

## TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

16 SEPTEMBER 2025

### REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY: DELIVERY UPDATE

#### REPORT BY SENIOR PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

##### Purpose

This report provides an update on progressing the delivery of the Tayside and Central Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

##### Summary

The report presents the RTS Annual Delivery Report 2024/25 and provides an update on steps to improve co-ordination of programmes and delivery of workstreams

## 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1.1 That the Partnership:

- (i) notes the RTS Delivery Progress Report 2024/25, included as Appendix A in the Members Area of the Tactran website; and
- (ii) notes progress in investigating opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness through co-ordination of programmes and resources.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 11 June 2024 the Partnership adopted the Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Strategy 2024-2034 (RTS) (Report RTP/24/12 refers).
- 2.2 The RTS identifies the strategic objectives, outcomes and targets which set out the shared aspirations of the regional partners. The delivery of the RTS is the responsibility of a range of partners and will need to be progressed via those partners' relevant delivery programmes.
- 2.3 Given the scale of the challenge, the limited finances and resources, and the urgency behind targets (especially the Climate Change targets), the RTS notes the following is required:
- **A step change** in delivery, requiring a change in how we do things
  - **Prioritising** those locations and populations where support is most required to achieve the adopted outcomes of the RTS
  - **Co-ordinating** work to provide integrated solutions which provide a realistic alternative to the car for the whole journey.

- 2.4 It was acknowledged that more resources would likely be required to achieve the national aspirations contained within the RTS. However, the RTS also noted that it would be necessary to demonstrate that Tactran and partners were maximising the effectiveness of existing resources, when it came to discussing additional help with the Scottish Government.
- 2.5 At its meeting on 9 September the Partnership requested a RTS Delivery Plan update every 6 months (Report RTP/24/22 refers).

### 3 DISCUSSION

#### Delivery Plan

- 3.1 Report RTP/25/07 noted that the Delivery Plan would be an organic document, needing updates as Partners developed their plans and programmes. Following publication of the draft Stirling Mobility Strategy, the Delivery Plan has been updated to reflect this document. The revised Delivery Plan is available in the members area of the Tactran website.

#### Delivery Report 2024/25

- 3.2 The Partnership Meeting of 18 March 2025 approved the reporting of delivery progress each year (report RTP/25/07 refers). Understanding delivery will assist members and officers in the review and setting of their respective programmes.
- 3.3 The RTS Delivery Report 2024/25 collates those actions undertaken by the constituent Councils which align with the locations and populations identified in the RTS and the RTS Delivery Plan where activity will likely have the biggest impacts on the adopted outcomes and targets.
- 3.4 The RTS Delivery Report 2024/25 is included as Appendix A in the Members area of the Tactran website. Table 1 below summarises delivery in 2024/25 which aligns with the RTS outcomes. A key consideration for Members and Officers is whether the actions are working towards a step change towards achieving the adopted targets.

**Table 1: RTS Delivery: 2024/25 Summary**

**Actions to take climate action**

- Progress in increasing electric vehicles in Council fleet and the introduction of public electric vehicle charging points
- Continued improvement of broadband connectivity across the region helps reduce the need to travel
- Some active travel improvements providing links to public transport interchanges (to enable transfer for longer distance trips) most notably the Arbroath Place for Everyone and Walk Cycle Live Stirling projects
- Partners are progressing work relating to the electrification of the rail network and improving Aberdeen – Central Belt capacity and reliability; understanding how car km could be reduced; improving

**Table 1: RTS Delivery: 2024/25 Summary**

Perth bus and rail stations and Broxden P&R/low carbon transport and travel hub

- No action to reduce freight mileage

**Actions to improve health and wellbeing**

- Speed limit reviews and introduction of local road safety schemes progressed by all four Councils
- Dundee Low Emission Zone introduced May 2024. Crieff AQMA revoked
- Arbroath Place for everyone in Angus and Walk Cycle Live Stirling and Fallin-NCN projects in Stirling provide links for poor health outcome areas. Dundee focus active travel programmes on the most 20% deprived datazones as defined by SIMD
- Little specific action by Councils to support access to healthcare, unless support for community transport and/or active travel routes provide links. Perth & Kinross Council undertook the Perth Rural Futures work to identify problems and opportunities for accessing healthcare with rural communities
- Continued delivery of NHS Tayside Journey Planner to assist visitor access
- Few projects improved access for least affluent communities to active leisure facilities or green space with exception of NCN1 improvements in Angus; Walk, Cycle Live Stirling (linking to Scottish Institute of Sport); and provision of new bus services into the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (when combined with connecting services)
- No specific actions to reduce the impact of traffic on communities on strategic routes

**Actions to reduce inequalities**

- A handful of projects targeted improving access for 18-24 yr olds to job, services and education. Those being continuation of MyD&A Journey Planner, the promotion of u22 travel (largely to schools); and Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling which provided links to Forth Valley College and Stirling University
- A number of active travel routes have been introduced which link least affluent communities to services and/or public transport links (Arbroath Places for everyone; Walk Cycle Live Stirling; Fallin-NCN link, Stirling; North Muirton, Perth and the majority active travel improvements in Dundee)
- Community transport services predominately operate in the rural areas, with a limited number operating in the Dundee, Montrose and Stirling urban areas. Continued support of DRT services in Angus, Perth & Kinross and Stirling. Although the number of DRT services in Stirling was reduced
- Little work on improving facilities for people with disabilities or improving security except where active travel or interchange work is ongoing and dropped kerb programmes

**Actions to help deliver sustainable, inclusive economic growth**

**Table 1: RTS Delivery: 2024/25 Summary**

- Continued progression of work on the three sustainable travel corridors in Dundee and Perth seeks to improve bus journey times/reliability. This work was complemented by the installation of bus signal priority measures on bus priority corridors in Perth and Dundee which allowed for advanced signal activation requests from buses
- Work on Swallow Roundabout, Dundee seeks to improve the reliability of journey time on A90
- Continued work by Network Rail to progress Aberdeen - Central Belt improvements

3.5 The Delivery Progress Report 2024/25 suggests that there are likely too few projects targeted at the locations and populations (as identified in the RTS Delivery Plan) required to support the objectives and outcomes of the RTS. In noting this, the following factors should be taken into account:

- Resources will mean a limited number of activities can be undertaken by any one authority
- Councils will have priorities for interventions that extend beyond the outcomes and targets adopted in the RTS. The above does not represent all the transport and access related interventions undertaken by the Councils in 2024/25
- All Funding opportunities do not align with RTS objectives
- The RTS Delivery Plan was first approved by the Partnership meeting of September 2024. Most projects and initiatives delivered 2024/25 would have been initiated before then. Conversely, the majority of the RTS outcomes and targets are based on national objectives and targets which have been in place for a number of years.

3.6 Nonetheless, the Report continues to highlight the gap between delivery and the likely achievement of the adopted targets/outcomes. It therefore continues to emphasise the scale of change that is required.

3.7 To improve alignment and co-ordination, the RTS Senior Officer Delivery Group are considering opportunities to align programmes against objectives and co-ordinating delivery to deliver integrated solutions.

### **Outcome Monitoring Reports**

3.8 The Partnership noted the intention that an outcome monitoring update is provided to the Partnership every two years (report RTP/25/07 refers). Given the last reporting on outcomes was included in the RTS in 2024, it is proposed that the next reporting on outcomes is presented in 2026.

### **RTS Delivery Board**

3.9 Recognising that delivery of the RTS requires action across a wide range of Partners beyond the Councils, the Partnership endorsed the principle of an RTS

Delivery Board to assist with the prioritisation and co-ordination of activities across the wider group of RTS partners.

- 3.10 The Partnership Board noted that Tactran and the Councils should attempt to make progress regarding prioritisation and co-ordination prior to then co-ordinating activity with others.
- 3.11 Given that discussions are ongoing with the RTS Senior Officer Delivery Group about how best to co-ordinate activity, the establishment of the RTS Delivery Board has been delayed. Nonetheless, contact is being made with relevant organisations to invite and introduce them to the process.
- 3.12 Staffing shortages on the strategy side of Tactran over the last 12 months have not aided the pace of progress on this matter.

### **Resourcing**

- 3.13 The issue of sufficient resources to deliver the national and local aspirations was one that was central to shaping the RTS. Indeed, at the heart of the prioritisation / co-ordination / monitoring processes is the objective to demonstrate the gap between aspirations and the best we can do with existing resources.
- 3.14 The Partnership considered the RTS Improvement Programme which identified those new actions required to reduce risks to delivering the RTS (report RTP/25/07 refers). The RTS Senior Officer Delivery Group have agreed leads for the specific actions in the Improvement Programme. Inevitably, there are actions for which resources are not currently aligned. The Senior Officer Group have therefore discussed collaborative actions and resourcing.
- 3.15 The RTS Senior Officer Group have agreed to investigate opportunities for collaborative arrangements which could assist in improving efficiency and delivery. Tactran officers are also working with Stirling Council officers regarding how best to support the Council within the Forth Valley context. Any opportunities identified by the Senior Officer Group in both cases will be carefully explored further by the respective authorities.
- 3.16 With regard to actions within the Delivery Plan and accompanying Improvement Programme, Tactran's resources have – since 2013/14 – continually diminished as income has not increased despite costs increasing. This issue is considered in a separate paper to this Partnership meeting on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (see Item 4).

## **4 CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Delivery Plan work informs the role of Tactran in supporting regional partners in delivering regional priorities. The consequences of this are reflected in the Tactran Medium Term Financial Plan being considered at this Partnership Meeting.

## **6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment and no major issues have been identified. The process of developing a RTS will include the following impact assessments:
- Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqIA)
  - Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)
  - Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (HIIA)
- 6.2 The requirements of the Fairer Scotland Duty have been met through the EqIA, CRWIA and HIIA processes included within the Integrated Impact Assessment.

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### **NOTE**

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

Reports to Partnership RTP/24/12, Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Strategy: Adoption and RTP/24/13 Develop to Deliver Refresh, 11 June 2024

Report to Partnership RTP/24/22 Regional Transport Strategy: Delivery Plan, 10 September 2024

Report to Partnership RTP/24/36 Director’s Report, 10 December 2024

Report to Partnership RTP/25/07 Regional Transport Strategy: Delivery Plan Update, 18 March 2025