

## **REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE - 22 AUGUST 2019**

### **ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL STRATEGIC TRANSPORT APPRAISAL: OUTCOME OF OPTION GENERATION AND SIFTING**

#### **1 Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1.1 Approve the outcomes of the option generation and sifting process presented in the Appendix to this report, and advise the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee of the approval, if given; and**
- 1.2 Instruct Officers to continue to update this Committee via appropriate reports or briefings as the appraisal work progresses through the next appraisal stages.**

#### **2 Background/Discussion**

- 2.1** The Aberdeen City Region Deal was approved in October 2016. One commitment within the deal was funding to complete a Strategic Transport Appraisal. The scope of the work focussed on a twenty year view of the transport requirements of the region; building on recently completed or committed schemes (such as full opening of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and improvements to local rail infrastructure); addressing issues at key gateways into Aberdeen; enabling safe reliable and attractive connections along key strategic corridors; tying together transport infrastructure, planning and economic development goals; and facilitating Aberdeen's City Centre Masterplan.
- 2.2** An outline business case was approved for the execution of the Strategic Transport Appraisal, which was agreed by this Committee and the City Region Deal Joint Committee in November 2017. Work has focussed on updating the regional transport and land use model and using the revised model to complete a cumulative transport assessment of the Strategic Development Plan. Problems and opportunities have been reviewed, and transport planning objectives have been set and agreed (June 2018). The most recent phase of the work has focussed on generating a range of options which have the potential to address the objectives that have been set, taking into account stakeholder views, previous and ongoing work, and best practice.
- 2.3** The option appraisal work is being undertaken in parallel (and interactively) with the following:
  - 1)** The development of a revised Regional Transport Strategy, being led by Nestrans;
  - 2)** Submission and examination of the Strategic Development Plan;

- 3) Development of the Local Development Plans;
- 4) Delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy; and
- 5) Completion of a number of existing transport project appraisals and studies, including work on Fraserburgh-Peterhead-Ellon to Aberdeen; A956 Wellington Road; City Roads Hierarchy and Low Emission Zone and the A947 route action plan.

2.4 A draft of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) was launched on 31 July 2019 for a 12 week consultation period. The key policy directions contained in this document reflect much of what we have in our adopted Local and Regional Transport Strategies. The proposed consultation response to the Draft NTS will be brought back to this Committee on 3 October 2019.

### **Option Generation and Sifting Work**

2.5 The Consultants retained to progress this work, Jacobs, undertook the option generation and sifting work, as a continuation to their earlier work considering transport problems, opportunities and objectives. A summary of the outcomes of this work are presented in the **Appendix** to this report. The full report is being made available to view on the Nestrans website at [www.nestrans.org.uk](http://www.nestrans.org.uk)

2.6 The work included the following stages:

- 1) A review of relevant previous and ongoing work to understand transport options that are already under active consideration;
- 2) Three option generation workshops (Council Officers, External Stakeholders, Elected Members) held between November 2018 and February 2019; and
- 3) A sifting exercise focussing on whether the generated options were considered to be strategic and in scope for the study; whether they could meet the Transport Planning Objectives that have been established; and whether there were any significant feasibility/deliverability issues.

2.7 At this stage of the process, the focus is on selecting a range of possible options, the subsequent testing of which then helps to inform and justify the selection of the most likely package of measures for the next 20 years.

2.8 The outcome of the work is a list of 42 separate options which have been recommended for further development and appraisal. Contained in the list, there are a range of policy ideas, road/bus/rail/active travel suggestions, and technological interventions. Officers are content that the list represents the range of options that are worthy of future development, capturing both the most appropriate approaches currently under consideration, but also recognising new opportunities and the ambition required to respond to future challenges.

- 2.9 A particular focus will be required on the different delivery pathways for these emerging options, including relationships between policy, delivery and funding, at the national, regional and local levels. In turn, this also requires consideration of the relationships with economic goals, land use development plans, and wider network objectives (including safety, network efficiency, social goals, and environmental impact). Accordingly, it is anticipated that this work will be valuable in its widest context in informing the next Regional and Local Transport Strategies, and input to the consultation on the NTS.
- 2.10 A smaller subset of the list of options (ie those which relate to specific regional strategic project proposals) will be most relevant in the context of delivery of projects through the City Region Deal or the Councils'/Nestrans Capital Plans; and also promotion through the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review.

### **Next Steps**

- 2.11 The full opening of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route is now changing traffic levels and trip making patterns across parts of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The current version of the regional transport and land use model (ASAM) has provided forecasts of these changes, but now requires to be recalibrated to reflect the actual changes that have occurred. This involves a comprehensive data collection and collation exercise, and a re-basing of the model and forecasts. Using City Region Deal funding, Nestrans have commissioned consultants Systra to undertake this work. This work is being over-seen by the City Region Deal Transport Working Group, which includes Nestrans, Transport Scotland, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and the Strategic Development Planning Authority. The work complements more localised city centre modelling effort focussed on Aberdeen City Centre and a future Low Emissions Zone.
- 2.12 It is planned that work will also shortly be commissioned to undertake an initial appraisal of the long list of options that are presented within this report. This work is required to enable progression of the Regional Transport Strategy (anticipated draft for consultation late 2019/early 2020), provide continued support for the area's Development Plans, and provide an informed feed into the national Strategic Transport Projects Review. This work will identify the broad costs, positive and negative impacts across a range of appraisal criteria, and consider deliverability issues, and how different elements may work best as part of packages. Funded by the City Region Deal, this work will be commissioned by Nestrans, providing a focus for the schemes that will help to address the region's future transport requirements. Reflecting the proposals set out the Strategic Transport Appraisal Outline Business Case, it is intended that this will be tendered shortly for substantial completion within the current calendar year.
- 2.13 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Their comments are incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

### **3 Scheme of Governance**

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item of in terms of Section F1.1.f of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance

### **4 Implications and Risk**

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report presented does not have a differential impact on persons with protected characteristics. The study undertaken is at a high level and is intended to give rise to developing future strategic projects which will be subject to equalities impact assessments as they are brought forward.
- 4.2 There are no direct staffing and financial implications at this time and any financial implications which become evident during the option appraisal will be reported to the Committee where appropriate. The current and next stages of the Strategic Transport Appraisal work is fully funded through the City Region Deal subject to approval by Transport Scotland at key gateway stages.
- 4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
- 4.4 ACORP006 Reputation Management

The City Region Deal is a high-profile programme and there is a risk of expectations of delivery on the transport element may be unable to be fulfilled in the timescales available or for other reasons such as finance. It will be necessary to continue to manage expectations by being transparent and open about the process and by maintaining integrity by following nationally recognised assessment processes.

- 4.5 ACORP 010 Environmental Challenge

There is increasing recognition of the impact of climate change and the importance of transportation as a contributor and requiring adaptation to deal with climate change. There is a risk that projects coming forward as priorities may not accord with environmental priorities or changes in Government approaches (e.g. a moratorium on road building or investment) and so may not be able to be progressed. As part of the next stage of appraisal the fit with emerging National Transport Strategy will be considered as part of the identification of projects.

- 4.6 ACORP 002 Changes in Government Policy, Legislation and Regulation

The Transport (Scotland) Bill is currently progressing through Parliament alongside a new Planning Bill which will both impact on future priorities for strategic transport. The work undertaken to date has taken the emerging themes, priorities and likely impacts into account – for instance the introduction of Low Emission Zones in Aberdeen.

There is also a risk of a change in approach to City Region or growth deals and the approach to funding which could impact on how future projects are progressed. However, at this stage, there is no indication of any changes that would have a significant impact.

- 4.7 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:
- 4.8 ISSR003 City Region Deal – Unexpected events or changes in government may impact on the delivery of the Deal.

As noted above there is no indication of change in government policy or approach but we continue to liaise closely with the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland and progress the work in line with current policy and guidance while being mindful of changes as they emerge.

- 4.9 ISSR004 Climate Change – As noted above.
- 4.10 A Town Centre Impact Assessment was not carried out as the proposals at this stage will not have a direct impact on town centres although individual projects arising for this work will be assessed at the point of being developed.

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Report prepared by Paul Finch, Strategic Transportation Project Manager  
6 August 2019





**Table 1 - Breakdown of Option Types**

Types of Options (based on breakout table modes)	No. of Options
Active Travel	31
Public Transport and Freight	27
Roads	17
Technology/Behaviour	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>

The options list then underwent a second review to further package and consolidate options, and resulted in 51 options being retained to progress into the option sifting stage.

#### 1.4 Option Sifting

The option sifting, to qualitatively gauge the performance of each option against the criteria shown in Figure 1, was then undertaken using a multi-step process. The key steps involved were as follows:

1. Sifting out of options which were not within scope – i.e. options which are not considered strategic (given the strategic nature of the study)
2. Sifting out of options which do not provide at least a minor contribution to one or more of the 6 study objectives
3. Sense check of any options which are out with the region (given the regionally specific nature of the study)
4. Sifting out of options that presented any model issues – under the headings of:
  - a. Ownership – who is likely to have responsibility in the delivery and maintenance of the option, such as public or private sectors, or a mixture of both, and whether there is likely to be insurmountable issues with this meaning an option must be sifted out;
  - b. Operations – to what extent does the option affect the operation of the existing transport network, and will it cause any operational issues that may cause it to be undeliverable, and as such should be sifted out; and / or,
  - c. Packaging - is the option able to be delivered on its own, or would it be more successful if delivered as a package with other options. This was not used to sift out options but rather reduce the overall number of options through consolidation.
5. Sifting out of options which are ‘showstoppers’ - i.e. are unlikely to be deliverable

The sifting process outlined above resulted in the retention of a total of 42 options, as identified in Table 2.

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**Table 2 - Summary of Retained Options**

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Active Travel	Upgrade existing routes and develop a network of high quality and safe active travel routes across the region	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	Option is likely to require TS to act as National Lead, with responsibility for development and delivery most likely to be through the RTS and LTS.
2	Active Travel	Increase the provision and quality of active travel facilities across the Region	✓✓	○	✓	○	✓	✓✓	This option is recommended to progress to the RTS as it has positive benefits for both local and regional aspects of the active travel network in the North East.
3	Active Travel	Implement a regional cycle hire scheme	✓✓	○	✓	✓	✓	○	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS due to the cumulative positive impact at the local level leading to a greater impact at regional level.
4	Active Travel	Continue development and roll out of Regional Active Travel Promotion Strategy with innovative awareness campaigns and incentives to encourage people to travel by active modes	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS due to the cumulative positive impact at the local level leading to a greater impact at regional level; and potential delivery as part of a national active travel promotional strategy.
5	Bus	Implement BRT/Bus Priority schemes which improve bus service journey times and reliability on key corridors in the City and Towns in the Region	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	This option is recommended to be considered for the RTS. This option is likely to have positive benefits to journey time and journey time reliability for both local and regional bus services in Aberdeen City and towns across the region.
6	Bus	Consider future ownership/regulation/partnership models for buses - working with North East Bus Alliance	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	○	This option is recommended to be Progressed Elsewhere - Scottish Government - as it requires legislation change at Scottish Government level to give provisions for Local Authorities to implement new ownership/regulation models for bus services. The potential policy/legal challenges and the acceptability issues may mean Showstoppers.

Option Generation & Sifting: Executive Summary

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	Bus	Demand Responsive Services	✓✓✓	✓	○	✓	✓✓	○	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS to build on current experience in the region. Considered as having a regional level of impact due to the cumulative positive impacts across the towns and city, and also likely to have a positive impact on equality.
8	Freight	Development of an integrated, multimodal network of freight hubs across the Region	○	✓✓✓	✓	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended to be considered in both STPR2 and the RTS as implementation should be progressed at national and regional levels to positively influence the logistics chain, ensure consistency across regions, and optimise 'Hub' locations.
9	Freight	Review provision of Rest Stops on trunk roads and key freight routes for HGVs	○	✓	✓	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended to be considered in both STPR2 and the RTS due to the positive impact it should have on both national and regional freight traffic, the need for consistency across the regions and to optimise rest stop locations.
10	Freight	Improve road access to all regional ports	○	✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended to be considered in STPR2 and the RTS due to the significant contribution the region's ports have at the national level. Links to the Northern Isles will also presumably inform the national Ferries Plan work.
11	Policy	Use price mechanisms to manage demand	○	○	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	○	Recommended to be considered in STPR2 given there are tools within this option that would impact across the trunk road network as well as at the regional and local level.
12	Policy	Revised approach to Development Planning Policy	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS, in conjunction with Local and Regional Planning Bodies, as it should take into account the local and regional planning considerations that are specific to the North East, in order to create a new approach to transport in development planning policy.
13	Policy	Maintain and expand routes* and destinations (domestic and international) served by Aberdeen International Airport <small>*Note: scope of STPR2 extends only to domestic air routes.</small>	○	✓✓	○	○	○	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS given the importance of air travel to the region. It is also recommended for consideration STPR2, however it is noted the scope of STPR2 only extends to domestic air routes.
14	Policy	Maintain and enhance maritime services serving Aberdeen, and connections to Orkney and Shetland	✓	✓✓	○	○	○	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS given the regional importance of ferry routes to the NE region, the national importance of the connecting services to the Northern Isles and the potential for expansion of the visitor cruise ship market.

Option Generation & Sifting: Executive Summary

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
15	Public Transport	Provision of high quality Park and Ride and multimodal interchange facilities, and supporting services	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended to be considered in both STPR2 and RTS as park and ride sites exist (and new ones as part of this intervention) on regional and nationally significant routes (i.e. rail network/stations, intercity bus services).
16	Public Transport	Improved marketing, information and digital connectivity (on and off) Public Transport services	✓✓	✓	○	○	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as it involves increasing provision of public transport information across modes. This is not restricted to services within the North East region so should be considered at a national level to take into account regional and cross-border services, consistency of standards, hardware, comms etc.
17	Public Transport	Introduce new fares model for public transport (potentially linked to MaaS)	✓✓	✓✓	○	○	✓✓	○	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as it involves the integration of tickets across modes, simplification of fare structures across modes/services that are not restricted to the North East region, as well as regional specific services.
18	Public Transport	Development of fully integrated public transport services across the region, including timetabling and multimodal interchanges/attractors	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention involves improving timetable integration between all modes (bus, rail, ferry and air) within the North East, other regions, Nationally and Internationally
19	Public Transport	Timetable and capacity enhancements to deliver faster/more frequent services on core corridors	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	○	✓✓✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention involves improving timetable and capacity enhancements to bus and rail services within the North East and extending to other regions in Scotland (and to England for cross-border bus and rail services).
20	Public Transport	Light Rail/Tram	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	Recommended for consideration in the RTS as similar examples of Fastlink (Glasgow) and Tram (Edinburgh).
21	Public Transport	Improve City Centre connections between Bus and Rail Stations	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended to be considered in the RTS as the intervention is of Regional significance and likely be delivered at this level.
22	Public Transport	Public Transport Connections to Airport	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	This option is recommended to be considered in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would have regional and national importance - both for staff working at the airport, and for domestic/international air journeys

Option Generation & Sifting: Executive  
Summary

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
23	Rail	Expand the rail network in the North East (to the benefit of both Passenger and Freight users) via new and/or reinstated railway lines	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would likely have implications on across the wider national rail network, as well as the rail network within the region.
24	Rail	New Local Rail Stations on existing local routes	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would likely have implications on across the wider national rail network, as well as the rail network within the region.
25	Rail	Improve Strategic Inter-City Rail Connections	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would likely have implications on across the wider national rail network, as well as the rail network within the region.
26	Road	A90/A952 Upgrade Ellon to Peterhead/Fraserburgh	○	✓✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would involve changes to the trunk road network between Aberdeen and Fraserburgh - a key corridor for commuter, freight and strategic movements - therefore of regional and national significance.
27	Road	A90 Upgrade south of Aberdeen to Dundee (including the Kingsway)	○	✓✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS as the intervention would involve changes the trunk road network to the south of Aberdeen - a key corridor for commuter, freight and strategic movements - therefore of regional and national significance.
28	Road	North/North West Radial Route Action Plans	○	✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS as the North/North West radial routes perform a regionally significant function.
29	Road	Western Radial Routes Action Plans	○	✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in the RTS as these routes perform a regionally significant function.
30	Road	Route Action Plan on former A90/newly designated A92 between Blackdog and Stonehaven following AWPR completion	○	✓✓	○	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended for consideration in both STPR2 and the RTS because of the significant role this section of the A90/newly designated A92 has at a regional and national level on access (for example, the Dee and Don crossings, and access to Aberdeen).

Option Generation & Sifting: Executive Summary

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
31	Road	Consolidated Asset Management and Prioritisation System	○	✓✓	✓	○	○	✓✓✓	This option is recommended as part of the RTS as it is largely the remit of Local Authorities to maintain transport infrastructure (excl. for example Trunk Roads and Rail Network). This could however be incorporated into a National Asset Management and Prioritisation System, therefore, is also recommended for consideration in STPR2.
32	Road	Introduce 20mph zones	✓	○	✓✓	○	○	✓✓	This option is recommended to be included as part of the RTS as it takes a region-specific approach to implementing 20mph speed limits, although it is likely to have positive impacts at the local level.
33	Technology	ITS to manage vehicle entry to lanes and zones based on vehicle types, time of day, real-time emissions and congestion levels	✓	✓	✓✓	○	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended to be considered in the RTS as aspects of it are region-specific and would need to be administered by the Local Authorities. Aspects would most likely be implemented on key access routes to the city and larger towns, and is likely to affect local and regional movements.
34	Technology	Wayfinding App for Tourists	✓	○	✓	○	○	✓	This option has been recommended to be considered in the RTS as it should consider the local and regional visitor hotspots and linking them with transport routes to create the trails.
35	Technology	Implement new technologies strategy for the region, across modes	✓✓	○	✓✓✓	○	✓	✓	This option has been recommended for consideration in STPR and the RTS as it should consider the local and regional needs and benefits of such technology, as well as consider local knowledge/research (e.g. alternative energy & fuels - Hydrogen) which could assist in the delivery of new technologies across the region. At the national level this should consider for example the impact of alternative fuels including Hydrogen for ferries, and the need for consistency of standards and optimisation of a national network of charging/fuelling stations.
36	Technology	Enhance network monitoring capability to collect real-time user information across all modes, to input to journey planning tools and real-time network management	✓	✓✓	✓	○	✓✓	✓	This option is recommended to be progressed to the RTS as it is a regional-based system. It could however complement a National Monitoring System
37	Technology	Policy support for a digital working strategy (including Broadband Connectivity Improvements) for the region to reduce peak-time travel, and	○	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	This option is recommended to be progressed to the RTS as it is seen as a key option in influencing travel decisions and expanding travel choices. Not by itself a direct transport function or responsibility but will have a significant part to play in the future development of the region.

Option Generation & Sifting: Executive Summary

Summary Table of Recommended Options									
No	Type	Option Name	Transport Planning Objectives						Rationale for Outcome
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
		encourage communities to develop potential working hubs							Also needs close engagement with Scottish Government on broadband connectivity roll-out programmes.
38	Technology	Promotion of shared mobility services, including car clubs and facilitation of MaaS (mobility-as-a-service) providers	✓✓	✓✓	✓	○	✓✓	○	This option is recommended for consideration the RTS and Progress Elsewhere - NTS. The North East is already investigating MaaS Technology, however it is considered that Scottish Government/Transport Scotland would need to take a national lead on MaaS Technology, and examine the impacts (may be positive and/or negative) from a transport perspective.
39	Various	Infrastructure measures to complement City centre Masterplan proposals	✓✓	○	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	This option has been recommended to be progressed to the RTS and Progress Elsewhere - CCMP - as it identifies interventions which mainly have a local focus, with regional benefits.
40	Various	Improved access to healthcare strategy	✓✓	○	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	This option has been recommended to be considered both in the RTS and 'Progress Elsewhere'. - The RTS should consider the healthcare needs across the region, the different levels of care and emergency provision, and the catchments served; and - Progress Elsewhere which references working with NHS and Third Sector Partners
41	Various	Programme of access for all improvements at all key public transport points, and within urban areas, to benefit those who may have mobility impairment	✓✓✓	○	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	This option has been recommended to be considered in the RTS to improve the local and regional mobility access, ensure consistency across the region in terms of implementation and provision.
42	Funding	Local Transport Funding	✓✓	✓	○	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	This option has been recommended to be considered in the RTS and also Progress Elsewhere - Scottish Government, LTS - as it consists of funding mechanisms that may be specifically tied to development planning, and what provisions may or may not be contained in the Planning Bill. - It would also be for the relevant authorities to consider and implement as a 'ring-fenced' funding stream. - Would require legislation to Progress Elsewhere - Scottish Government - and acceptability barriers may be Showstoppers for this option.