland and Sustrans on arranging a joint RTPs/CS/Sustrans meeting in the autumn.  

7. **Rail Issues**  
(i) **Smartcard Update (ES/BK)**  
No report as SPT not present

(ii) **ECMA Report (AM)**  
AM provided a verbal update following a recent ECMA meeting: ECMA structure to be changed with more of a communications orientated focus in the future. Costs for a project manager to be shared.

(iii) **Winchburgh Tunnel Works**  
No report as SPT not present.

(iv) **Glasgow Queen Street Station Improvements**  
No report as SPT not present.

8. **Bus Issues**  
(i) **Bus Stakeholder Group / Bus Registration Process Update**  
TD provided an update on a number of issues including Bus Registration process consultation where consideration was being given to responses with the main issue of contention being around the merits of a 42 or 56 day period of notification.

Transport Scotland also currently reviewing role of SQP’s. TD highlighted any change would require primary legislation but noted current developments in England following KPMG report and the proposed Bus Bill in the Queens Speech.

TD highlighted current key focus on pushing forward roll out of smart-ticketing within the bus sector. TD also highlighted need to promote existing bus policy guidance that was available on the Transport Scotland but that many were not aware of it.

Green Bus Fund – TD stated that future options for the fund were currently being considered and that this would take cognisance of Low Emission Strategy. Any solutions would need to consider how best to deliver targets within estimated fleet of 4000 vehicles and the turnover period of these vehicles. Role of BSOG also being considered as part of this review.

National Concessionary Travel Scheme – TD stated that cost implications of various modifications to the current scheme were being reviewed.
Bus Investment Fund – TD confirmed that the current allocation of funding had been committed. Consideration is being given to how criteria for the fund in future may be tightened or focussed on a particular area for future rounds.

9. **Legal Advice on Council Board Members Input to Planning applications**
Cllr Ramsay Milne and DM provided members with an overview of the enclosed Briefing note for the Nestrans Board. General discussion then followed on how each RTP had sought to avoid potential conflict of interest when considering planning applications or other quasi-judicial matters within their different organisations. EM said that he was keen to consider the implications given the preference for increasing RTP's role in the strategic Planning Process.

**Action:** EM to consider a response to the briefing note on behalf of Transport Scotland.

10. **AOB**
Members agreed to accept the Transport Ministers invitation to reschedule a meeting with the RTP Chairs at the Scottish Parliament on 11 June at 2pm.

**Action:** Secretariat to co-ordinate a slide/s on key themes to help being focus to discussion with Minister.

11. **Dates of next Meetings**
15/16 September Tactran, with EG to arrange for TEN-T meeting.

**Items for Noting**
The Chair moved and it was agreed that the papers submitted for the following items be noted.

12. **EU Funding Update (GE)**

14. **Highland ITP Project (RR)**
REPORT OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT/REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS/CoSLA WORKING GROUP

Develop to Deliver – Maximising the role of RTPs in furthering improvements to transport in Scotland

August 2015
Executive Summary

A Working Group consisting of RTP Lead Officers, Transport Scotland and CoSLA was tasked by the Minister for Transport and Veterans and the Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) to examine how RTPs can further assist the Scottish Government (SG) in delivering the National Transport Strategy and Government’s wider Strategic Objectives, and to maximise the role of RTPs in delivering their Regional Transport Strategies.

The key recommendations of the Group are noted below. Further detail on each of these is available within the body of the report:

Building Effective Partnerships

- Strengthen and ensure more consistent liaison arrangements between Scottish Government/Transport Scotland, CoSLA and the RTPs, building on the existing Lead Officers’ and Chairs’ meetings.

Improving Integration of Land-Use and Transport Planning

- RTPs to continue to engage proactively as ‘key agencies’ in the Development Planning process and in the Development Management process to support and maximise integration of strategic land-use and transport planning policy, developments and delivery.

Improving Access to Health and Social Care

- RTPs to play an enhanced key role in this area, building on the outcomes and pilot schemes established as a result of the Short Life Working Group on Access to Health and Social Care and other regional Health & Transport initiatives.

1 The implementation of recommendations will be dependent on local circumstances and applicability, and the approval of the Scottish Government, RTP Boards, partner Councils and other organisations, as appropriate to each RTP area.
Delivering a ‘Step Change’ for Bus, Integrated Transport, Ticketing and Information

- RTPs to support the development and implementation of proposals emerging from the national Bus Stakeholders Group (e.g. agreed elements of SPT 10 point plan and the Bus Investment Fund).

- RTPs to work with Councils and other partners to progress social / integrated transport, Demand Responsive Transport and Community Transport initiatives, including the procurement and co-ordination of public transport.

- RTPs to continue to assist with, co-ordinate and, where applicable, lead on the development and delivery of smart and integrated ticketing in their regions.

- RTPs to work with Traveline Scotland, Councils and operators to provide Real Time, on-line and conventional forms of public transport and multi-modal travel information, and assist in improving co-ordination and expansion of coverage regionally.

- RTPs to play a key role in helping to make door to door journeys for older and disabled people more accessible, considering travel information, access to modes of transport and bus stops, stations, etc. and assistance.

Developing Rail / High Speed Rail

- RTPs to contribute to implementation of ScotRail franchise, cross-border franchises and HSR issues through liaison with Transport Scotland, DfT and rail industry.

- National rail policy issues to be addressed through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action as appropriate.

Improving Air Services

- RTPs to contribute to development of air policy and provision through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and liaison with Transport Scotland, DfT and regional action as appropriate.
Improving Ferry Services

- RTPs to contribute to development of ferries and other maritime policy and provision through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/ RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action as appropriate.

Improving Freight

- RTPs to contribute to freight policy development and delivery through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action, including Regional Freight Quality Partnerships, as appropriate.

Promoting and Improving Active Travel and Travel Planning

- RTPs to have key role in supporting the Scottish Government on delivery of national cycling / active travel targets and infrastructure, including co-ordination with Councils / Community Planning Partnerships, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and other agencies, with appropriate funding and delivery responsibilities.

Delivery Mechanisms

- Transport delivery mechanisms, prioritisation and funding to be addressed through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements, liaison with private sector partners, Community Planning Partnerships and the travelling public, and regional action as appropriate.

The Minister for Transport and Islands, RTP Chairs and Boards and the CoSLA Development, Economy & Sustainability Executive Group have endorsed this paper and above recommendations as a framework and focus for progressing further development of effective partnership working between Scottish Government, Transport Scotland and the Regional Transport Partnerships.
Introduction

1. This paper has been prepared by an officer Working Group working under the auspices of Ministers with responsibility for transport and the RTP Chairs and to a jointly agreed Terms of Reference.

2. In summary, the Group examined how RTPs can further assist the Scottish Government in delivering the National Transport Strategy and wider Strategic Objectives across various themes and also how the role, effectiveness and contribution of RTPs as key statutory bodies in the Scottish public sector landscape can be maximised.

Context: Regional Transport Partnerships - Models for Success

3. Regional Transport Partnerships were established by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 to deliver transport solutions across their regions. RTPs are partnerships focused on the delivery of integrated, multi-modal, transport solutions and are ideally placed to work with both public and private sector partners to deliver on their statutory Regional Transport Strategies.

4. Since their establishment in 2006, the RTPs have successfully delivered projects and initiatives which have made significant transport improvements across Scotland. These include major projects (such as Subway modernisation), bus improvements, access to healthcare improvements, park and rides, active travel and public transport/multi-modal travel information improvements.

5. Interventions like these have ensured that RTPs, in partnership with the Scottish Government, constituent Councils, and others have played a key role in delivering solutions that promote sustainable economic growth and development, social inclusion, address climate change, and contribute to achievement of wider Community Planning and national outcomes.

6. Building on their achievements to date and by continuing to seek opportunities to develop and maximise their role, RTPs can add further value to the transport system in Scotland – e.g. through delivering improvements which stimulate public transport passenger growth and modal shift for both passenger and freight movement – which can and will assist the Scottish Government to achieve national targets (e.g. in relation to Climate Change).

7. This report focuses on the main issues and areas where RTPs can add further value by building on previous successes, exploiting new opportunities, and focusing on what really matters: delivering transport solutions that make a genuine difference for people, communities and businesses across Scotland.
8. Transport and connectivity is central to effective delivery across many policy areas e.g. economic development, health, regeneration, climate change. RTPs, individually and jointly, seek to influence, develop and support national, regional and local policy through their respective Regional Transport Strategies (RTSs) and on mode or subject-specific issues such as active travel, bus, rail, air, maritime and freight.

9. Strong functional relationships have existed between the RTPs and Transport Scotland and between the RTPs and CoSLA. Regular meetings and liaison between the RTP Chairs and Minister and the former Strategic Transport Liaison Group consisting of the RTP Chairs and members of the CoSLA Regeneration, Strategy & Development Executive provided a clear and strong political and governance framework and focus for underpinning these relationships.

10. Transport and accessibility is frequently raised within Community Planning forums as a significant issue – be it lack of a bus service, the need for shared services, community transport or more strategic issues such as rail or air connections. RTPs are ideally placed to be the ‘voice’ of transport in these forums and to offer solutions which assist local communities and support Community Planning.

11. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 gives Community Planning a new statutory purpose, built on public sector bodies working together and with the local community to improve local outcomes in the local authority area. The Act also places specific duties on RTPs and other statutory partner bodies, linked to this purpose. These include taking account of CPPs’ agreed local outcomes in carrying out its own functions and contributing such resources as the CPP considers appropriate to improve local outcomes and to secure participation of community bodies in community planning. For RTPs this will develop the statutory role which has evolved for them as a matter of policy i.e. contributing proactively to Community Planning in their partner Council areas through supporting the work of CPPs, and reflecting agreed local priorities for these CPPs in their Regional Transport Strategy policies, delivery and resourcing decisions.

12. The Scottish Government and Transport Scotland welcome the role of RTPs in securing EU and other external funding and will work with RTPs to maximise opportunities, within budgetary and other constraints, through initiatives such as the new Bus Investment Fund.

13. In terms of securing delivery funding for national and regional transport priorities, the RTPs suggest that consideration is given to the creation of an “EU Challenge Fund”, through which RTPs and other partners could bid for development funding and match funding to support submission of project bids for EU funding.
14. Transport Scotland views delivering efficient transport provision to underpin sustainable economic growth in Scotland as a shared responsibility between the Scottish Government, RTPs, local authorities, and businesses and individuals making decisions and choices around location and movement of goods and services. Further policy and regulatory issues which may be worthy of consideration in terms of the potential role of RTPs include parking demand management and low carbon strategy within transport. The RTPs will also play an important role in helping to deliver the actions in the Low Emission Strategy when it is published.

**Recommendation:**

- Strengthen and ensure more consistent liaison arrangements between Scottish Government/Transport Scotland, CoSLA and the RTPs, building on the existing Lead Officers’ and Chairs’ meetings.
Improving the Integration of Land-Use and Transport Planning

15. Through their Regional Transport Strategies RTPs seek to promote and further the integration of land-use and transport planning working with Councils and other partners on strategic planning applications, proposals and developments, through the delivery of strategic infrastructure and initiatives, the developer contribution process, and Transport Assessments and Green/Active Travel Plans.

16. The RTPs engage fully and proactively in their role as ‘key agencies’ supporting the Development Planning process and by embedding and aligning their RTSs and associated Delivery Plans with SDPs/LDPs and their associated Action Plans/Programmes.

17. The Scottish Government has simplified and streamlined development management procedures and expects RTPs to continue to work with planning authorities and engage on Development Management.

18. The RTPs contributed to the review of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and the Third National Planning Framework (NPF3). Scottish Government looks forward to and encourages RTPs’ continued involvement in supporting SPP and delivery of NPF3 as these develop. The important role played by Regional Transport Partnerships in supporting sustainable development through implementation of their Regional Transport Strategies is recognised by the Scottish Government.

Recommendation:

- RTPs to continue to engage proactively as ‘key agencies’ in the Development Planning process and in the Development Management process to support and maximise integration of strategic land-use and transport planning policy, developments and delivery.
19. Health inequalities and access to health and social care are vitally important and growing issues of concern for many communities and socially excluded groups. Demographic trends coupled with changes to the delivery and location of health and social care services is placing increased demands and emphasis on the need for effective solutions and models for the delivery of health and social care transport. Current provision of and budget-holding for transport access to health and social care (emergency, non-emergency Patient Transport Services and public access) is undertaken by various public/private/healthcare/community/voluntary providers.

20. The 2011 Audit Scotland report on Access to Health and Social Care highlighted the opportunity RTPs present to lead on the co-ordination of transport in this field. This also reflects the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, which gave RTPs a statutory responsibility to work with partners in improving transport access to healthcare, and RTPs are already playing a key role in their areas in improving access to healthcare and addressing other health and transport issues.

21. Arising from the work of the Short Life Working Group on Access to Health and Social Care (SLWG), the Scottish Government, working with RTPs and Health Boards, has established hub based pilots in the Hitrans and SPT areas as a means of taking forward improvements in accessing health and social care. The experiences from these, along with other health and transport initiatives which all RTPs are developing, will inform the development of new approaches to collaborative delivery by RTPs, the health sector and other agencies.

Recommendation:

- RTPs to play an enhanced key role in this area building on the outcomes of pilot schemes established as a result of the Short Life Working Group on Access to Health and Social Care and other regional Health and Transport initiatives.
22. Bus services fulfil a range of local, regional and national economic and social functions, in terms of accessibility to employment, education, health, leisure, shopping and other facilities. The role of the bus, as the dominant form of public transport, is recognised and forms a key element of each of the 7 RTs, and the RTPs support and develop this by working with Councils, operators and other stakeholders. Three of the seven RTPs are the public transport authorities for Councils in their areas. All of the RTPs contribute to promoting and enhancing bus service availability, quality, information and infrastructure. Collaborative partnership between the public, private and, where appropriate, voluntary sectors will continue to play an important part in ensuring the effective delivery of bus services. There are a number of ways in which transport authorities, including RTPs, can contribute, including through Quality Partnerships and Contracts and subsidising services to meet social needs that the market is not serving. Where RTPs are not currently local public transport authorities, they still play a valuable role in promoting and facilitating partnership working and also contributing to, and often leading on, development and funding of service and infrastructure improvements as resources permit.

23. Shared services are a potentially important opportunity in the context of maximising the economic and social role and contribution of buses (and other forms of public transport). With their focus on ensuring a regionally integrated, co-ordinated and multi-modal approach RTPs can significantly add value through efficiency. SPT has delivered savings through taking a regional, cross-council approach to the procurement and delivery of supported bus services, DRT, school transport etc., delivering a better deal for passengers and for the public purse. RTPs provide a ready-made statutory vehicle which, through exercise of existing powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, can be used straightforwardly to support collaboration between councils in the planning and management of supported bus services and other transport delivery functions.

24. The Scottish Government and Transport Scotland encourage RTPs to engage with their constituent Councils on issues such as shared services and making best use of the Bus Investment Fund and other relevant funds to encourage partnership working, including through statutory Quality Partnerships.

25. Paper-based and single operator/mode ticketing is a barrier to a truly integrated transport network which could offer the passenger real modal choice and efficient, attractive pricing mechanisms. Integrated paper-based ticket options do exist (e.g. Zonecard, OneTicket in central Scotland and Grasshopper in the Nestrans area) and these provide an ideal platform for further development of smart and integrated ticketing solutions. RTPs very much welcome the Competition Commission’s recommendation that participation in ‘integrated’ ticketing schemes should be made compulsory.
26. Smartcard infrastructure is in place on buses and some rail infrastructure. The most successful commercially available transport smartcard in Scotland is now the ‘Bramble’ which has been issued to 77,000 Subway and Zonecard customers in the SPT area. SPT is in the process of rolling out the Subway smartcard across other modes in the west of Scotland and the opportunity to join this project has been offered to the other RTPs by SPT. In the SEStran area One Ticket is developing an e-ticket system for purchasing integrated bus and rail tickets. These are examples of RTPs playing a lead role in both development and delivery of smart and integrated ticketing initiatives.

27. Transport Scotland welcomes RTP involvement in the development and delivery of integrated ticketing. Transport Scotland will retain a national overview to ensure consistency of approach across Scotland. This approach may apply to smart ticketing infrastructure, marketing and engaging with national transport providers. RTPs are important partners in this and will remain key stakeholders.

28. Good, up-to-date information on transport services is vital in encouraging modal shift to more sustainable modes. There are various models / infrastructure in place for providing public transport (PT) information (including real-time passenger information (RTPI) and multi-modal travel information. Through their Travel Information Strategies and contributing to and working with Traveline Scotland to develop regional travel information systems, RTPs have been proactive in ensuring a co-ordinated approach is taken to the delivery of high quality and effective information, enabling the public to make more informed travel choices, supporting wider sustainability objectives.

29. Traveline Scotland is the key national provider of public transport information across Scotland. Transport authorities are essential to data collection and maintaining the quality of the national journey planner. Transport Scotland considers that RTPs have an important role in encouraging transport authority support in maintaining and improving data supply and the resilience of the resources authorities devote to supplying that data. RTPs are encouraged to continue working with Traveline Scotland to provide and develop public transport information and other travel information on a regionalised basis to encourage modal shift and demand management. RTPs are also able to support specific service developments which will enhance the national provision e.g. creating better data for demand led transport provision or services to users with special needs.

30. Accessible public transport is one of the key enablers to allow older and disabled people to travel freely to pursue work, health, leisure and social activities. In line with the vision for Independent Living in Scotland, older and disabled people should have the same choices, freedom and control as other citizens to travel in Scotland from door to door. RTPs should involve older and disabled people in helping to identify and resolve issues in these areas.
31. RTPs have a role to play in upholding the Equality Act 2010 and in supporting the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) to help ensure that disable people are included in shaping transport services to provide them with door to door accessible, safe and comfortable journeys, including access to different modes of travel, access to and between stations, bus stops and ferry terminals. This also includes accessible travel information, assistance and consideration of the part which demand responsive transport, including taxis, plays.

32. RTPs also play a strong role in providing real time information for those parts of Scotland not already covered. Currently Traveline Scotland’s journey planner contains real time data for Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dundee, Angus, Inverness, Argyll and Bute and Orkney. RTPs’ support in expanding coverage to other areas would be welcome. In the SEStran area, RTPI will soon be available throughout the Stagecoach Fife and First Bus networks in the region which, when combined with the current Edinburgh system, will mean that the three main operators’ services in the SEStran region are fully covered.

33. The national Bus Stakeholder Group is discussing a number of aspects of how bus services are regulated and funded. Transport Scotland welcomes RTPs’ contribution to the work of the Group and expects that the Group will wish to consider the roles of RTPs and local authorities in relation to any specific recommendations which it develops. Most recently, TS has undertaken a consultation on improvements to the bus registration process taking account of improvements put forward by SPT and supported by the other RTPs.
Recommendations:

- RTPs to support the development and implementation of proposals emerging from the national Bus Stakeholders Group (e.g. agreed elements of SPT 10 point plan and the Bus Investment Fund).
- RTPs to work with Councils and other partners to progress social / integrated transport, Demand Responsive Transport and Community Transport initiatives, including the procurement and co-ordination of public transport.
- RTPs to continue to assist with, co-ordinate and, where applicable, lead on the development and delivery of smart and integrated ticketing in their regions.
- RTPs to work with Traveline Scotland, Councils and operators to provide Real Time, on-line and conventional forms of public transport and multi-modal travel information and assist in improving co-ordination and expansion of coverage regionally.
- RTPs to play a key role in helping make door to door journeys for older and disabled people more accessible, considering travel information, access to modes of transport and bus stops, stations, etc. and assistance.
Developing Rail /High Speed Rail

34. RTPs have a key role to play with Transport Scotland and others in helping to ensure a co-ordinated, integrated, multi-modal approach is taken e.g. buses serving rail stations, information for the travelling public, integrated ticketing and supporting the development of an integrated and accessible public transport network which enables all users, including older and disabled people, to travel freely to access and pursue work, health, leisure and social activities.

35. RTPs have also developed, or are developing, a number of regional and local rail enhancement initiatives which supplement and/or complement the core ScotRail franchise network and also proposals for rail enhancements identified in the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) and Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP).

36. Transport Scotland considers that RTPs should have responsibility to engage with and offer advice to Transport Scotland, the ScotRail franchisee and Network Rail on local and regional transport priorities and proposals, e.g. in relation to capital co-ordination, multi-modal integration (e.g. with bus), policy, project development (e.g. park and ride), community rail, leading on regional rail forums. RTPs should also be the first point of contact for promoters of local and regional rail investment proposals, coordinate third party funding and advise on regional transport priorities, e.g. for the Station Investment Fund.

37. In addition Transport Scotland considers that RTPs should have responsibility to engage with and offer advice to Transport Scotland on cross-border rail issues and to provide regional representation to DfT in the specification of cross border franchises. Similarly, RTPs are engaging with Transport Scotland in the promotion of High Speed Rail to Scotland and in the development of new high speed lines.

Recommendations:

- RTPs to contribute to implementation of ScotRail franchise, cross-border franchises and HSR issues through liaison with Transport Scotland, DfT and rail industry.
- National rail policy issues to be addressed through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action as appropriate.
38. Air services provide fast access to markets and provide vital business, social and leisure links. In peripheral areas they provide essential access to health services and employment and play a key role in allowing peripheral areas to remain competitive. The RTPs can provide a useful role to help ensure the air service needs of their areas are identified and can help ensure any Air Route Development funding available is appropriately prioritised, through closer engagement and influence with the Scottish and UK Governments, Councils, operators and others.

39. Transport Scotland acknowledges RTP experience in terms of service development and will continue to engage with RTPs on aviation issues which are relevant to their regions, whilst retaining overall strategic responsibility for aviation policy, consulting RTPs as appropriate.

Recommendation:

- RTPs to contribute to development of air policy and provision through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and liaison with Transport Scotland, DfT and regional action as appropriate.
40. Ferry services play a crucial role in enabling island and peninsular communities to contribute to Scotland’s sustainable economic growth. RTPs have established effective consultation arrangements that enable communities to contribute their views on lifeline ferry services provided under contract to the Scottish Government. These consultation arrangements should be strengthened in line with the “Empowering Scotland’s Island Communities” prospectus to include commercial and Council operated ferry services and their role should be formalised in future ferry contracts.

41. Transport Scotland is reviewing the role and functioning of consultation arrangements and partnership working around ferry services and is working closely with RTPs on this. This process will result in a strong platform with clear governance arrangements and roles and responsibilities being established.

Recommendation:

- RTPs to contribute to development of ferries and other maritime policy and provision through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action as appropriate.
42. An effective and efficient freight industry is vital to the economic development of Scotland. However, connections for freight in many areas continue to be poor, and also freight vehicles (such as HGVs/LGVs) continue to be heavy emitters of carbon. RTPs have established regional Freight Quality Partnerships with the industry and Councils to provide regional fora for addressing these issues. This role could be further strengthened, for example through responsibility for the promotion of Freight Facilities Grant and other freight initiatives.

43. Transport Scotland considers that RTPs have an important role in fostering active freight partnerships with all those involved with the movement of goods in their region and those who will be impacted by it. The Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) model provides a sound basis for those involved in the movement of freight for engaging with the industry and considering how freight issues should be addressed within Regional Transport Strategies.

**Recommendation:**

- RTPs to contribute to freight policy development and delivery through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements and regional action, including Regional Freight Quality Partnerships, as appropriate.
44. RTPs provide a strong regional lead and focus on the promotion, development and delivery of Active Travel support and Travel Planning through Liftshare schemes etc., in partnership with Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and other organisations. There is growing political and public desire for increased investment in Active Travel in general in order to meet Scottish Government targets and objectives in relation to the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, National Walking Strategy, National Walking & Cycling Network and contributing to wider Climate Change Act targets. The RTPs have a strong track record and can deliver added value in this area through increased partnership working, co-ordination, securing match-funding and project delivery, including through their role as statutory Community Planning partners with responsibility to deliver on health and wellbeing, social and economic outcomes, as well as their own core RTS objectives.

45. Transport Scotland welcomes RTP support in promoting and developing Active Travel, particularly in relation to delivering on the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, including supporting or encouraging local authorities to do likewise. RTPs also have an important role to play in promoting the development of “smarter choices” measures and supporting low carbon transport options, including car clubs and cycle hire schemes.

Recommendation:

- RTPs to have a key role in supporting the Scottish Government on delivery of national cycling / active travel targets and infrastructure, including co-ordination with Councils / Community Planning Partnerships, Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and other agencies, with appropriate funding and delivery responsibilities.
Delivery Mechanisms

46. RTPs already take a lead role in delivering projects, including those from the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) and the Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP), such as smartcard ticketing and park and ride. RTPs utilise their position to ensure local involvement and engagement in the development of these projects, smooth their path, and are particularly effective and efficient at raising additional funding or in delivering project savings. RTPs have been particularly effective at securing European funding for projects / initiatives and other funding e.g. from other stakeholders, the private sector and developers.

47. There is significant opportunity and scope for RTPs’ role in project delivery to be developed to further assist the Scottish Government, particularly for STPR / IIP projects. The ability to exploit the opportunities highlighted in this report – in policy, project delivery, integration of strategic transport and land use planning, access to healthcare, bus, air / ferry services, freight, active travel, smart ticketing and travel information – to advance delivery and play a more proactive role is strongly dependent on securing the necessary ongoing revenue and capital funding.

48. Scottish Government investment priorities are set out in the STPR and the Infrastructure Investment Plan. Transport Scotland would welcome further discussion to consider fully the role that RTPs currently and could in future play in delivering these priorities.

Recommendation:

- Transport delivery mechanisms, prioritisation and funding to be addressed through proposed Scottish Government/Transport Scotland/RTP/CoSLA liaison arrangements, liaison with private sector partners, Community Planning Partnerships and the travelling public, and regional action as appropriate.
16th June 2015

Dear Minister,

SCOTRAIL FRANCHISE : OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

I write further to your recent meeting with the RTP Chairs in Edinburgh on 11 June 2015, when I raised with you the desire to retain diesel rolling stock, which will become available for alternative use upon completion of the Edinburgh – Glasgow Improvement Programme (EGIP) and planned introduction of refurbished HSTs on the Scottish InterCity network, to support implementation of Tactran’s Tay Estuary Rail Study (TERS) rail strategy proposals and, indeed, other proposed enhancements to the Scottish rail network.

We understand that decisions on the future use of cascaded DMU rolling stock over the next 2 – 3 years are likely to be made very soon. At its meeting earlier today the Tactran Partnership Board agreed to write to yourself and the Chief Executive of Transport Scotland, who is copied into this correspondence, urging Scottish Government, Transport Scotland and the ScotRail/Network Rail Alliance to work jointly to secure the retention of cascaded DMU rolling stock to support early implementation of our TERS proposals.

As you are aware, the RTP Chairs also met recently with Phil Verster, Managing Director of the ScotRail/Network Rail Alliance on 4 June when this issue was also raised. We are advised that the ScotRail/Network Rail Alliance’s strategy for development of the rail network includes the ambition to increase rail patronage by 40% throughout the 10 year life of the ScotRail franchise, which we welcome. Our TERS proposals have been developed to fully complement STPR and industry proposals to enhance the role of Scotland’s rail network. We believe the additional services and capacity TERS aims to provide can play a crucial role in delivering the required passenger capacity to accommodate planned passenger growth with the potential to accommodate further growth.

Over the past few years Tactran has worked in close partnership with the rail industry and Transport Scotland on developing our TERS strategy. Pending resolution of the Usan single track constraint south of Montrose, the TERS ambition is to provide an additional hourly stopping service from Arbroath to Glasgow, calling at Carnoustie, Monifieth, Broughty Ferry, Dundee, Invergowrie (Dundee West), Perth, Gleneagles, Dunblane and Stirling to complement existing and future Aberdeen/Inverness to Glasgow intercity services. TERS has a positive business case; provides excellent synergy with STPR proposals for rail improvements between Aberdeen/Inverness.
and the Central Belt; requires low capital investment; focuses on making more
efficient use of existing resources; improves accessibility to rail transport for a
significant proportion of the Tactran region, generating over 300,000 passengers per
year; and can assist in both achieving and accommodating the new franchisee’s aim
of 40% passenger growth. Tactran has worked with the previous franchisee to
achieve passenger growth of over 20% at stations on the Arbroath to Glasgow rail
corridor in the period to 2013/14 and we look forward to working similarly with Abellio
with the expectation that this growth will continue, if not increase.

The Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the ScotRail re-franchise included reference to
TERS. Tactran officers met all five companies invited to tender for the franchise to
promote awareness and understanding of our TERS service enhancements and
other regional aspirations for rail. From these discussions we are aware that other
bidders had included provision for the introduction of TERS within their franchise
submissions and were disappointed that these important regional rail improvements
and priorities are not included in the final Franchise Agreement between Abellio and
Scottish Government. From our earlier work and discussions with other bidders we
believe that our TERS proposals are technically robust and capable of
implementation.

Implementation of the TERS additional hourly service requires 3 additional DMUs.
As I indicated at our meeting on 11 June, we would strongly encourage Scottish
Government, Transport Scotland and the ScotRail/Network Rail Alliance to work
jointly with train leasing companies to retain sufficient cascaded rolling stock from
implementation of EGIP in 2016 and introduction of HST’s in 2018 within Scotland, to
enable our TERS and other regional proposals and ambitions for enhancing the
regional and national rail network in Scotland to be realised, rather than potentially
lose this resource to rail franchises elsewhere in the UK.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss our TERS proposals in more detail and
also how we might advance and build on our TERS work and successes to date, as
outlined above.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Will Dawson
Chair of Tactran

CC  David Middleton, Chief Executive, Transport Scotland
     Phil Verster, Managing Director, ScotRail/Network Rail Alliance
Thank you for your letter of 16 June 2015 regarding Opportunities for Growth within the rail network. I understand that you also contacted Transport Scotland’s Chief Executive, David Middleton on the same subject. Please accept this letter as a response to both enquiries.

The desire for improvement to Scotland’s rail network was reflected in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the new ScotRail franchise, the subsequent bids received and the final contract award to Abellio. This relates to all aspects of the passenger experience, including improvements to the passenger environment, on-board services, frequency improvements and reductions to journey times between key cities.

As you have stated, during the bidding process all of the regional transport partnerships (RTPs) were given the opportunity to engage with each of the bidders and discuss their aspirations for journey time improvements and services. You are of course correct when you point out the benefits that this contract has secured, it is good for passengers, good for staff and good for Scotland.

Following completion of EGIP and the introduction of the High Speed Trains (HSTs) by December 2018, the class 170 fleet reduces from the current fleet of 55 units to 21 units. The Abellio ScotRail’s (ASR) rolling stock strategy will also introduce 70 new Hitachi trains for the expanding electrified network and 27 HSTs shall deliver a step change in passenger experience across inter-city routes.

The strategy will provide more capacity for the projected growth in patronage across the country in the coming years. These changes will see the overall ASR fleet being significantly re-balanced to a majority of electric trains and delivering 23% more seats by early 2019.
The fleet was secured through the franchise re-letting process, which RTPs contributed to, and the quantum was based on a specified service level. To deliver this ASR secured leases from rolling stock owners (ROSCOs) and from within this total it plans to manage the fleet in a more efficient manner, improving train availability, to operate these services.

Currently there is no budget within the Franchise funding to lease more trains and for extra staffing resources to operate new services outwith the new Franchise contract.

The ROSCOs are presently finalising arrangements with bidders for DfT franchises, such as Northern and TPE, and the market for diesel trains, in particular, is highly competitive and lease rates reflect the limited supply.

I note the close partnership working you refer to in your letter with the rail industry, in particular Transport Scotland on the development of the TERS strategy. This engagement with my officials has focussed on the proposals associated within the strategy and specific study reports, which has resulted in the successful delivery of enhancements at Gleneagles Station.

Transport Scotland will continue to offer assistance through the provision of technical advice and guidance at each stage of any appraisal work that is required by existing processes. This will facilitate and expedite the appraisal of the proposals that your regional transport partnership undertakes. Network Rail are also available to advise on design and development work to ensure it is compatible with railway standards.

Additionally, Transport Scotland and Network Rail are focussed on rail planning with the long-term planning process generally responding to factors such as: what will demand for rail travel look like in time, what are the pinch points against the existing network, and what interventions need to be considered. This has been developed in consultation with rail industry partners, including Tactran to build on the success of the Route Utilisation Strategy programme.

I look forward to our continued working to the betterment of Scotland’s future rail network.

Kind regards

DEREK MACKAY
ANNEX B - CREATION OF COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS (CRPs) IN SCOTLAND – DRAFT APPLICATION FORM

Application Date: 1st May 2015

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Name of proposed CRP

WORKING TITLE: Strathallan CRP

Route/Area to be covered

Bridge of Allan to Gleneagles

Rail route includes the following stations:

- Bridge of Allan
- Dunblane
- Gleneagles

Communities that have expressed interest and intend to participate are those principally within the Strathearn and Strathallan districts and include rural towns and villages (but not exclusively):

- Aberuthven
- Auchterarder
- Blackford
- Braco
- Bridge of Allan
- Comrie
- Crieff
- Dunblane
- Dunning
- Greenloaning
- Muthill
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS (CRPs) in SCOTLAND

DETAILS OF SUPPORT

1. Name of Regional Transport Partnership and contact details (please tick as appropriate)

Regional Transport Partnerships

TACTRAN
Niall Gardiner, Projects Manager, niallgardiner@tactran.gov.uk

Supporting evidence to be attached (written evidence of support)

2. Name of Railway organisation and contact details (tick as appropriate)

ScotRail
John Yellowlees, External Relations Manager, 0141 335 4787
john.yellowlees.scotrail.co.uk

Network Rail
Audrey Laidlaw
Lead Strategic Planner (Scotland), Tel: 0141 5554020
Audrey.Laidlaw@networkrail.co.uk

Supporting evidence to be - (written evidence of support)

ScotRail
John Yellowlees

Network Rail
Audrey Laidlaw

Tactran
Niall Gardiner
PROPOSALS & PLANS FOR THE COMMUNITY & THE RAILWAY

Introduction

In the last 20 years, community rail has developed in England and Wales and there have been some astounding successes which has created a general appreciation that the concept works. Ultimately this has lead to increased use, reduced cost and greater community involvement in local and rural railway lines.

The Scottish government, having developed a Community Rail Strategy aimed at improving the long term sustainability of social railways, are keen to encourage and facilitate greater community engagement. Community Rail Partnerships (CRP’s) are intended to form a bridge between the railway and local communities, as they bring together a wide range of interests along the rail corridor and within rural serviceable communities. The harnessing of local knowledge encouraging social and economic regeneration and providing a sense of place to enable that bridge to be established.

The community rail partnership (CRP) would be a “grass roots” organisation serving a specific geographical region, with shared needs and aspirations, linked to the railway. The partnership route would endorse the destination focus surrounding the current train services. It would also work with local organisations and businesses to maximise potential benefits of the location, line and community.

The CRP will also create and champion plans and programmes which engage with the rail industry to promote and market initiatives offering clear benefits aligned to long term community objectives. There already exists a strong community interest and involvement with all of the stations along the proposed partnership by virtue of their participation in the ScotRail “Adopt a Station” initiative.

There are three stations on the railway line.

Bridge of Allan Station is situated to the north west of the village but most of the 5,000 population live within one mile of the Station. Bridge of Allan Station was closed in the 1960s and a new unstaffed station was opened in 1985 just south of the original station. Recent timetable improvements providing direct trains to Perth, Dundee and Inverness are very welcome. The services to Edinburgh and Glasgow, however, cater for most of the annual 220,000 plus passenger journeys each year to and from Bridge of Allan Station. The large car park is full on most days and some travellers are required to park in adjacent streets.

Dunblane Station serves a local community of almost 10,000 inhabitants in addition to many commuters from outlying areas. The station is located in a central position adjacent to the town centre. There is no dedicated station car park which results in commuter parking issues in the town.

The third station, Gleneagles, is remote from any local community with the closest, Auchterarder, being three miles distant. The communities that are naturally serviced by Gleneagles are spread over a wide geographic area, with some having the option to use any of the three partnership stations.

Gleneagles station and surrounding infrastructure has recently undergone a major renovation project as proposed in Tactran’s Tay Estuary Rail Strategy and in support the 2014 Ryder Cup event. Renovations include:

- New, safe, access road off the A9.
- Major and sensitive refurbishment of the station buildings.
- Provision of accessible passenger waiting rooms.
- Improved disabled access to both platforms.
- Pick up and drop off parking for both public transport and private vehicles.
- Increased parking facilities.

The local communities are very proud of their refurbished asset and there are currently investigations with local organisations and businesses as to how to promote the use and sustainability of the station.
The specific strength of the proposed partnership will be the presence of community groups with a focus on sustainable transport and providing support to the communities within the catchment area of the railway.

The line can be a fundamental asset on which to build from and create strong presence of positive community action, aligning with Health, Environment, Social Cohesion and the promotion of area attractions and services.

**Partnership Proposals**

Area covered by the Proposed Partnership

- Title of the Partnership is to be **Strathallan CRP**
- Extent of the partnership is as stated above
- The Stirling to Perth / Inverness / Aberdeen line is serviced by ScotRail, Virgin Trains East Coast and the Caledonian Sleeper. The line provides for intercity, business, commuter, social and tourist passengers.

![Diagram of railway line: Inverness, Aberdeen, Perth, Gleneagles, Dunblane, Bridge of Allan, Stirling, Glasgow, Edinburgh]

**Formation of the Partnership**

- A strong steering group has been established with membership drawn from communities both adjacent to the line and outlying from the railway.

**Group members include:**

- Ewan McIntosh : Auchterarder Community Council
- Cllr Tom Gray : Perth and Kinross Council, Braco and Greenloaning Community Council
- Bill Young : Bridge of Allan Community Council
- Terence O’Byrne : Dunblane Community Council
- Ailsa Campbell : Crieff Community Trust
- Gavin Doherty : Dunning Community Trust
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS (CRPs) in SCOTLAND

John Anderson : Auchterarder Rotary Club
Roger Brickell (Convenor) : Crieff Community Trust

- A precursor to the formation of the group was consultation / presentations to:
  - Perth & Kinross Council – Transport Management
  - Stirling Council
  - Tactran
  - Auchterarder Rotary
  - COBRA committee (Campaign to Re-Open Blackford Station)
  - Dunblane Community Council
  - Bridge of Allan Community Council
  - VisitScotland
  - Crieff Community Council
  - ScotRail
  - Network Rail
  - Public Information Meeting in Auchterarder (Aytoun Hall)
  - Strathearn & District Community Council Forum (Crieff, Comrie, Muthill, Auchterarder, Dunning and Blackford)
  - Friends of Bridge of Allan

Aims and Objectives of the Strathallan CRP

The partnership, once formed, would have the following aims and objectives:

1. Make rail travel more attractive and accessible to the community.
   - Support the development of transport hubs at stations, allowing for seamless travel across rail, bus, bike and foot.
   - Highlight timetable / route issues for integration with bus services.
   - Publicise rail and public transport services – both through the production of leaflets / line guides and online with links to appropriate websites. Also public notice boards would be used. Information could also be accessible via QR code on signage, onboard trains and at stations as well as public noticeboards in relevant towns and villages.
   - Undertake an audit to determine the long term needs and aspirations of all the communities within the partnership area to improve / increase train usage.

2. Encourage more commuters to use public / active transport.

3. Improve access and linkages between stations and community centres / points of interest.
   - Undertake an audit of each station to gain understanding on what is already in place and identify improvements to signage, paths etc. It is envisaged that this role would be taken on by a station adopter sub group.
   - Undertake public consultations to identify key improvements required at each station that would make them more attractive / accessible and encourage increased train usage.

4 Actively support the ScotRail Timetable Conference (RTPs / TOC/ Passenger Focus).

5 Undertake passenger / community audits to identify key improvements required at each station that would make them more attractive accessible and encourage more people to use the train.

6 Support the Economic Development of the Region
   - Promotion of sustainable tourism encouraging both tourists and locals to use the train to access cycling and walking options.
Promotion of local businesses and services accessible by public transport.
Seek to promote more active public and community involvement in creating viable and sustainable use of the station buildings.
Seek to promote and support the ScotRail station adoption programme to heighten community ownership of the station assets.

7. Seek to improve accessibility for those with mobility issues and others with accessibility issues, for both the railway and onward connections. Support the ScotRail, SDEF (Scottish Disability Equality Forum).

8. Act as an interface between the community, Tactran and the rail industry.
Pre & Post Designation

1. Consolidate the geographical limits of the partnership.
2. Establish the infrastructure of the CRP and build on the ideas expressed by the steering group to date.
3. Establish a representative CRP Board. The Board would consist of representatives from across the communities served by the line. It is anticipated that a significant number of steering group members will wish to serve as active members of the board.
4. It is suggested that the structure of the board would be a simple minute of agreement between organisations to begin with but would, in time, evolve into either a company limited by guarantee and/or a charitable organisation. This would enable application for additional sources of funding. A third party would be used to hold funds in the first instance.

Once the partnership is formed then a business model would be developed. The model would include:

1. Adoption of a constitution.
2. Business plan (minimum 12 months)
3. Election of officials.
4. Engagement with Tactran, TOC & Network Rail.
5. Creation and support to station adopter sub groups.
6. Consideration of the need for a salaried Partnership Officer.

Post Designation Projects / Aspirations

During the various meetings convened in Auchterarder the now members of the steering group voiced their views and visions for what a partnership could achieve along the designated portion of the Strathallan Route.

The following is a list of steering group proposals formulated during those group meetings. It is to be noted that the proposals are not prioritised at this stage. It will be for the partnership officials to debate and agree joint priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ensure current Station Adopters are encouraged to join the partnership and their activities augmented / supported by the establishment of the Strathallan CRP. Station adopters to be represented on the partnership board. Ensure all station adopters know how to contact the CRP and know that they can approach the CRP for help with the more ambitious projects at their stations. All three stations have been adopted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Responsibility:** Strathallan CRP

**Timelines:**

**Potential Funding:** ScotRail (TOC) will reimburse associated costs to adopters as per current agreement. It is assumed that a similar agreement will exist in the new franchise and that the CRP can assist / support with the transition process.

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Using local knowledge, carry out checks of ScotRail notice boards and collate amendments and changes required to ensure they are accurate and relevant. A key element in this is ensuring that recognisable images and multi lingual information is displayed to reflect the large number of international visitors to the line. This will ensure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that rail users are fully aware of the public transport options.

Where stations are unmanned it is anticipated that the partnership could adopt a supportive role of station inspection and fault / defect reporting. This activity would require a reporting route to the TOC and support the TOC in its objectives. It could also provide a local SQUIRE linked reporting regime which could ultimately result in cost savings for Transport Scotland.

**Responsible:** Strathallan CRP Station Adopter Sub Groups  
**Timelines:**  
**Potential Funding:** Voluntary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>Market and lay out in a coherent format details of existing connections and services that promote the usability of the line in the context of the wider public transport network.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Responsible:** | Strathallan CRP  
**Timelines:**  
**Potential Funding:** Voluntary

| 4 | Aim to get all disused buildings / rooms at each station back into use, preferably with relevant services that will encourage the use of the line as part of that building/room use.  
|---|---|
| **Responsible:** | Strathallan CRP  
**Timelines:** Feasibility studies, research and ideas can commence following the designation of the CRP.  
**Potential Funding:** TOC (Station Regeneration Fund) & RHT

| 5 | Partnership input to timetable review. (In conjunction with project 3) Use local knowledge to support Tactran in its mission to improve connectivity with onward links, critical in our location. Use would be made of the output from the community audit to provide evidence to support recommended changes. Support the goal of an integrated transport timetable that is practical and useful for the various types of public transport user within the partnership communities.  
|---|---|
| **Responsible:** | Strathallan CRP  
**Timelines:**  
**Potential Funding:** to be confirmed

| 6 | Increase accessibility of local businesses to market their produce and offerings directly to passengers on the train. This may be in the form of on train posters/leaflets.  
|---|---|
| **Responsible:** | Strathallan CRP / TOC / Local Suppliers  
**Timelines:**  
**Potential Funding:** Self-funding with implementation supported by the CRP

| 7 | Work with an appropriate educational partners (e.g. the University of Strathclyde School of Business & Marketing), to develop initiatives to market the CRPs activities and to assess their effectiveness.  
|---|---|
| **Responsible:** | Strathallan CRP  
**Timelines:** Post Designation of partnership  
**Potential Funding:** TOC (support with rail travel costs)

| 8 | Consider the range of available activities accessed from stations within the partnership and their suitability for experiencing in conjunction with the rail travel.  
<table>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Timelines:**  
**Potential Funding:**  
Aim to encourage local businesses to incentivise travel on the Line in relation to these activities. |
COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIPS (CRPs) in SCOTLAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible: Strathallan CRP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timelines:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Funding: VisitScotland / Local attractions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 Partnership noticeboards to be positioned at stations in addition to TOC notices. Partnership boards would be erected and managed by the partnership. They would provide community based information to locals and tourists including critical information on how to get help in the event of problems/confusion.

Noticeboards would reflect the area covered by the Strathallan CRP and its branding.

**Responsible:** Strathallan CRP

**Timelines:**

**Potential Funding:** Streams to identified by partnership. Anticipated that Local Authorities / Local businesses / TOC would support this initiative.

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Specific Station / Community Aspirations raised by Steering Group members

10 It is the intention of the steering group not to restrict the application with a rigid list of aspirations, other than to establish a CRP rail show with the intention of increasing community ownership of the CRP and its aspirations. This is to ensure the grass roots ethos behind community rail is upheld.

Specific local issues will be discussed by the partnership members once established.

**Responsible:** Strathallan CRP

**Timelines:**

**Potential Funding:** TOC funds

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Note: The steering group proposals should not be restricted to any or all of the above.

**Please note:**
Proposals suggested above must be shared with the appropriate Regional Transport Partnership and Railway organisation who are asked to support the application.

www.transportscotland.gov.uk
Access to Laurencekirk Study – Executive Summary

Introduction
CH2M Hill was commissioned by Nestrans in December 2013 to develop a robust evidence case for a preferred solution for access between the A90 Trunk Road and Laurencekirk and the north of Angus that is cost effective, improves road safety, allows the efficient operation of Laurencekirk High Street and meets the needs of local businesses and residents. The study was also required to give cognisance to the potential for traffic growth through future development within Laurencekirk and Angus and on the A90 Trunk Road Network. The Client Steering Group for the study consisted of Nestrans, Transport Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council and Tactran, with participation from Angus Council. The study has shown that there is a strong case for intervention to improve the efficiency of the network, support economic growth and reduce the risk of accidents.

Background
The A90 trunk road was upgraded to dual carriageway standard in the 1980s and is the main strategic link between Aberdeen and Dundee. The settlement of Laurencekirk is approximately 40km south of Aberdeen and is bypassed to the south east by the trunk road. There are three at-grade junctions with the A90 that give access to Laurencekirk, namely the A937 north junction which also has a staggered access to Keilburn farm; the central B9120 staggered junction that gives access to St Cyrus and Garvock Hill; and the A937 south junction, where the staggered southern leg gives access to Marykirk, the A92 and Montrose area.

There are also a number of minor accesses to the A90 in the vicinity of Laurencekirk. The nearest grade separated junctions on the A90 are either 10km south of the Laurencekirk south junction at Stracathro or 21km north of the A937 north junction at Stonehaven.

The A90/A937 south junction is the busiest of the three Laurencekirk junctions and safety improvements were undertaken in 2005 and 2010 on the A90 Trunk Road on the approaches to the south junction, which included the introduction of a 50mph speed limit and the installation of speed cameras.

Although there have been no injury accidents at this location in recent years there is still a strong perception that it is a dangerous junction. The local community are highly engaged and have expressed the strength of their feeling throughout this study. A petition is currently lodged with the Scottish Government, which calls for the construction of a grade separated junction at this location.

Study Methodology
This study has been undertaken in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) methodologies. This required identification of the key transport problems, issues, opportunities and constraints on the corridor, which was informed through a review of previous studies and stakeholder engagement and evidenced where possible through traffic and data collection.
Rationale for Intervention

Problems, issues and opportunities within the study area were identified and validated following extensive desktop research, surveys and consultation. This provided an evidence base for the development of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) to specify what any transport intervention should seek to achieve. The objectives then provided a framework for appraising alternative options. Each TPO is shown below along with a summary of the key problems, issues and opportunities they are seeking to address:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Associated Problem, Issue or Opportunity</th>
<th>Transport Planning Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 serious accidents at the A90 Laurencekirk centre junction between 2011 and 2013.</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Large vehicles observed overhanging the central reserve causing obstruction to trunk road through movements and creating risk of a serious accident.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Speeding on the A90 through the 50mph section and growth trends on the A90 are likely to exacerbate existing problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-routing of vehicles to avoid the A90 Laurencekirk junctions due to delay and perception of poor safety.</td>
<td>Driver Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor driver behaviour when merging onto or crossing the A90.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delay to vehicles on the A90 as a result of the 50mph speed constraint.</td>
<td>Efficiency of the Network and Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delay to vehicles on the A937, especially in peak periods, approaching the A90 south junction from the south and north.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traffic growth trends on the A90 and further development likely to lead to increased congestion, delays and queuing at the A90/Laurencekirk junctions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development in Laurencekirk and north Angus would require improvements to transport infrastructure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunities to improve sustainable travel.</td>
<td>Sustainable Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality of life for local people in Laurencekirk being influenced by the barrier presented by the A90.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parking is an important function on the High Street, but can affect pedestrian crossing visibility and cause delay to vehicles.</td>
<td>Laurencekirk High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Significant increases in traffic volumes could lead to delay and congestion in peak periods.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of constraints have been identified that require to be considered in the development of any transport intervention. The BP Forties Pipeline lies to the east of the A90 and has a corridor of restriction for development. The exclusion zone for infrastructure either side of the pipeline is in the vicinity of the A90/B9120 central junction. The railway line and Laurencekirk Cemetery also limit the opportunity for physical improvements in their proximity.

Constraints are also imposed on option generation, due to the requirement to maintain accessibility for local users of the B9120 Garvock Road both north and south on the A90, as well as various farm properties at the north junction. This principally affects the combinations of central reservation closures that can be considered to be viable.

Option Generation and Sifting
A range of options were developed which were informed from previous studies, suggestions from the stakeholder workshops, an open day and professional knowledge. The long list of options were considered against the objectives and a number sifted out that did not contribute to the objectives or were unlikely to be delivered due to constraints. The remaining options were categorised as either core or complementary options. Core options consist of those that address the problems and issues central to the study and they were formed into a series of packages for appraisal. The complementary options were insufficient in themselves to significantly address the study objectives.

Option Packages Appraisal
A series of eight packages were developed for appraisal as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package 1 – Minor transport interventions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This was considered as a low cost alternative to a major intervention and consisted of extending the current 50mph speed restriction on the A90 at the A90/A937 south junction to include the central and north Laurencekirk junctions, with the introduction of average speed cameras. This package did not however fully address the study objectives and was rejected for further assessment.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Packages 2 to 7 – Grade Separation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Package 2 – grade separated junction at south</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package 3 – grade separated junction at south and closure of central reserve at north junction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package 4 – grade separated junction at south, closure of centre junction and provision of link road between the B9120 and A937 to south of Laurencekirk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package 5 – grade separated junction at south, closure of central reserve at north junction, closure of centre junction and provision of link road between the B9120 and A937 to south of Laurencekirk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package 6 – grade separated junctions at south and north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package 7– grade separated junctions at south and north with part closure of centre junction leaving left in/out from B9120 on the south side only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package 8 – Sustainable travel measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes improved pedestrian and cycling facilities. This could provide opportunity for increased pedestrian and cycling activity, improving health and wellbeing. Whilst this package does not address many of the objectives and was not fully assessed under the detailed appraisal, it could be considered as a supportive measure to enhance any of the junction improvement packages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An S-Paramics micro-simulation model of Laurencekirk and the surrounding road network was developed to test the traffic related performance of packages 2 - 7. Future year forecasts of traffic demands for a design year of 2033 were informed from the strategic Aberdeen Sub Area Model and based upon background traffic growth trends and committed developments, excluding those that are conditioned on the provision of an upgrade to the A90/A937 south junction.
Packages 2 – 7 all contain a proposal to grade separate the A90/A937 south junction. The detailed appraisal has shown the significant benefit this would bring. The removal of at-grade crossing movements would provide safer crossing opportunities for all modes and enable the removal of the 50mph speed restriction on the A90 that was introduced as a road safety measure. This provides a positive benefit to cost ratio for the upgrade by reducing journey time and improving network efficiency on the trunk road and removing queuing on the A937 from both Montrose and Laurencekirk. The upgraded junction would safely accommodate increased traffic levels at the south junction generated by planned development in Laurencekirk and north Angus and therefore help enable economic growth. Upgrade of the south junction alone however does not reduce the risk of accidents at the north or centre junctions.

Appraisal to date suggests that there is benefit in closing the central reserve at the north junction to improve safety and remove the queue of southbound vehicles on the A90 waiting to turn right into Laurencekirk in the PM that are otherwise predicted to exceed the current stacking and deceleration lane in future years. The optimum arrangement of any further combination of closures or access restrictions however will require to be determined in subsequent work.

Provision of a second grade separated junction at the A90/A937 north junction does not provide a significant level of additional benefit with committed development only, that is those developments which have been granted planning permission.

Risk and Uncertainty Testing
A number of tests were undertaken to assess the impact on the option appraisal given some outcomes that cannot at this stage be predicted with any certainty. A sensitivity test was undertaken to test the impact should vehicles that are reported to be diverting from using the A90/A937 south junction transfer to an upgraded junction. The results indicate that a grade separated junction would safely accommodate any traffic attracted back to this junction that is currently re-routing due to safety concerns and delays. This would give the opportunity to further improve safety by allowing consideration to be given to the closure of the central reserves at the at grade junctions to the south of the A937, such as the A90/Landends/Unnamed road and the A90/B974.

The performance of the various packages have been tested under a 2033 future year scenario that was based upon background traffic growth forecasts and committed developments. As there is uncertainty over the rate that future development, as allocated in Local Development Plans, may be progressed, a number of scenarios were tested as a sensitivity test. This has indicated that there would be benefit in providing a grade separated junction at the A90/A937 north junction in addition to grade separation of the south junction should the M1 development allocated in the Local Development Plan for Laurencekirk be fully progressed. The requirement for this upgrade is related to potential future levels of development in Laurencekirk and should therefore be developer led.

This study has not sought to determine at what level of development it becomes necessary to provide an upgrade to the north junction and this will have to be determined through the planning process, although it is recognised that the low build rates in this area may affect the viability of development within Laurencekirk to meet the costs of a significant junction upgrade along with other local infrastructure requirements, such as education, water and waste water within the current Strategic Development Plan period.

Access Around Laurencekirk
Any changes in access between Laurencekirk and the A90 have the potential to change traffic flow levels on the High Street in Laurencekirk. Rationalisation of parking on the High Street would provide a clearer road layout for all users and improve the environment and safety for pedestrians. Although current parking availability would be altered, parking surveys have shown there is parking availability on the High Street and side streets. There is a risk
however that removal of pinch points may lead to increased speed, but traffic management could enable any changes to be better accommodated on the High Street.

Constructing a western distributor road between the A90/A937 south and north junction was shown to reduce benefits due to the significant increase in trip length and journey time that would be involved for those using the route and indicate that it is unlikely to attract traffic from the High Street. The high cost of this route, which would require rail crossings, would reduce value for money and cannot be justified.

The appraisal has identified that no immediate measures are required to address any changes in traffic flows on the High Street as a result of any improvements on the A90 trunk road, but that Aberdeenshire Council monitor any impact on the vitality of the High Street in Laurencekirk and consider local traffic management measures such as rationalisation of parking in future if required.

Summary of Key Findings
In conclusion, a viable case has been made for intervention at the A90/A937 south junction to address current problems. Upgrade of this junction would improve network efficiency and safety and enable economic development that is currently being constrained to proceed. It could also provide the opportunity to improve safety through closures or access restrictions at nearby junctions, although the optimum arrangement will require to be determined through further appraisal. The public consultation that has been undertaken has revealed a very clear preference for junction improvement strategies that include grade separation of the south junction.

Further development of these proposals in accordance with the DMRB stages 2 and 3 will be required. In the longer term there may be a requirement to upgrade the A90/A937 north junction to be grade separated, but this requirement is associated with potential future levels of development within Laurencekirk and would be determined through the planning process.