

## **TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**

Minute of Meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership held in Council Chambers, 2 High Street, Perth on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 11am.

Present: Councillors Kevin Cordell and Siobhan Tolland (Dundee City Council); Depute Provost Andrew Parrott and Councillors Richard Watters (Perth & Kinross Council); Councillor Jim Thomson (Stirling Council); Amy McDonald, Bryan Doyle and Alan Stewart (Members).

In Attendance: M Speed (Director); J Padmore, J Cooper, M Smith, K Ewan and A Roger (Tactran); M Robertson (Angus Council); J Mullen (Dundee City Council); S Hendry (Secretary), J Salisbury and N Sworowski (Perth & Kinross Council); D Hopper and E Williamson (Stirling Council); D Jamieson (Audit Scotland); L Hamilton (NHS Tayside); Duncan Henderson (member of public).

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Brenda Durno and Ronnie Proctor (Angus Council); Councillor Alasdair Tollemache (Stirling Council).

Depute Provost Andrew Parrott, Chair, Presiding

The Chair requested a nomination for Deputy Chair, there were no nominations so will consider at a future meeting.

The Director advised that following an interview by the Executive Committee, the position of a non-Councillor Board member had been offered to D Henderson. The Director further advised that he has written to the Cabinet Secretary to seek approval for D Henderson to be appointed to the Board.

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 16 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The minutes of meeting of the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership of 16 September 2025 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **3. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS STATEMENT**

There was submitted an Outstanding Business Statement by the Director (RTP/25/40) setting out the status of outstanding decisions of Partnership.

#### **Resolved:**

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

**4. DRAFT AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2024/25 AND DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TACTRAN AND THE CONTROLLER OF AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

There was submitted a report by the Treasurer and Director (RTP/25/41) presenting the Partnership's 2024/25 Audited Annual Accounts (unsigned) in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

J Salisbury introduced the report and provided an update and advised that the audit will be unqualified.

D Jamieson from Audit Scotland advised audit opinion is unqualified and no significant findings from the audit.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To note the contents of Audit Scotland's Draft Annual Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2025, as attached at Appendix 2;
- (ii) To approve the 2024/25 Audited Annual Accounts at Appendix 3 and to authorise the Partnership Chair, Director and Treasurer to sign them; and
- (iii) To authorise the Treasurer to sign the Letter of Representation as attached at Appendix 4.

**5. TACTRAN ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

There was submitted a report by the Director (RTP/25/42) introducing the Tactran Annual Report for 2024/25.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To consider and approve for publication and submission to Scottish Ministers the Tactran Annual Report for 2024/25.

**6. 2025/26 BUDGET AND MONITORING**

There was submitted a joint report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/43) providing a monitoring update on the Partnership's Revenue and Capital expenditure and seeking the Partnership's approval of a revised 2025/26 RTS Revenue Programme.

A McDonald said it was a good report and demonstrated a positive position and asked if the proposal to use £4k from reserves to cover overspend in staff costs was allowed. J Salisbury confirmed that reserves could be used for this purpose.,

Councillor Thomson asked if the Westminster budget and 3p per mile on electric vehicles would be considered in future work? The Director confirmed once details were confirmed, it would be incorporated into the car Km reduction work.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To note the position regarding Core Revenue expenditure as at 14 November 2025 as detailed in Appendix A;

- (ii) To agree to the virement of £15,358 from the Climate Change Budget heading to the Development of RTS and Delivery Plan budget heading to support monitoring and reporting activity;
- (iii) To note progress and to approve a revised 2025/26 RTS Revenue Programme and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendices B;
- (iv) To note progress on the 2025/26 Active and Sustainable Travel Behaviour Change, People and Place and MaaS Grants and related expenditure as discussed within the report and detailed in Appendix C; and
- (v) To agree to delegate authority to approve the use of the remaining Contingency budget in the RTS Revenue Programme budget to the Partnership Director and Treasurer.

## 7. 2026/27 CORE REVENUE BUDGET AND RESERVES POLICY

There was submitted a report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/44) seeking the Partnership's approval of a proposed 2026/27 Core Revenue Budget and re-approval of the Reserves Policy.

A McDonald said there is a lot of risk associated with changes in partner funding, and whilst agreed the report in principle asked for an update on the discussions with the partner organisations. J Salisbury confirmed budget delayed due to Westminster budget delays and in terms of partner discussions, these have been held with Finance Officers and have been positive with 3 out of the 4 partners agreeing to put the funding change requests forward for consideration.

Councillor Thomson noted Stirling Council is facing a deficit and queried why Tactran is able to grow when councils cannot. He highlighted the significance of a £10k funding increase and asked whether Tactran's Reserves should be increased given ongoing uncertainty. He added that additional staff is not feasible for councils and questioned whether Tactran should add extra staff. The Chair confirmed other partner councils are in similar financial circumstances and noted Tactran has not requested a funding increase for 12 years. He stated the current request is aligned to agreed programmes of work with each council and is therefore necessary rather than discretionary. J Salisbury emphasised that while all councils face funding deficits, Tactran is not seeking to expand headcount; instead, it is being asked to deliver more outputs. Staff costs have significantly increased and, unlike councils, Tactran does not receive additional in year funding uplifts to meet these pressures. Regarding reserves, Local Authorities typically hold 2–4%, whereas Tactran's 3–5% range is considered sufficient and an increase in reserves could only be achieved through planned underspend. The policy can be adjusted if members prefer.

### **Resolved:**

- (i) To approve the proposed 2026/27 Core Revenue Budget as detailed in Appendix A to the report;
- (ii) To requests that partner Councils make provision for their proposed respective funding contributions within their 2026/27 Revenue Budgets;

- (iii) To agree to receive a report with a finalised 2026/27 Core Revenue Budget and proposed 2026/274 Regional Transport Strategy Revenue Programme Budget at its next meeting; and
- (iv) To note the estimated Reserves balance at 1 April 2026; and
- (v) Re-approve the Tactran Reserves Policy as set out in Appendix B.

## **8. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

There was submitted a report by the Director and Treasurer (RTP/25/45) asking the Partnership to note the Medium-Term Financial Plan request for funding from partner Local Authorities.

The Director advised that he is happy to delve deeper into the MTFP with any Board member outside of the meeting if desired.

A McDonald commended the report for clearly outlining the risks. She noted that staffing levels are already tight and cannot be reduced further but expressed support for progressing with recruitment to the Senior Strategy Manager post. She queried whether any staff are on temporary contracts, given that staff costs account for 85% of expenditure. The Director confirmed that all staff are on permanent contracts, with one vacancy intended to be advertised in the new year. There are two secondments funded through the People and Place Programme, which are reviewed every six months. There is a 1.8 recharge arrangement in place for permanent staff members to facilitate MaaS and the People and Place programme.

A McDonald noted that if the funding issue is not addressed for the longer term, this would threaten the ability of the Partnership to fulfil its functions.

The Chair highlighted that Tactran is one of the smaller RTPs, but all RTPs face similar challenges. As the representative on the National Transport Strategy Board, he will use that platform to raise awareness of the issues affecting RTPs.

### **Resolved:**

- (i) To note the Medium-Term Financial Plan; and
- (ii) To remit Tactran officers to request funding proposal for the next five years to be considered in each of the partner Local Authorities budget.

## **9. SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT SUMMARY**

There was submitted a joint report by the Projects and Programme Manager (RTP/25/46) providing a summary of Social Return on Investment (SROI) and its potential for application to Tactran as an evaluation tool. The tool would be demonstrated and applied in the first instance to the People and Place Programme (P&P). The inclusion of such a measure has been highlighted as a desirable outcome, allowing for the wider social and community benefits to be identified and presented on a consistent basis.

A McDonald praised the strength of the figures in the paper, particularly regarding isolation and employment, and asked how these were calculated. J

Cooper explained that the figures are cumulative and noted that the process was based on substantial research analysis and surveys on current projects. He plans to provide more detail at the upcoming workshop and confirmed he is happy to share further information. A McDonald requested that this be provided.

The Chair noted that he hoped this tool would help identify priority areas for future focus.

Councillor Watters welcomed the report and noted the value going forward is very helpful and asked for clarification on scope. J Cooper advised that scope covers individual projects as well as larger projects under People and Place Programme.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To note the potential application of SROI analysis; and
- (ii) To approve and are invited to participate in a workshop specifically discussing SROI as a measure of societal impacts and the potential benefit of such an indicator.

**10. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN**

There was submitted a report by the Transport Strategy Officer (RTP/25/47). The Scottish Government issued a consultation draft Climate Change Plan on 7 November 2025, with responses sought by 29 January 2026. This report provides a response to that consultation.

Councillor Thomson asked whether increased parking charges for SUVs is something Tactran should consider. K Ewan confirmed that this is not a proposal in the draft plan but acknowledged it is being discussed by some Local Authorities across the country. J Padmore noted that it is unlikely car kilometre reductions will be achieved without demand management measures. One demand management option could be parking charges. If Councils choose to use parking charges to discourage car use then they may consider different parking charges for different vehicles.

**Resolved:**

- (i) Note the updates relating to the content of the draft Climate Change Plan; and
- (ii) Agree the response to the draft Climate Change Plan consultation as included in paragraphs 3.1 - 3.40.

**11. PEOPLE AND PLACE PROGRAMME 2026/27**

There was submitted a report by the Projects and Programme Manager (RTP/25/48) noting proposals for the Tactran People and Place programme for 2026/27. The report asks the Partnership to note the programme structure, approve the process for delivery partner engagement, and to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to approve programme application to Transport Scotland, expected prior to the March 2026 Partnership Board.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To note the intended submissions to Transport Scotland as outlined in paragraph 3.5 parts (a) and (c) for the continued operation of the Tactran People and Place programme, in line with updated guidance from Transport Scotland; and
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Tactran Executive Committee to confirm and approve the proposed submission to Transport Scotland in line with the TS deadline of the 30 January 2026, being prior to the March 2026 Partnership Meeting.

**12. DIRECTORS REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director (RTP/25/49) providing updates on RTP Chairs meeting of 3 September; the submission of the Public Sector Climate Change Duties for 2024/25; bus initiatives update; consultation responses to the respective stages of the Local Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority and Cairngorms National Park Authority Local Development Plan processes; and the update on the lease for the Tactran office.

**Resolved:**

- (i) To note the discussions held at the RTP Chairs meeting of 3 September 2025;
- (ii) To note the Public Sector Climate Change Duties submission for 2024/25;
- (iii) To note the Bus Initiatives update;
- (iv) To note the consultation responses to the respective stages of the Local Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority and Cairngorms National Park Authority Local Development Plan processes; and
- (v) To notes the update on the lease for the Tactran office.

**13. MEMBERS ISSUES AND AOCB**

None.

**14. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – via MS Teams  
16<sup>th</sup> June 2026 – via MS Teams  
15<sup>th</sup> September 2026 – in Person  
15<sup>th</sup> December 2026 – via MS Teams