# TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

## 17 JUNE 2025

## CLIMATE ACTION: REDUCING CAR KM

## REPORT BY SENIOR STRATEGY OFFICER

#### <u>Purpose</u>

The Scottish Government's Climate Action Plan Update (2020) introduced a target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 compared to 2019 levels. Whilst it has been announced that the target itself will be reviewed, the task of reducing car km remains important in achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2045.

Transport Scotland and the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) have recognised that this goal would not be achieved without traffic demand management measures. This report provides an update and asks the Partnership to note that a new Transport Scotland/COSLA car use reduction policy statement is expected imminently and agree to a workshop to consider the issues.

### Summary

The analysis commissioned by Tactran compares the equality and economic impacts of a distance-based charge vs cordon charges vs increased parking restraints (increased charges or reduced levels of parking). In doing so, the work compares the relative:

- Change in car trips from origins to help understand the potential impacts on people
- Change in car trips into areas (such as town centres) to help understand the potential impacts on the economy
- Impact on car km (to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) but also the relative impact on car trips (to reduce air quality emissions or congestion in town centre
- The likely measures required to mitigate against the impacts of the different measures on those people and places most likely to be negatively affected

It also provides an indication of the relative gross income which could help fund mitigation measures.

A member workshop is proposed to enable Members to better understand the potential implications of the different demand management measures to inform any Partnership position if/when required and any future work.

# 1 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Partnership:
  - (i) notes that a renewed policy statement by Transport Scotland / COSLA on achieving car use reduction in Scotland is expected imminently; and
  - (ii) agrees to undertake a workshop to consider the issues in this report to enable the Partnership to consider a position statement at the Partnership Meeting in September 2025.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Partnership will be aware of the Scottish Government's climate action target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 compared to 2019 levels.
- 2.2 Scotland's <u>Guiding Principles on the Environment</u> has confirmed the appropriateness of:
  - The precautionary principle as it relates to the environment
  - The principle that the polluter should pay
- 2.3 Both these principles are useful to be conscious of when considering options to help reduce car mileage.
- 2.4 In January 2022 Transport Scotland and COSLA issued a draft route map to achieve a 20% reduction in car km by 2030 entitled '<u>Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland</u>'.
- 2.5 Audit Scotland undertook an investigation into progress and in January 2025 their publication <u>Sustainable Transport: Reducing Car Use</u> noted a lack of progress due to a lack of a clear plan and leadership (report RTP/25/12 refers).
- 2.6 Following consideration of a revised route map by the COSLA Environment and Economy Board, a paper seeking approval on a way forward was considered by COSLA leaders on 28 February 2025. Leaders agreed to prepare a renewed policy statement rather than publishing the draft route map.
- 2.7 The renewed policy statement to reduce car km is expected to recognise that demand management measures would be required.
- 2.8 In April 2025 the Cabinet Secretary discussed the car use reduction target with the Holyrood Public Audit Committee on 23 April 2025 and announced that the target would be reviewed.

- 2.9 The Tactran approach to understanding the implications of delivering car km reduction is outlined in the RTS, which notes "*It is those that drive the most (individuals and businesses) that will be asked to change their habits the most. This will mean considering which mechanisms can discourage car use, but this can only be done where there are reasonable alternatives to the car. There is a need to ensure such mechanisms are fair and equitable, reflecting the different circumstances across the region."*
- 2.10 The Partnership's parameters to investigating how to support the target is set out in section 3.4 of the <u>RTS</u> (pp49-51). The Partnership agreed that any change to charging to reduce car km must:
  - Follow sufficient improvement in alternatives to the car
  - Have an impact on kilometres driven
  - Not undermine the viability of a location and consequently the coordination of measures across local authority boundaries will be required
  - Not increase transport poverty
  - Be able to be responsive to changes in fuel duty or its successor
- 2.11 Members will remember that work was commissioned to inform the Partnership of the determinants of car km and consequently the likely effectiveness of options for achieving a 20% reduction in car km to inform the RTS (<u>Achieving a 20% reduction in car-km: Options for the Tactran Region</u>). The headlines from this work concluded that:
  - Longer distance trips generated the greater proportion of car km
  - Demand management options would be required to achieve the target
- 2.12 In recognition of the draft route map and the emerging renewed policy statement is likely to place an emphasis on local authorities to deliver demand management options to support car use reduction, Members noted that officers would undertake an Equality and Economic Analysis of Demand Management Options (reports RTP/24/32 and RTP/25/12 refer).

## 3 DISCUSSION

# A Renewed Policy Statement on Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland

- 3.1 As noted in section 2 of this report, it is anticipated that Transport Scotland and COSLA will shortly publish a renewed policy statement on achieving car use reduction in Scotland.
- 3.2 The renewed policy statement will aim to guide work on reducing car use (and specifically car km) and is expected to:

- Give a greater emphasis on those measures that will have an impact on reducing car use- specifically demand management measures - and related communications
- Note that more attention should be paid to interventions that will address longer distance trips
- Recognise that reducing car km requires collaborative working
- 3.3 Transport Scotland have also proposed a regulatory review of powers available to introduce road user charging schemes. Whilst such a review could be useful, the scope of the regulatory review should aim to provide an understanding of the full the range of powers available to both national and local bodies and the alternatives for longer distance trips, such as bus, coach and rail.
- 3.4 It is expected that Transport Scotland will work with COSLA and the Regional Transport Partnerships to progress the recommendations of both the Audit Scotland work and the Renewed Policy Statement. It is important that this work considers and reports on the full range of powers and funding for alternatives.

## Equality and economic analysis of demand management options

- 3.5 Increasing the costs of driving will reduce car km. Whether it encourages a modal shift, or results in people accessing fewer services or opportunities will depend on:
  - Availability and cost of alternative modes of travel to access the same (or closer) destination/service
  - Availability of closer services and opportunities
- 3.6 Given that all localities do not and are unlikely to boast a full range of services and opportunities, reducing car km will potentially mean that some people will access a smaller range of services and opportunities.
- 3.7 This paper seeks to introduce Members to the equality and economic impact work prior to a member workshop which will allow members a good opportunity to delve deeper into the implications of demand management measures. This workshop will then assist the Partnership and our partner Local Authorities in ongoing discussions with Transport Scotland and also any further investigations by officers.

### Purpose of the study

3.8 Officers commissioned work to understand the comparative economic and equality impacts of different demand management options which can support an approach to reduce car km. The work identifies the relative benefits and disbenefits of each demand management option rather than provide absolute 'numbers' for each option (as many factors relating to a scheme's design and implementation will require to be debated).

- 3.9 The analysis compares the relative:
  - Change in car trips from origins to help understand the potential impacts on people
  - Change in car trips into areas (such as town centres) to help understand the potential impacts on the economy
  - Impact on car km (to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) but also the relative impact on car trips (to reduce air quality emissions or congestion in town centres)
  - Effectiveness and deliverability of measures required to mitigate against the impacts of the different measures on those people and places most likely to be negatively affected. (Understanding the extent of the mitigation measures will depend on the extent of the respective demand management option)
- 3.10 It also provides an indication of the relative gross income which could help fund mitigation measures.

## Methodology and scope

- 3.11 The work considered three basic examples of demand management:
  - Distance-based road user charging, such that all car journeys incur a charge that is proportional to the distance travelled (includes trunk and non-trunk roads)
  - **Cordon charges** around our Cities: a charge for driving into, out of, within or through Dundee, Perth and Stirling
  - Parking controls (which could be increased cost and/or reduced supply of publicly-controlled parking) in key centres (Dundee, Perth and Stirling, Arbroath, Carnoustie, Forfar and Montrose)
- 3.12 To enable a fair comparison between the equality and economic demand management options, plausible rates were set for price per mile / cordon charges / parking charges which would produce the same reduction in car km.

### Factors which influence the scale and location of impacts

- 3.13 In understanding the differing impacts of the demand management options on the distribution of trips, it is useful to note:
  - Distance based road user charging will affect all trips, including those that generate the most car km. Parking restraint measures will only affect that proportion of trips which end in our centres (and which the local authority has some influence over) whilst cordon charges will capture trips which end in or pass through a cordon. Parking and cordon charges will not necessarily capture the greater proportion of trips which generate the most car km
  - Most trips into our centres are from either inside or nearby the centre. One consequence of this is that measures targeted at our centres (e.g. cordon charges and parking restraints) will likely affect those that use

the centres the most. The greater proportion of our least affluent neighbourhoods are in or near our main centres.

- The effect of an additional parking or cordon charge will add a proportionally higher cost to a short trip compared to a long trip. Parking and cordon charges will therefore likely have a greater impact on short trips rather than longer trips.
- All rural trips, including those to the closest centre, will likely be longer than for those living in or near our urban centres
- 3.14 In understanding the impacts of demand management options on vulnerable groups, it is useful to note that whilst more affluent groups drive the most, it is likely that those vulnerable and least affluent groups which rely on the car are the most likely to be affected as a consequence of one or more of the following factors:
  - Cost / lack of alternative options(time/place)
  - Security
  - Physical ability
- 3.15 **Cost**: Car ownership for the lowest SIMD quintile remains low but those in that quintile that have access to a car or van are reliant on them. In the <u>quantitative public opinion</u> <u>surveys</u> undertaken for the RTS the lowest SIMD quintile stated a higher car dependency than the next three quintiles. This may be because this quintile is most likely to work at times / locations (including care work) where public transport is not available.



- 3.16 Increased costs of car use will mean users will prioritise trips. It is most likely that social and leisure trips will be affected the most, while work, education and essential shopping affected less. The quantitative public opinion surveys undertaken for the RTS demonstrate that all SIMD quintiles undertake a similar percentage of work and education trips. However, least affluent SIMD quintiles undertake less non-essential trips compared to more affluent groups.
- 3.17 **Security**: Some protected characteristic groups have an increased reliance on cars due to fear of crime on public transport. Increased costs could result in some trips (more likely social/leisure) not being made.
- 3.18 **Physical ability**: A proportion of people will consider that they cannot make their trip by any mode other than the car. This is affected not just by their ability to use public transport itself, but also the ability to get between the origin/destination and public transport
- 3.19 In addition, change is difficult for people. The ability to change will vary according to a number of factors, not least:
  - Financial opportunity: e.g. ability to pay for public transport when feel you also need to pay for a car

- Flexibility in lifestyle: ability to change where and when you travel. e.g. A shop or factory worker will have less flexibility about where and when to work as opposed to a professional working in an office
- Skills to adjust to new behaviours: e.g. using public transport instead of the car requires the ability to plan and make a multi-modal journey

#### Issues members may want to consider within a proposed workshop

- 3.20 Members may want to consider the following when reviewing the findings in the proposed workshop:
  - Which measure will have the greatest impact on reducing car km
  - Which measure will be most fair and equitable across society, taking into account the numbers and locations affected, and by what degree
  - Whether any reduction in car trips has resulted in a trip being made by an alternative mode, or whether the trip was not made or the function was not fulfilled
  - Which measures will likely have the greatest impact on trips into our centres
  - The revenue raising potential of a measure and the extent to which a scheme can help fund and be designed and include mitigation which reduces / negates the impact
  - Whilst the percentage of the more vulnerable in society which may be impacted negatively is likely to be small, it is vital that adverse impacts are minimised. Members will want to consider which groups in society are most likely to be adversely impacted and hence what considerations need to be taken into account in the design of a scheme and accompanying mitigation measures
  - There will be benefits of change (most likely to materialise in the longer term) and disbenefits (many more likely to be felt initially). It will be important to consider the net impact on people over both the short and long term.

### Feasibility

3.21 The analysis does not consider the feasibility – and costs – of introducing the demand management measures. It can reasonably be expected that increasing parking charges will be the easiest to introduce (technically and cost wise), whilst distance-based charges likely to require significant understanding of the technical feasibility and costs.

#### Potential Mitigation

- 3.22 The analysis has not considered the costs of appropriate mitigation packages. This stage of work is intended to help identify the potential problems – and allowing Partnership to discuss such – before identifying mitigation packages.
- 3.23 Identifying and understanding the scale, location, feasibility and phasing of any mitigation package in line with the phasing of any demand management scheme would be an essential element of any future phase of investigation.

- 3.24 A clear understanding of how any income is used will be essential for any scheme to be publicly acceptable. <u>Next steps</u>
- 3.25 It is suggested consideration of the issues raised above should inform a position statement to be considered by the Partnership meeting on 16 September 2025. This can inform the Partnership's discussion with Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government if required.
- 3.26 To this end, it is recommended that a workshop be held to allow Members to fully discuss the implications of the demand management options.

## 4 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The report has been prepared in consultation with the Local Authority transport officers.

## 5 **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

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

### 6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This purpose of this report is to consider the potential equality impacts of different demand management options which could help reduce car km.

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### <u>NOTE</u>

Background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report:

Report to Partnership RTP/24/32, 2024/25 Budget and Monitoring, 10 December 2024

Report to Partnership RTP/25/12, Directors' Report, 18 March 2025