

## REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 26 NOVEMBER 2020

### STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

#### 1 Reason for Report/Summary

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with updates on transportation projects across Aberdeenshire for the period between July 2020 and November 2020.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the progress made with projects, activities and developments taken forward by Nestrans, external agencies and stakeholders as outlined in the report; and**
- 2.2 Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) as appropriate; and**
- 2.3 Consider and approve the submission of the consultation response to the Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 consultation.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Attached to this report as **Appendix 1** is the LTS Action Update covering the period from July 2020 to November 2020. This shows progress made against identified categories, i.e. Travel Actively and Travel Effectively.
- 3.2 This report is brought to the Infrastructure Services Committee at every second meeting in order to provide timely updates on progress and allow appropriate decisions to be taken.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 Since the last report to Infrastructure Services Committee on 20 August 2020 (Item 7), the Nestrans Board met virtually on 16 September. The approved minutes of the meeting and a video recording can be accessed at:

<https://www.nestrans.org.uk/about-nestrans/board-meetings-2/>

- 4.2 Electric Vehicle usage is increasing across Aberdeenshire with the number of charging sessions exceeding 2019 rates for July, August and September. Due to the high cost of electricity and maintenance, the recovery of costs for charge points was approved by Infrastructure Service Committee on 28 November 2019 (Item 11) a fee for electricity usage will commence in January 2021 and the rate will be £0.21 per kWh.

- 4.3 In the interest of public health off-street parking charges was removed across Aberdeenshire from March 2020 due to Covid 19. Following endorsement from the Recovery Reference Group, parking charges in our off-street car parks will resume in January 2021.
- 4.4 Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 sets out the strategic vision for road casualty reduction on the road network. Officers have been engaging with Transport Scotland during the development of the Framework and are supportive of the approach taken in setting out the aims and objectives of the Framework. The proposed submission to the consultation can be found in **Appendix 2** and the consultation document is available via [https://consult.gov.scot/transport-scotland/road-safety-framework-to-2030/user\\_uploads/425982\\_sct1219677072-001\\_sg-consultation-on-road-safety\\_final\\_web--1-.pdf](https://consult.gov.scot/transport-scotland/road-safety-framework-to-2030/user_uploads/425982_sct1219677072-001_sg-consultation-on-road-safety_final_web--1-.pdf).
- 4.5 Following adoption of the Road Safety Framework, a revised Road Casualty Reduction Strategy will then be developed in collaboration with partner agencies and authorities. This process will follow our usual approach to consultation including taking to Area Committee's before being reported to Infrastructure Services Committee for approval in Spring 2021.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 The report helps to deliver the Council Priority within the pillar "Our Economy" and the principles which underpins this priority of "responsible finances" and "tackling poverty and inequalities".

The report helps to deliver the Council Priority within the pillar "Our People" and the principle which underpins this priority of "right people, right place, right time" and "human rights and public protection".

The report helps to deliver the Council Priority within the pillar "Our Environment" and the principle which underpins this priority of "digital infrastructure" and "climate and sustainability".

- 5.2 This report shows how we are delivering on the commitments in the LTS.
- 5.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities			X
Fairer Scotland Duty			X
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X

- 5.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed for Equalities or Fairer Scotland Duty as the interventions, strategies, projects and policies referred to in this report will be separately assessed.
- 5.5 There are no staffing or financial implications.
- 5.6 As this report details events which have already occurred, there is no risk identified in terms of the Corporate or Directorate Risk Registers.

## **6 Scheme of Governance**

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments have been incorporated into the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section F.1.1f of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the monitoring of the activities of the Transportation Strategy Unit.

**Stephen Archer**  
**Director of Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by Sally Davis, Strategy Development Officer  
10 November 2020

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update, July 2020 to November 2020  
Appendix 2 – Draft response to Scotland’s Road Safety Framework to 2030  
Consultation

**Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update – July 2020 to November 2020**

<b>Project Title</b>	Charge Place Scotland Grant 20/21	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E8, LEV Delivery Plan	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Charge Place Scotland Grant	<b>Progress</b>	60%

Due to Covid 19, the 2020/21 programme was delayed.

Charge point installation progress can be found in the table below.

Location	Year	Charger Type	Unit Installed	Metering	Commissioning
Turriff, The Wynd	18/19	2x 22kw 1x50kw	P	Completed 21/9/20	Commissioned
Newmachar, Axis Centre	18/19	2x 22kw	P	Completed 30/9/20	Date to be confirmed
Oldmeldrum, Baker Street	18/19	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	P	Completed 30/9/20	Date to be confirmed
Ellon, Library	19/20	1x 22kw	P	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Fraserburgh, Hanover Street	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	P	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Alford, Community Campus	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	P	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Insch, Martin Road	19/20	1x 22kw	P	Completed	Date to be confirmed
Peterhead, Lido	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	P	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Aboyne	19/20	1x 50kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Hillside School	19/20	3x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Macduff, Aquarium	19/20	1x 22kw	P	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Laurencekirk, Mearns Academy	20/21	1x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Portsoy, The Square	20/21	1x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Location	Year	Charger Type	Unit Installed	Metering	Commissioning
Kemnay, Aquithie Road	20/21	1x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed

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Tarland, Recreation Ground	20/21	1x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Balmedie	20/21	1x 22kw	Install Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed

<b>Project Title</b>	Recovery of Costs Public Charge Point Network	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E8, LEV Delivery Plan	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>		<b>Progress</b>	10%

A tariff will be introduced on 4 January 2020 to recover the costs associated with the operation of the public charge point network as approved by Infrastructure Services Committee on 28 November 2019 (Item 11). The original implementation date of April 2020 was delayed due to Covid 19.

The Charge Place Scotland grant currently funds the maintenance of the charge point network until 2022 therefore this cost is not passed on to the public.

The cost to the customer will be £0.21 per kWh to ensure recovery of costs associated with the operation and management of the EV charger network in Aberdeenshire. This cost is detailed as:

Energy cost per kWh used £0.16  
 Maintenance cost per kWh used £0.00  
 Transaction cost per kWh used £0.05  
 Total cost per kWh used £0.21

The tariff will be re-evaluated to include maintenance costs in 2022.

**Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update – July 2020 to November 2020**

<b>Project Title</b>	Walking and Cycling Maps	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS M3	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Smarter Choices Smarter Places	<b>Progress</b>	90%

New walking and cycling maps have been developed for Aberdeenshire towns including;

- Kemnay
- Kintore
- Mintlaw
- Portsoy
- Turriff
- Newtonhill
- Banchory updates

There are now 18 different town walking and cycling maps available for Aberdeenshire towns. The new maps will be available online in November.

Due to the success of the original Treasure Trails additional towns have been added including Balmedie, Ellon and Kemnay. All the maps can be accessed through Aberdeenshire Council’s website (<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/transportation/cycling/commuter-routes>) and hard copies are available in local libraries.

<b>Project Title</b>	Staff Pool E-Bike Scheme	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS A17	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	Smarter Choices Smarter Places	<b>Progress</b>	80%

Five E-Bikes are currently available for staff use – 1 each at Woodhill House, Buchan House, Gordon House, Banchory Social Work office and most recently at Ellon Resource Centre. A further 2 E-Bikes are to be made available in the near future to double the capacity at Woodhill House and Gordon House, but these have been delayed due to Covid 19.

These bikes are free for all Council staff to make use of for either work or personal journeys and have proved very popular during the last few months, with 31 different members of staff making use of them this year. The majority of bookings have been for leisure and for the purposes of being able to try out an E-Bike, with 71% of users saying after using the staff E-Bike, they would be more likely to purchase their own bike.

Transport Strategy are also procuring an online booking and management system, again using Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) funding, to help streamline the system and trial for other supported projects.

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<b>Project Title</b>	Formartine and Buchan Way E-Bike Project	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS 2.1 A17	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	LEADER	<b>Progress</b>	90%
<p>Launch has been delayed due to Covid 19. It is hoped that at least 4 of the 5 sites will be operational by the end of the financial year.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	Caroline’s Well Woods Shared Use Path	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS 2.1	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/2021
<b>Budget</b>	Walking and Cycling Capital	<b>Progress</b>	30%
<p>An online community consultation was held in August which generated over 500 responses. The response was overwhelmingly supportive of the proposals with a large number of positive supporting comments also provided. A report was taken to the Adaptive Services Board for agreement to progress this project to detailed design. An Area Committee report will be taken to the Formartine Committee seeking approval to construct the scheme once final cost estimates have been sought. It is anticipated that this will be in early 2021.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	Kintore – Blackburn Active Travel Link	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS 2.1 A17	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Infrastructure, SCSP	<b>Progress</b>	50%
<p>Approval has recently been granted for the progression of this project through the Adaptive Services Board and endorsed by the Recovery Reference Group. Work is now progressing on the detailed design phase of the project.</p> <p>Positive discussion have been held with Sustrans with regard to obtaining external funding to progress the designs and the application is being currently being considered by Sustrans. The project is not reliant on a successful application as there is currently funding allocated within the Capital Plan for this work, which would no longer be required if the application is successful.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	Stonehaven Wayfinding	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E1, E5	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	Station Travel Plan Delivery Fund Other	<b>Progress</b>	50%
<p>Funding from ScotRail for the Station Travel Plan is on hold and there is currently no update on this project.</p>			

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<b>Project Title</b>	Schools Hands Up Travel Survey	<b>Action Area</b>	Monitoring, Reporting and Promoting
<b>Action</b>	LTS M2	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Station Travel Plan Delivery Fund Other	<b>Progress</b>	80%

The annual national Hands Up Travel Survey, which originated in Aberdeenshire, has just been completed by schools in Aberdeenshire with a 96.5% response rate. A report on this has yet to be completed but results show 42% of pupils are walking to school (4% increase from 2019), 7% are cycling or scooting (1% decrease from 2019), 7% are 'park and striding' (1% decrease from last year), 22% are being driven (1% decrease from last year) and 22% are coming by bus or taxi (2% decrease from last year).

<b>Project Title</b>	I-Bike	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Actively
<b>Action</b>	LTS A9	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Smarter Choices Smarter Places/ Sustrans	<b>Progress</b>	50%

I-Bike is working closely with 2 school clusters this academic year. The schools participating are Auchterellon, Ellon, Meiklemill Primary Schools in the Ellon cluster and Mintlaw and Pitfour Primaries in the Mintlaw cluster. Mintlaw Academy have also been involved and the I-Bike officer has been available to direct interested staff to funding and training courses.

The I-Bike officer has also contacted schools within the Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Inverurie clusters. The I-Bike project works on a 3 year structure, the first year provides intensive work with schools to help support them to take forward cycling projects, year 2 the officer takes a step back to allow the school to take on some of the work, and year 3, a further step back from the officer is taken. Due to Covid 19, Ellon and Mintlaw are repeating year 1 as many of the projects were missed.

<b>Project Title</b>	Car Park Tariffs & Management	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	E17, E19	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Car Parks	<b>Progress</b>	80%

At the start of the pandemic and lockdown period, the charging for use of the off-street car parks was halted along with associated enforcement and maintenance works. This decision was made in the interests of protecting public health, in particular to protect our enforcement staff as well as customers where there would be regular contact with ticket machines and the risk of close contact with others. With the easing of lockdown restrictions and a better understanding of what can be done to mitigate against the risk of virus transmission, along with associated issues in

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a number of towns due to decreased effective parking management measures, there was a need to consider the resumption of charges for using the off-street car parks.

At its meeting on 7 October 2020, the Recovery Reference Group endorsed the recommendation to reintroduce charges in the Council's off-street car parks from January 2021. This decision was taken following internal discussion and consideration of the current issues facing our residents and businesses.

During full lockdown there would have been minimal income, and Local Authorities who retained charges saw a 90% + decrease in income. The agreed restart will allow for 3 months of income in the 2020/21 financial year. However, it is assumed that revenue will be below forecast due to the longer term impact of the pandemic and therefore only 30% of budgeted income, based on 2019/20 actual figures, has been allowed for in the period from January to March 2021.

Our town centres began to reopen on 29 June 2020 following the beginning of the easing of lockdown restrictions. At this time our Car Park Operatives, who had previously been redeployed assisting with various forms of deliveries during the pandemic response, resumed car park monitoring, with a particular focus on misuse of disabled parking bays within the car parks. Proactive communications setting out that reintroduction of charges is to be delayed to beyond Christmas but will be restarting in January 2021 will be undertaken.

### Residents Permits

There have been 47 residents permits on our system since March 2020. All except 1 of these have been active through the period of no charging since 17 March 2020. For the number of weeks that they have been active for, when charging has not been in place, they will be extended for, from the start date of charging in January. All permit holders will be contacted and advised of the extension and of when they will be required to pay for a renewal of their permit.

### Machine upgrades

All machines have now been upgraded to accept card payments by either contactless or chip payment. Integration between machines and enforcement systems (by the restart date), all machines will be linked to our enforcement systems, this should improve customer experience, for any user who forgets to display their ticket, or their ticket is placed face down. This should also reduce the number of appeals and associated administration.

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<b>Project Title</b>	Strategic Transport Appraisal – STAG1 Appraisal	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E24	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	City Region Deal	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing
<p>The Strategic Transport Appraisal (STA) STAG 1 Initial Appraisal stage has concluded and was reported to Infrastructure Services Committee on 1 October (Item 8) as part of the Regional Transport Strategy consultation. The City Region Deal Joint Committee will consider the STA report at its meeting on 13 November and agree the next stage of work.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	Strategic Transport Appraisal – Strategic Transport Model Update	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E24	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	City Region Deal	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing
<p>The new Aberdeen Aberdeenshire Transport Model – ASAM19 – which is used to model the impact of proposed transport interventions and land use development has been delayed due to the need to undertake more work on future scenario planning which is linked to national work, changes to the Tay Cities model which has a knock on impact to ASAM and to recent changes in travel patterns due to Covid 19. It is not expected this will not be completed until Quarter 4 of 2020/21.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	External Links to South Aberdeen Harbour	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E24	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	City Region Deal	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing
<p>The External Links study into options for improving the link between the South Harbour and the principal road network is progressing with the Harbour construction restarting and the publication of the City’s Draft Local Development Plan. It is anticipated that a preferred route will be identified by the end of 2020.</p>			

<b>Project Title</b>	Rail Projects – Aberdeen to Central Belt	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E26	<b>Delivery</b>	By 2026
<b>Budget</b>	Transport Scotland	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing
<p>The Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Enhancement Project is progressing through the Rail industry investment stages with the Project Delivery Group meeting at regular intervals. The November meeting of the City Region Joint Committee will receive a presentation from Transport Scotland on progress of this project.</p>			

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<b>Project Title</b>	Rail Projects – Kintore Station	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E26	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	Transport Scotland, Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council	<b>Progress</b>	Complete

The Kintore Station was opened to the public on 15 October - 56 years after it closed. The Provost, Infrastructure Services Committee Chair, Leader and Local Members were in attendance to welcome this achievement with significant positive coverage in the media highlighting the partnership of Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans and Network Rail and Transport Scotland to delivering the project.

<b>Project Title</b>	Rail Projects – Inch	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E26	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	Transport Scotland (LRDF fund), Nestrans	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing

Nestrans project to appraise alternative options for providing step free access to the far platform at Inch Station, supported by Local Rail Development Fund.

This study is being carried out as a STAG appraisal with funding from the Local Rail Development Fund. Under the grant conditions, each stage of the STAG is sent to Transport Scotland as part of a gateway before we proceed to the next stage. A revised Preliminary Appraisal Report was sent to Transport Scotland in August 2020. They have now come back with further additional comments. AECOM, our consultants carrying out the study on our behalf, are currently pulling together a further revised version and this will shortly be sent to Transport Scotland. It is planned to complete this study and send the final report to Transport Scotland by the end of 2020. This is in line with the Local Rail Development Fund Grant conditions.

<b>Project Title</b>	Aberdeen City/Nestrans Cross Boundary Studies	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E24	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	Aberdeen City Council, Nestrans, Infrastructure	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing

Low Emission Zone

Work by the City Council is ongoing to deliver the Scottish Government’s commitment to introduce Low Emission Zone’s (LEZs) into Scotland's 4 largest cities. The implementation plan is being reviewed in light of the Covid 19 shutdown and subsequent temporary traffic restrictions to enable social distancing. The Scottish Government has now confirmed that the date for the implementation of LEZs will be put back by 12 months.

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A944/B9119 Corridor Study

The Bus Alliance Partnership and Aberdeen City have commissioned a corridor study of the A944/B9119 from the City Centre out to Westhill, to consider what could deliver a step change in public transport, alongside active travel opportunities on the corridor. Due to the Covid 19 response this project is currently paused.

<b>Project Title</b>	Trunk Road Projects	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>	LTS E4	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2019/20
<b>Budget</b>	Transport Scotland	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing

Laurencekirk Grade Separated Junction

Aberdeenshire Council is continuing to work closely with Transport Scotland and consultants Amey to address the issues arising from the closure of Oatyhill Bridge. Work on an options appraisal is currently being undertaken to identify the most effective future access options which would not impact adversely on the project. A meeting with affected residents in Oatyhill was held in September and local Members will receive regular briefings on progress once options have been considered in discussions with Transport Scotland.

A96 Dualling

Work on the assessment of the route options in light of the previous public responses is ongoing but was been delayed due to Transport Scotland's focus on the Covid 19 response. On Friday 30 October The Cabinet Secretary for Transport issued an update <https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/a96-design-work-update/> which included the publication of revised junction proposals, a report covering the online option at Inverurie <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/a96-online-dualling-at-inverurie-supplementary-study-october-2020/> and confirming that responses to stakeholder feedback had been issued.

<b>Project Title</b>	HTAP	<b>Action Area</b>	Travel Effectively
<b>Action</b>		<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2020/21
<b>Budget</b>	HTAP	<b>Progress</b>	Ongoing

**Regional Transport Strategy Consultation**

The HTAP Programme Manager co-ordinated the NHS Grampian response to the Regional Transport Strategy and assisted with the Aberdeenshire Council response. Work was done to dialogue with the Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues who also submitted responses.

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**Consultations**

Several transport projects have approached the Programme Manager seeking NHS input. These are circulated accordingly, but there are clearly operational pressures precluding colleagues being available for all such consultations.

**Looking Back, But Moving Forward 2020**

Each year the Programme Manager hosts a workshop for both HTAP Steering Group and Sub-Group members and other supporters. The workshop will be held in early 2021.

**Sub-Group Chair**

A Transport and Public Health Sub-Group met on 8 October. Discussion focused on the importance of ensuring HTAP does not focus on THInC or acute services, but also address the evident issues of health inequality, social isolation, general wellbeing and the availability of transport in all communities.

**Spaces for People**

Knowledge sharing discussion on Spaces for People, facilitated by the Programme Manager, have been held with colleagues from NHSG, the 3 local authorities and Sustrans

**Sub-Group Chair**

Since early 2020 the position of Chair for the Access to Health and Social Care Sub-Group has been vacant. The pandemic required urgent actions from partners and direct communication between senior managers involved with the Covid 19 response were necessary. Paul Finch, Strategy Manager (Nestrans) chaired a meeting of the Sub-Group on 17 September, as per the agreed schedule of meetings.

<b>Project Title</b>	HyTrEc2 project – Hydrogen Vehicles	<b>Action Area</b>	Effective Car use
<b>Action</b>	Support new low carbon vehicle initiatives and implement associated infrastructure where appropriate and feasible.	<b>Delivery</b>	FY2021/22
<b>Budget</b>	ERDF Interreg 50% support	<b>Progress</b>	ongoing

Under the EU funded project HyTrEc2, Aberdeenshire Council concentrates its efforts exploring the use of hydrogen fuel as an option for a future ULEV fleet.

Aberdeenshire Council currently has four hydrogen powered vehicles in use. The original plan to install Enterprise car club equipment to a hydrogen vehicle pool based

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at Woodhill House has been put on hold due Covid 19, however Enterprise have since acquired their own fleet of the same hydrogen vehicles.

The 4 Aberdeenshire vehicles have been obtained on leases using a mixture of Scottish Government Switched On Fleet grant and HyTrEc2 project funding resulting in near zero overall cost to the Council.

The 4 vehicles are currently deployed with Transportation and Waste Services and with up to 10,000 miles per annum are apparently operating a much greater mileage than any others currently in the North East of Scotland.

The vehicles are monitored by the project in order to inform the debate about future fleet options for such issues as fuel consumption and reliability. As a result of the HyTrEc2 interactions Aberdeenshire are participating (at no cost to the Council) in an overall high level assessment of the scope for more widespread operations of battery and hydrogen vehicles.

The contract with the European funding body for the HyTrEc2 project has now been extended to run until October 2022.

<b>Project Title</b>	G-Patra Project demand responsive transport	<b>Action Area</b>	Passenger Transport
<b>Action</b>	Undertake a comprehensive review of how to deliver an integrated passenger transport system.	<b>Delivery</b>	FY 2021/22
<b>Budget</b>	ERDF Interreg 50% support / PTU	<b>Progress</b>	ongoing

Under the EU funded project “G-Patra” Aberdeenshire Council has supported 2 ‘in-house’ operated A2B dial-a-bus services in the Turriff area (Turriff Town and Turriff Rural) since November 2018. These 2 ‘in-house’ minibuses also operate school transport services to Auchterless Primary and Turriff Academy.

The Turriff A2B services were the first Council ‘in-house’ operated demand responsive transport services to restart following Covid 19 lockdown and the general suspension of ‘in-house’ A2B dial-a-bus services, recommencing operation on 26 October 2020.

The project partnership has agreed with the European funding body for a grant contract extension applying to the overall project as a result of Covid 19 impact. The new extension until the end of 2021 should allow Aberdeenshire to still claim the full amount of available grant (at a rate of 50% of costs) despite the service interruption.

## Proposed Response to Consultation for Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030

### 1 Is the vision set out for the next 10 years the right one?

Yes  No

Using various methods to reduce likelihood and severity of collisions in a collective manner is a pragmatic but challenging vision. It may be overly optimistic however and will require all partners within the system to work fluidly and progressively together.

Being the best in the world would take a vast quantity of money and resources, and unless fully automated systems are in place human error or judgement is always a variable that is difficult to mitigate. Councils are carrying out repairs to existing infrastructure with limited budgets and existing roads can be difficult to adapt to new standards. To achieve this vision will require an understanding from the Scottish Government that it is unfeasible without changes to how road safety is funded.

### 2 Are the outcomes of Safe Road Use, Safe Speeds, Safe Vehicles, Safe Roads & Roadsides and Post-Crash Response to deliver the vision the right ones?

Yes  No

Correct implementation of these 5 pillars will contribute greatly in working towards zero fatalities on the network. However, there are various obstacles in the way of achieving these outcomes especially on the local network and would require significant investment from the Government to implement the type of passive roadsides required.

Lowering speed limits without additional measures will not yield good rates of compliance which would put extra strain on Police resources. Just lowering a speed limit based on environmental features and expecting drivers to adopt a limit that they feel is not warranted may not get the desired results.

In terms of Safe Roadsides, further work will be required to consider the costs and the benefits of this approach on a blanket basis. As a rural authority with an extensive road network it would not be feasible to protect or removed the sheer number of mature trees required to make the roadsides completely safe and this would also have to be consider alongside wider road maintenance, amenity and habitat concerns.

Safe Roads – Segregation would be of great benefit but how is this funded and implemented appropriately? Especially as it looks likely that e-scooters and micro-mobility are going to need provision within the carriageway.

**3 Do you agree that the Safe System Approach is fundamental to the success of the Framework?**

Yes  No

We are under pressure to prevent all collisions and concentrating on Serious and Fatal whilst laudable does not fit in with our Council Priorities of Health and Well-Being and may be difficult for the public to accept that we will spend less of our energies on addressing lower classes of casualty.

However, a true safe system also requires costly interventions such as removing the potential for head on collisions at speed by either having 2+1 systems or central barrier where speeds are in excess of 40mph. Retrofitting these types of schemes within existing evolved local road infrastructure will be both costly and, in many cases, difficult to achieve due to topography constraints.

Making sure the right road safety project is delivered in the right place is becoming more challenging. Applying for the funds by using estimates of long-term apparent savings is one approach that can be made; however, this is reliant on the relevant Committee agreeing with the evaluation. A separate fund for proactive and distinctive road safety projects through the National Road Safety fund would be advantageous, however more clarity would be required on how this fund may affect other budgets and statutory road safety obligations. There are many questions still to be answered at this developmental stage; where would the Scottish Government see this fund sit in relation to Grant Aided Expenditure? Would this be above and beyond existing local authority Road Safety budgets? How will the funds operate in terms of applying?

Would there be specific criteria for application and time restrictions on spending? Are there any mechanisms in place to ensure a fair spread of the fund through all 32 Local Authorities?

The success of the Framework is reliant on multiple industries, organisations and departments within organisations working towards the same goal in a collective manner. A fundamental platform to work with seems like the most effective way to collaborate and share resources.

**4 Are the 12 key challenges for road safety, from Climate Emergency, Health to Emerging technologies and Post-crash response, the correct ones?**

Yes  No

These are the correct key challenges to focus on as they cover a wide range of matters that can affect road safety. By using advances in technology, appropriate guidance and partnership working, it may be possible to work towards reducing collisions and collision severity. Methods such as Route

Risk Mapping that are mentioned appear workable but do not always produce suitable results for rural Council areas. As the information shows, 60mph roads have the highest severity of collisions. Route Risk Mapping usually identifies solutions that just cannot be installed for either cost or available space issues; be it central separations, climbing/overtaking lanes, removal of road side objects such as mature trees. The Route Risk Mapping process can also be expensive to implement. Other emerging technologies that can be utilised to reduce collisions on the network will be welcomed and as an authority with a dedicated Road Safety Unit, we would embrace opportunities to work with, and promote, any new technology that can be used to make the roads safer or potentially reduce collision severity.

Also in order for the 12 key challenges to be realistically and effectively achieved it may require: an increase in Police recruitment to focus on speed enforcement; input into Regional and Local Transport Strategies and National Policy on new developments to address the Climate Emergency and Active and Sustainable Travel challenges; and partnership working to coordinate physical road safety measures with advances in technology.

**5 Do you think the strategic actions will deliver the outcomes and address the identified challenges?**

**Yes**                       **No**

**Speed:** The strategic actions will only work if a speed management review is conclusive and feasible for local authorities to deliver. Enforcement must be sufficiently funded and education is targeted to specific demographics.

**Climate:** There needs to be incentives for people to change mode of transport. Accessible cheap public transport and scrappages schemes to move from fossil fuel vehicles towards EV's and infrastructure to power these vehicles is fundamental to its success.

**Funding and Resourcing:** Additional funding that can be applied for, for specific road safety projects/initiatives would be beneficial. However, funding for better maintenance of existing carriageways would also be beneficial. It is also understandable that in the current climate, funding for major projects will be hard to come by and partnership working on a local level and sharing resources as best as possible will be a good work practice to maintain.

**Changes in Attitudes and Behaviour:** Road safety week with focussed advertising and educational events would be valuable. This can also be applied to changing wider attitudes and behaviours so that the role of road safety professionals' teams can be involved in strategies, projects and future maintenance proposals at an early stage. Good work around public health messaging and promotion of active travel can be used as a model for work on road safety and the work on the Health and Transport Action Plan in the North East of Scotland is a good example of how the outcomes of road safety work is way beyond transport.

**Technology:** As in car road safety technologies progress it will be interesting to see how they interact with the rural road network given the lack of edge lining, narrow roads adjacent to bridge parapets and areas subject to flooding among other issues. It may be difficult to measure the reduction in collisions as a result of technology unless there is a system in place to do this.

**Active and Sustainable Travel:** Active and sustainable travel is imperative to achieving many of the strategic actions as without this they may not be achieved.

**Knowledge and Data Analysis:** Aberdeenshire Council have recently jointly procured a new collision analysis software with an adjacent local authority with similar road network characteristics. Some of the major roads that cross over the boundaries also make up regular tourist or promoted motorcycle routes such as the North East 250. This allows a level of partnership working between local authority road safety teams at an officer level which will be beneficial for route action plans and will provide a consistent approach for drivers over the whole route. This is something that should be encouraged for all local authorities with shared borders, and potentially beyond.

**Enforcement:** Disappointing not to see graduated licencing not being considered as part of a co-ordinated approach to young driver behavioural work. Will be interesting to see how Police resources are used in the future to make more of an impact. The restrictions around locating mobile enforcement points may have to be reviewed to make better use of this resource.

**Health:** The inclusion of health is potentially very beneficial to the educational side of road safety as little is maybe known of the ongoing support that may be required to an individual as a result of a road traffic collision. Projects such as Safe Drive Stay Alive touch on this, and there may be elements of this that can be expanded on in any future joint educational programmes or advertising campaigns.

Aberdeenshire Council are one of the partners delivering The Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP). The plan comprises 2 themes: transport and public health, and access to health and social care. One of the visions is for everyone in the region to live without unacceptable risk to their health caused by the transport network or its use.

It has long been known that the NHS could be a vital partner in assisting with road safety activity and the focus within the framework '*Health: improving road safety to reduce impact on public health services*' is a welcome and important addition which is broadly compatible with the themes within HTAP.

**Education:** The proposals for improving the educational road safety developments may be mainly targeted to young drivers. However, focussing on older drivers and awareness of impacts of ageing on reaction time and general awareness may also be beneficial with an ageing population.

**6 Are some of these actions more important than others?**

Yes                      X                      No

Each action will interact with all the others and progress with one will have a positive effect on all the others.

**7 What are your views on the proposed 2030 Interim Targets?**

It is always good to have targets as long as they are achievable and lessons are learned, with different approaches taken when not achieving these. We will now be expecting in car technology to further reduce collision rates as most engineering and education methods have been used to get us to the point that we are at now.

There are a number of collisions that occur on the network where you cannot simply attribute a simple engineering or educational mitigation measure. The randomness of some collisions can be frustrating and are not often considered when looking at a graph showing Killed or Seriously Injured trends. It will take a considerable effort from everyone involved to reduce the trends further given that they have been plateauing in recent years.

**8 Do you think that the Intermediate Outcome Targets and Key Performance Indicators are appropriate to monitor the progress towards the 2030 interim targets?**

X    Yes                      No

The Intermediate Outcome Targets and Key Performance Indicators will allow us to accurately report progress in annual Road Safety Performance Reports. Along with our own collision statistics they will also allow us to specifically identify areas that may require more focus than others to help achieve the targets for 2050.

It is unclear how some of the proposed KPI's will be monitored and reported. Such as percentage of drivers not distracted by a handheld mobile phone/Sat Nav or in-car entertainment system and percentage of vehicle occupants wearing a seatbelt or child restraint system correctly.

**9 Do you think that the proposed Governance Structure is appropriate?**

X    Yes                      No

In terms of coordinating national policies and events it seems appropriate. In terms of representing all 32 Local Authorities which may all have differing priorities, budgets and staffing availability it may fall short. There also seems to be no mention of public transport or sustainability and environmental groups at a high level which would be advantageous to meeting the overarching aims of the Framework.



larger selection of case studies for alternative road safety solutions that can be utilised nationally if successful.

**13 In your opinion what aspects of road safety do not work well in general and as a result of Covid-19?**

Reduction in funding due to Council budgets being redirected as a result of the pandemic will reduce the potential for supplying road safety measures. Not only engineering works but reaching people for educational purposes is also more difficult, particularly younger drivers. Reduction in maintenance budgets not only leads to reduced maintenance of infrastructure but a reluctance to implement measures that have future maintenance implications, whole life costing of schemes and funding needs to be provided going forwards.

Initially site visits were a real issue. Even now, not being able to car share to sites make it slightly impractical and unsustainable. As more work was being carried out as 'desktop studies' as opposed to site visits, officers were more reliant than ever on our collision database being up to date and accurate, which unfortunately was not been the case.

Information on how strategic level aspirations are translated into actions that can be applied across the local network.

**14 What practical actions would you like taken to overcome these aspects?**

Improved lines of communication hopefully through a successful LPF and additional funding.

A more integrated approach to trunk and local road interventions ie minimum levels of skid resistance/roadside safety being applied to the local network. Information and data analysis software being as accurate and up to date as possible would give more confidence in evidence led approaches to road safety mitigations schemes and educational and media/social media related road safety awareness projects.