

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Minute of Meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership held via MS Teams on Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 10.30am.

Present: Provost Linda Clark and Councillor Heather Doran (Angus Council); Councillor Siobhan Tolland (Dundee City Council); Depute Provost Andrew Parrott and Councillor Hugh Anderson (Perth & Kinross Council); Councillors Rachel Nunn and Jen Preston (Stirling Council); Alan Stewart (Member).

In Attendance: M Speed (Director); N Gardiner, J Padmore, J Cooper, M Smith and A Roger (Tactran); M Roberts (Angus Council); E MacNaughton (Dundee City Council); K Molley (Secretary), N Moran and J Salisbury (Perth & Kinross Council); D Hopper and E Williamson (Stirling Council); M Bruce and M Niaz (Audit Scotland).

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Kevin Cordell (Dundee City Council), Councillor Richard Watters (Perth and Kinross Council); Bryan Doyle and Amy McDonald (Members).

Depute Provost Andrew Parrott, Chair, Presiding

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

Following the resignation of Councillor Mark McDonald, the Chair welcomed Provost Linda Clark to the Board.

2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 10 DECEMBER 2024

The minutes of meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership of 10 December 2024 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

Cllr Nunn asked for an update on Liftshare. N Gardiner confirmed the branded Tactran Liftshare will cease from 31 March 2025 as approved at the previous Partnership meeting, and Tactran will commence promoting Liftshare in general on its website.

3. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS STATEMENT

There was submitted an Outstanding Business Statement by the Director (RTP/25/03) setting out the status of outstanding decisions of Partnership.

The Chair noted that the only outstanding item was the RTS Delivery Plan which was due to be considered later in the meeting.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the Outstanding Business Statement and to receive updates at future meetings.

4. AUDIT STRATEGY 2024/25

There was submitted the Audit Strategy 2024/25 (RTP/25/04) which was presented by M Niaz of Audit Scotland.

Councillor Nunn asked about “Best Value Audit” and whether the Local Authorities will be included as part of that. M Bruce said a high-level approach to “Best Value Audits” is taken as Tactran is a less complex body and the focus is on financial sustainability, so the individual Local Authorities will not be involved.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the Audit Strategy for 2024/25.

5. REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER

There was submitted a report by the Director (RTP/25/05) presenting the Partnership’s Risk Register for annual review and approval by the Partnership.

Councillor Doran asked if some of the risks could be removed as they are superseded e.g. Brexit. The Director noted that Brexit implications are still working through. Councillor Tolland asked if it was possible to just amend the wording if the effects of Brexit are still working through.

Councillor Nunn asked for the completion dates of the STPR2 and NTS2. The Director confirmed the STPR Delivery Plan work is ongoing and that is the reason that those items are still on the Register.

Councillor Nunn asked about Cyber Security and if there was a more secure option than the Office Manager. The Director confirmed all IT is provided via Perth & Kinross Council and is subject to the same security.

Resolved:

- (i) To approve the Risk Register which forms Appendix A to the report; and
- (ii) To agree to receive a further report reviewing and updating the Risk Register not later than March 2026.

6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

There was submitted a report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/06) asking the Partnership to note the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and to remit officers to maintain a rolling five-year plan.

The Chair advised that Amy McDonald had circulated comments on this paper which were fair and proper comments.

Councillor Doran asked how the charging back works in practice in relation to locations etc. J Salisbury confirmed the recharge to projects is salary cost only. The Director said the staff salary cost is recharged to the relevant project grant provider, for example Transport Scotland for People and Place.

Councillor Nunn said in relation to paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 there is an imbalance in planning as opposed to delivering. The Director advised that other than working on projects that are recharged, the focus of Tactran is on the RTS Delivery Plan and working with the Local Authorities on identifying who is delivering what and where the gaps are.

The Chair said Tactran has been fair to Local Authorities by not requesting an uplift in funding in previous years, but it is getting to the point that this might be required. If an uplift in funding is requested, Tactran and partners need to be able to identify what that is for and the RTS Delivery Plan will help identify that.

The Director said the RTPs have been discussing delivery with Transport Scotland and this has assisted in more funding being allocated to the Local Authorities to facilitate this.

The Director explained the funding structure and delivering the RTS with partners.

Cllr Nunn asked if there are any issues around pension liabilities. The Director confirmed Tactran is within the Tayside Pension Fund. J Salisbury confirmed that Tactran is a separately identifiable part of the Tayside Pension Fund, and a person or persons can only take voluntary severance if the savings generated cover the costs.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the Medium-Term Financial Plan; and
- (ii) To remit Tactran officers to maintain a rolling five-year plan and further refine the assumptions that underpin it.

7. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY: DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Senior Strategy Officer (RTP/25/07) providing an update on progressing the recommendations of the Tayside and Central Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) via a RTS Delivery Plan process.

J Padmore gave a presentation on the RTS Delivery Plan and progress made since September 2024.

E Macnaughton felt RTS Delivery Plan and progress was summed up well by J Padmore. He noted principally the co-ordination and the Transport Planning function provided by Tactran is good and that regional collaboration and co-ordination is needed. Dundee City Council officers are very supportive of the RTS Delivery Plan and will be a key partner, recognising the benefit and value of a co-ordinated approach between the RTP and Local Authorities to get the desired outcomes on the ground.

The Chair recommended that either the Tactran Chair or Deputy Chair represent Tactran Board Members on the RTS Delivery Board and requested a different name be considered for the RTS Delivery Board. Councillor Doran supported the recommendation.

Councillor Doran asked whether DRT was included within the Delivery Plan. J Cooper confirmed it is and that the People & Place fund now includes sustainable transport and Angus Council's DRT is one of the projects included in the proposed 2025/26 People and Place programme.

Cllr Nunn requested a copy of the roles & responsibilities for the Tactran Board and Executive Committee. It was agreed that this could be provided.

Regarding Appendix B of the report, Councillor Nunn requested clarification on who the owners of the actions are, as she felt some were Transport Scotland's responsibility. J Padmore noted the RTS Lead is who is best placed to engage with Transport Scotland or other providers on the progress of the action and any other issues that may arise.

Councillor Nunn noted that the Scottish Government has asked all Local Authorities to review LDP evidence on green spaces and asked whether items in Appendix B are being shared with Local Authorities. JP said there has been engagement with all Local Authorities regarding the Delivery Plan.

Councillor Nunn asked about how to best move forward in an equitable way to support the Tactran core budget. The Chair agreed that there is a need to make best use of available resources, but a one size fits all approach cannot be assumed. J Padmore said the RTS Delivery Improvement Programme helps all the partners identify new actions and which pieces of work are of the most value for them. This process identifies what actions are of most value to each Local Authority with further detail contained within full documents available in the Members area of the Tactran website.

Councillor Nunn considered that, if further support or monetary value is required from Local Authorities, it would be helpful to understand what value the RTP provides for Local Authorities.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the RTS Delivery Plan 2024-2029 (March 2025), as included in the Members Area of the Tactran website;
- (ii) To approve the RTS Delivery Improvement Programme (March 2025) recommendations, as summarised at Appendix B and included in the Members Area of the Tactran website;
- (iii) To endorse the frequency for the reporting of the RTS Delivery Improvement Programme, RTS Delivery and RTS Outcome Monitoring reports; and
- (iv) To advise that it would be appropriate for either the Tactran Chair or Deputy Chair to provide the Tactran Board Member representation on a RTS Delivery Board.

8. ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Projects Manager (RTP/25/08) noting progress on the Tactran People and Place Programme commencing financial year 2025/26. The report asks the Partnership to note the application to Transport Scotland; the continued development and delivery of the programme as set out in the application, and to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to approve fund allocation on conclusion of the application process. The report also provides an outline of other Active Travel Funds available.

J Cooper gave a short presentation providing an update on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 People and Place programmes.

Councillor Nunn asked for clarification around the Monitoring and Evaluation. She would like to understand whether the existing monitoring allowed for a calculation of return on investment rates for the projects being undertaken, to provide a better understanding going forward as to what is, and is not, working. She noted that it is disappointing that the evaluation framework for 2025/26 was not yet finalised. J Cooper advised Transport Scotland are leading on the evaluation framework, but the concept of a return on investment measure could be considered as part of the ongoing assessment.

The Director advised that Tactran's delivery partners have been requested to provide monitoring information. However, as the revised People and Place programme is just finishing its first year, and some of the projects at schools extend beyond the financial year, it will be later in 2025 before the full monitoring information is available. He advised that there is a group of officers from Transport Scotland and the RTPs working on the Monitoring & Evaluation process.

The Chair asked when confirmation of funding will be received for 2025/26 People and Place programme. J Cooper advised funding approval is going through the Scottish Government's budget process and a confirmation letter is expected imminently. He noted that as some of the existing projects end on 31 March 2025, it would be good to have a smooth transition between financial years.

Councillor Nunn considered 3-year continuous projects can lead to better outcomes and long-term trends and impacts. J Cooper agreed but noted that as funding is allocated by Scottish Government on an annual basis, it would be difficult for Tactran to allocate funds beyond 1 year. The Director clarified that although continuing project intervention types over a 3-year period is desirable, this does not equate to the same partners delivering the same project interventions to the same people.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the application to Transport Scotland for the continued operation of the Tactran People and Place programme in 2025/26, as approved by the Executive Committee and included at Appendix A;
- (ii) To note the continued development and delivery of the programme in line with the application and activities as described within the report;
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Committee to confirm and approve the Tactran People and Place project programme for 2025/26; and
- (iv) To note Active Travel Funds available to RTPs and Local Authorities in 2025/26.

9. BUS INITIATIVES UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Projects Manager (RTP/25/09) providing the Partnership with updates on bus initiatives within the Tactran area and requesting delegated authority to the Executive Committee to approve application to Bus Infrastructure Fund, if required.

The Chair hoped the new Bus Infrastructure Fund requirements would become clearer and are confirmed soon.

Councillor Nunn advised the Forth Valley Bus Alliance proposals has been set aside, and projects are now being pursued by Stirling Council and the other individual Councils directly.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the development of the various bus initiatives;
- (ii) To note the continued development and implementation of the initiatives within the Tactran Bus Plan; and
- (iii) To note the current position regarding bus infrastructure support under Transport Scotland's proposed Bus Infrastructure Fund and potential projects as detailed in Appendix A and to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to approve application to Bus Infrastructure Fund, if required.

Provost Clark and Councillor Preston left the meeting.

10. 2024/25 BUDGET AND MONITORING

There was submitted a joint report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/10) providing a monitoring update on the Partnership's Revenue and Capital expenditure and seeking the Partnership's approval to carry forward any final year end underspend in the Core and RTS Revenue Programme to the next financial year.

Resolved:

- (i) To note the position regarding Core Revenue expenditure as at 31 January 2025 as detailed in Appendix A;
- (ii) To note progress on the 2024/25 RTS Revenue Programme and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendix B;
- (iii) To agree that any final year end underspend in the Core and RTS Revenue Programme funding is carried forward to supplement the 2025/26 Revenue Budget and Programme; and
- (iv) To note progress on the 2024/25 Active Travel Behaviour Change and Access to Bikes Grant and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendix C.

11. 2025/26 CORE REVENUE BUDGET

There was submitted a report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/11) updating the Partnership on Scottish Government and partner Council contributions towards the Partnership's 2025/26 Revenue Budget and seeking approval of a 2025/26 Core Revenue Budget and proposed 2025/26 RTS Revenue.

Resolved:

- (i) To note partner Councils' requested Revenue contributions towards the 2025/26 Core Budget;
- (ii) To note the anticipated award of Scottish Government Grant in Aid of up to £496,613 in 2025/26;
- (iii) To approve the 2025/26 Core Budget as detailed in Appendix A;
- (iv) To approve an initial 2025/26 RTS Revenue Programme budget as detailed in sections 3.8 – 3.24 of the report and to agree to consider approval of a finalised 2025/26 Programme at the Partnership's next meeting on 17 June 2025; and
- (v) To note the potential additional 2025/26 Revenue and Capital Income and to agree to receive a further update at its next meeting.

Councillor Tolland left the meeting.

12. DIRECTORS REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Director (RTP/25/12) providing an update on MaaS and seeking the Partnership approval to continue with the MaaS project. The Partnership was also asked to note updates on reducing car km; assistance given to partner Councils in preparing evidence in support of their Local Development Plans and information on ScotRail ticket office opening hours. The Partnership was also asked to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to 'A Draft Just Transition Plan for Transport in Scotland' consultation document.

Councillor Doran noted she has a concern around the ticket offices reduced opening hours but is reassured that there will be no change in staffing levels at stations. She is concerned that staffing levels may reduce in the future and would want to guard against this. N Gardiner confirmed ScotRail's intention is to make staff more visible and more able to assist passengers within the stations as opposed to sitting in the ticket office.

Resolved:

- (i) To note an update on MaaS;
- (ii) To approve the continuation of MaaS in 2025/26, guided by Transport Scotland's evaluation report;
- (iii) To note updates related to reducing car km; assistance given to partner Councils in preparing evidence in support of their Local Development Plans and information on ScotRail ticket office opening hours; and
- (iv) To delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to Transport Scotland's 'A Draft Just Transition Plan for Transport in Scotland'.

13. MEMBERS ISSUES AND AOCB

None.

14. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

17 June 2025 – via MS Teams
16 September 2025 – in Person
16 December 2025 – via MS Teams