

REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2022

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 This report provides the Committee with updates on projects associated with the Local Transport Strategy across Aberdeenshire. A full update is included as appendix 1, however the main updates in the report are:

- Scottish Government's free bikes to schools trial.
- Enhanced Demand Responsive Travel trial.
- Proposal to develop a new LTS in 2022.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Acknowledge the progress made with projects, activities and developments taken forward by Nestrans, external agencies and stakeholders as outlined in the report; and

1.2.2 Agree to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) as appropriate.

2 Decision Making Route

2.1 Attached to this report as **Appendix 1** is the LTS Action Update. This shows progress made against identified categories, i.e. Travel Actively and Travel Effectively.

2.2 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.

3 Discussion

3.1 Since the last report to Infrastructure Services Committee on 30 September 2021 (Item 17), the Nestrans Board met virtually on 8 December 2021. The approved minutes of the meeting and a video recording can be accessed at:

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

3.2 The Scottish Government funded free bike access to children as reported in the September Committee meeting has progressed and bikes are now on order. Sustrans have appointed a delivery officer who will be liaising with Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans and through collaborative working, Cycling UK. Further details are available in **Appendix 1**.

- 3.3. The enhanced Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) trial service, Ready2Go around Inverurie, launched on 16 August 2021 as reported at the September Infrastructure Services Committee meeting, has now been in operation for almost 6 months. Details of the early stages of the service are reported in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.4 Since its initial adoption by the Council, the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) 2012 has been at the heart of much of the Councils work around sustainable, active and environmentally sensitive travel projects. Although the document still remains relevant today, it is clear that much has moved on in terms of Policy at both a regional and national level and the wider public views on Climate Change and Carbon awareness have consolidated issues across many areas.
- 3.4.1 It is therefore intended to develop a new LTS during 2022 which will retain the core values of Travel Less, Travel Actively and Travel Effectively but will reflect changes in policy at national and regional levels.
- 3.4.2 It is proposed to bring a separate paper to Infrastructure Services Committee in March 2022 detailing the approach for delivery which will include establishment of a Member Officer Working Group, Area Committee engagement and will draw upon new tools available to ensure we communicate with and engage with as wide a section of our residents as possible.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 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”.
- 4.2 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”.
- 4.3 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”.
- 4.4 This report shows how we are delivering on the commitments in the LTS.
- 4.5 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X

Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

4.6 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process had not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessment to be undertaken as the interventions, strategies, projects and policies referred to in this report will be separately assessed.

4.7 There are no staffing or financial implications.

4.8 As this report details events which have already occurred, there is no risk identified in terms of the Corporate or Directorate Risk Registers.

5 Scheme of Governance

5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 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.

Alan Wood
Director of Environment and Infrastructure

Report prepared by Chris Menzies, Strategy Team Leader
6 January 2022

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Transport Strategy Update

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	Electric Vehicle Charge point Programme	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E8, LEV Delivery Plan	Delivery	FY 2020/21
Budget	Charge Place Scotland Grant	Progress	80%

Fault Management

The Council has received a large number of fault related queries in the last few months due to some confusion regarding fault reporting processes which has placed considerable strain on staff resource. This issue has been raised with SWARCO the incumbent back office manager of ChargePlace Scotland in an effort to improve the efficiencies of fault reporting and management.

Following a positive meeting with ChargePlace Scotland (CPS) it has been agreed to meet again in January and schedule regular conference calls to discuss network performance and maintenance issues. The remits have been agreed as:

- Faults identified in units that are still within the warranty period will be investigated and repairs actioned by CPS.
- Faults identified in units that are out with warranty will be investigated by CPS and if components are required CPS will contact the Council requesting a Purchase Order for parts and will then undertake the repair management.

Usage

Charge point usage for the period May 2020 - May 2021 was 284,299 kWh and 22,634 charges were delivered. This represents an increase of 0.68% on the total energy used, with a smaller number of events, on the previous equivalent 12-month period. Due to the change in Charge Place Scotland's system operator, in July 2021, this is the most recent information we currently have.

Recent data for new car registration in the UK shows a significant decrease on diesel registrations and growth on electric vehicles, with petrol still leading the market. In 2021, EVs (excluding petrol and diesel EV hybrids) are now running at about 22% of registrations, petrol 60% and diesel 18%.

LAIP(Charge Place Scotland Grant) 2019/20

Peterhead, Inch, Alford and Macduff have now been commissioned and are now operational.

A new SSEN wayleave agreement, which is an agreement on cable locations, has been signed by colleagues in Estates which now facilitates the SSEN works for Ellon Library anticipated in the early new year.

Hanover Street, Fraserburgh SSEN works were completed on 8 December and this site is now awaiting a date for metering to be completed.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Bay markings at Hillside School, Portlethen and Hanover Street, Fraserburgh will be rectified by repainting the green bay markings with the correct black and white markings in early 2022.

LAIP(Charge Place Scotland Grant) 2020/21

Programme of charge points installation is ongoing. Kemnay has been installed, metered and commissioned, should be included on ChargePlace's Scotland network in January 2022. SSEN works in Tarland have been scheduled for February 2022. The planning permission for the unit installation in Portsoy was received on 29 October 2021, SSEN electrical connections works are booked for the beginning of 2022.

LAIP(Charge Place Scotland Grant) 2021/22

Following a grant award of £85,000, the tender process is underway to procure units for Peterhead, Inverbervie and Balmedie. The tender was published on 13 December 2021, a decision will be made in February 2022.

Aberdeenshire Council Charging

Nestrans have agreed to provide funding for £30k to facilitate the delivery of a charge point to be located at Balmedie.

Feasibility work will be undertaken in 2022 in partnership with colleagues in Estates to establish the cost to install charge points at community campus locations across Aberdeenshire and drawing on partnership support from Nestrans.

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

Location	Year	Charger Type	Unit Installed	Metering	Commissioning
Ellon, Library	19/20	1x 22kw	Awaiting install	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Fraserburgh, Hanover Street	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	✓	Requested metering, date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Alford, Community Campus	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	✓	Completed 07/07/21	Commissioned
Insch, Martin Road	19/20	1x 22kw	✓	Completed 24/04/21	Commissioned

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Peterhead, Lido	19/20	1x 22kw 1x 50kw	✓	Completed 24/04/21	Commissioned
Aboyne	19/20	1x 50kw	✓	Completed 04/08/21	Commissioned
Hillside School	19/20	3x 22kw	✓	Awaiting SSEN works to be completed. Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Macduff, Aquarium	19/20	1x 22kw	✓	Completed 24/04/21	Commissioned
Laurencekirk, Mearns Academy	On hold due to excessive cost of grid connection				
Portsoy, The Square	20/21	1x 22kw	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed
Kemnay, Aquithie Road	20/21	1x 22kw	✓	✓	✓
Tarland, Recreation Ground	20/21	1x 22kw	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed	Date to be confirmed

Project Title	Virtual Event Platform	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS 2.1	Delivery	2020/21/22
Budget	SCSP 20/21	Progress	40%

The virtual platform is being designed to allow the Council to engage the public, businesses and schools in a new innovative way and include a much wider audience. The events launched on the platform will include a range of digital media and online content. The platform is currently in the planning stages of development with a launch date in Spring 2022.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	Walking and Cycling Maps	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	A5, A14	Delivery	2021/2022
Budget	Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets	Progress	100%

To date there are 17 walking and cycling maps and 8 Treasure trail maps the maps can be found online at [Commuter routes - Aberdeenshire Council](#).

Maps have been developed for the following locations: Westhill, Banff, Macduff, Oldmeldrum, Banchory, Aberchirder, Ellon, Fraserburgh, Huntly, Inverurie, Kintore, Mintlaw, Peterhead, Portlethen, Portsoy and Kemnay.

Project Title	Rural Walking and Cycling Routes (Shared Routes)	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	A5,A9,A14	Delivery	2021/2022
Budget	Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets	Progress	80%

The signs for the Shared Routes trial project, approved by Transport Scotland, have been installed across the 3 routes: Polinar Dam in Inverurie, Woodhead of Fyvie and Cornhill.

Traffic and pedestrian monitoring of these sites is underway which will inform the post project review.

Project Title	Formartine and Buchan Way E-Bike Project	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS 2.1 A17	Delivery	FY 2019/20
Budget	LEADER	Progress	95%

Bikes and tracking systems have now been prepared for a launch this spring. Members will be updated prior to launch of scheme.

Project Title	Integrated Travel Towns	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS 2.1 A17	Delivery	FY 2020/21
Budget	Infrastructure, Transport Scotland	Progress	40%

Portlethen – Design work is now almost complete for the 3 ITT cycle routes. Once completed the 3 routes will be tendered as a single package for construction in Summer 2022.

Inverurie – Design work is approaching completion of North South Route. In the event that local roads colleagues are unable to deliver this scheme, the works will, be

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

tendered for construction early 2022. Consultants are now commissioned to deliver design and contract documents for Corseman Hill -Davah Wood path with a design programme set to deliver a tender package for summer 2022.

Huntly – Design work on A96 link path completed and contract documents being prepared. Land purchase still ongoing to acquire short section of track to allow the delivery of the Huntly Deveron Road path.

Fraserburgh – Positive outcome from discussion with Feuars Managers has allowed the progression of the construction element of Phase 2 Maconochie Road scheme scheduled to start early 2022.

Ellon – Carolines Well woods design is now close to completion and consultants have been commissioned to undertake design of an extension to Castle Road. It is anticipated that the project will be ready for tender Spring 2022.

Details on the Integrated Travel Town masterplans can be found at the following link <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/transportation/integrated-travel-towns/>

Project Title	Strategic Routes	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS 2.1 A17	Delivery	FY 2021/22
Budget	Infrastructure, SCSP	Progress	55%

A96 Inverurie to Aberdeen

Ph3: Kintore to Blackburn – Landowners have been contacted to begin engagement on the proposals, first to seek agreement to undertake topographic surveys and then to discuss access options. Transport Scotland (one of the land owners) have consented to allow access for survey works and are supportive of new infrastructure subject to design approvals.

Aberdeen City Update - Colleagues in Aberdeen City have been advised by Transport Scotland that any new proposals for the A96 along this corridor would not impact on the development of a path from the City boundary to Blackburn and as such there are no barriers to developing a route on this basis.

Kemnay to A96 – the public engagement exercise was a success attracting over 870 responses with overwhelming support in principle to a route between Kintore and Inverurie. Both route corridors now have a preferred alignment and officers presented the findings to Garioch Area Committee on 11 January 2022.

A90N Ellon to Aberdeen

Ph1: Ellon – Foveran - Newburgh – The Landowner title search phase is approaching completion. Positive engagement with Foveran Community who have agreed to help in any engagement exercises. Consultants commissioned to undertake engagement scheduled for early 2022. Landowners will be contacted in advance to seek meetings to discuss access options.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Ph1: Balmedie-Blackdog – Positive engagement has been made with Aberdeen Roads Ltd who are the current landowner operating short section of path between Blackdog and Millden. It has been agreed that the existing asset can be transferred to Aberdeenshire Council and discussions are underway to conclude the agreement to allow connection of the shared use paths at either end of this section.

Aberdeen City Update - Colleagues in Aberdeen City had developed a design that would facilitate a link from Bridge of Don to Balmedie. Following a Road Safety Audit, colleagues from Aberdeen City Council have advised that the link between Bridge of Don to Balmedie is to be revisited. No timescale for delivery of the design has been given to date.

A90S Aberdeen to Stonehaven

Portlethen to Wellington Road (Aberdeen south route) – The design works have been progressed as far as possible and title searches will commence early 2022 with a view to approaching landowners early spring 2022.

Aberdeen City Update

The Wellington Road design study has been completed and we await further update from City colleagues regarding delivery of this section of route.

Others

Cluny to Sauchen – Fencing works have now commenced which will mark the completion of the scheme. Some qualitative evaluation will be undertaken early in 2022.

Inverurie to Oldmeldrum

Ph1 Relief Road Link – Work is scheduled to commence in early 2022 to create the first stage link between Inverurie and the new Malcom Allan bridge at Uryside Park. Following several discussions with Malcolm Allan early access to the relief road from the bridge, passing adjacent to the development site has been granted which will allow the path to be extended towards the relief road.

Ph2 Lethanty Mill Link - Route options beyond the relief road to Lethanty Mill had stalled in 2021 due to landowner issues, however the Meldrum Paths Group have had a positive response to an alternative route which would link to Lethanty Mill and officers will be working with the paths group during 2022 to try to facilitate this next link.

Project Title	Sustainable Travel Champions	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS 2.1	Delivery	FY 2021/22
Budget	SCSP	Progress	70%

Twelve e-bikes, 1 child's bike and relevant accessories were delivered to participants of the scheme, comprising of 6 households, in late August 2021. Each household has

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

been completing travel diaries and comments to show the extent to which the scheme is changing travel behaviours.

There are no issues to report and the initiative is ongoing. The next update will follow the project evaluation in September 2022.

Project Title	Access to Bikes	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS 2.1	Delivery	FY 2021/22
Budget	SCSP	Progress	20%

Sustrans are leading on a project with Aberdeenshire and 2 other local authorities that seeks to provide and supply bikes to schools and pupils who may not currently have access to bikes. The project is funded through Transport Scotland and is part of a trial that will look at different delivery methods nationwide.

This project is being run in Ellon Academy and Kellands School.

The pilot scheme has been launched and an officer to run the project has been appointed through Sustrans. Containers and bikes have been installed at the schools and work has begun looking at the best way to identify which families would benefit from obtaining bikes on a long term loan. Half the bikes supplied are for this purpose with the other half being made available for the school to use for cycling related activities.

Addressing what training staff may need to support this project can is currently ongoing. A working group with Sustrans, Education and Environment and Sustainability colleagues has been set and meet monthly to discuss plans and what support may be required.

Project Title	Cycle Parking	Action Area	Travel Effectively Travel Actively
Action	LTS 2.1 A17	Delivery	FY 2021/2022
Budget	Infrastructure Sustrans	Progress	100%

The installation of the cycle parking for schools took place during November 2021. The schools which received funding for cycle parking this financial year are; Banchory Primary, Crombie Primary, Glass Primary, Keithhall Primary, Hill of Banchory Primary, Lairhillock Primary, Midmar Primary, Newburgh Mathers Primary, Port Errol Primary and Westhill Primary. These shelters and scooter racks will help support children who wish to cycle or scoot to school, have somewhere safe and secure to leave their bikes/scooters during the school day.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	I-Bike	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS A9	Delivery	FY 2020/21
Budget	Smarter Choices Smarter Places/ Sustrans	Progress	On Going

In the first half of the academic year, I-Bike has successfully engaged with selected schools within the Ellon and Portlethen areas, whilst still offering support to school clusters across Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Mintlaw, Huntly and Inverurie.

Delivery of the project continued to be impacted by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic resulting in the majority of sessions taking place outdoors and the number of schools visited in a week reduced. Despite this, term one and two have seen the delivery of over 45 I-Bike activities, involving around 3,616 pupils. These sessions have included activities such as Bikeability Level 1 and 2, led walks, Dr Bikes and pedal cinema sessions. The delivery of these sessions was supported by and often extending to involve around 37 school staff members, 8 parent helpers and 12 registered I-Bike volunteers.

Four schools across Aberdeenshire (Kellands, Kintore, Strathburn and Ellon Primary) participated in our Leg it to Lapland winter active travel challenge this year. Between the 6 and 10 of December the 4 schools racked up almost 20,000 miles of active travel with the winning school (yet to be announced) to receive a silent disco dance walk early in 2022.

Four schools also received the installation of bike maintenance stands within their school grounds which are open to be used by families. Schools which received these are Mintlaw Primary, Kintore Primary, South Park Primary and Ellon Academy.

Project Title	Cycling UK Bike Bothy	Action Area	Travel Actively
Action	LTS A9	Delivery	FY 2020/21
Budget	Smarter Choices Smarter Places/ Sustrans	Progress	33%

The Aberdeenshire Council Cycling Bothy Project, in partnership with Cycling UK has made great progress within the 5 towns the project is focusing on our Integrated Travel Towns (Ellon, Fraserburgh, Huntly, Inverurie and Portlethen). Current update below:

Activity	Target	Delivered to date
Led Rides	50	42 led rides advertised from our volunteer ride leaders (around 15 participants).
Cycle Confidence Sessions/Better Biking	30	64 Better Biking sessions held, with 52 individual participants.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Pop up bothy events/travel planning, and bike try outs	5	5 community events, with bike marking (NE police), e-bikes try outs (Home Energy Scotland & Huntly Development Trust), Dr Bike (Live Life Aberdeenshire) route planning information & maps – around 400 attendees in total.
Volunteers trained	16	9 - 6 trained. Another Cycle Ride Leader course planned for end of January to train the remaining volunteers
Basic maintenance sessions for beginners	10	6 roadside repair classes planned for 2022 with Live Life.
Dr Bike sessions	10	2 sessions during pop up events.
Pop-up bothy events with journey planning and route advice	20	<p>Attended Huntly Primary and ran cycle safety session for the whole school – working with the older classes face to face and a virtual assembly for the younger years.</p> <p>Led ride ‘mini project’ planned for Ellon early 2022 to try and improve led ride participation – will be rolled out across all 5 if successful.</p> <p>1 – Winter talk planned for January in Huntly – organised by a local organisation we have been invited to host a community talk. The Bothy intend to talk about ‘Everyday Journeys by bike – Active travel and it’s benefits’ providing information on route planning, tips and considerations to make it easier for people to think of and use the bike for some of their shorter journeys.</p>
Family cycling sessions	10	33 Family Better Biking sessions.
Create and promote new health walks and link in with existing health walk providers to help share and support resource/opportunities and knowledge		925 Facebook followers Over 1600 views of our route videos on YouTube.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	Kintore Station E-Bikes	Action Area	Travel Effectively Travel Actively
Action	LTS E1, E5	Delivery	FY 2019/20
Budget	Area Management	Progress	50%

Approval has now been given to the siting of E-Bike lockers at Kintore Station. Some minor works required to create locker base and power connections. Officers will include the hire scheme onto the back office booking system currently used for Formartine & Buchan Way E-bikes and staff E-Bikes. E-Bikes have now been procured and are being fitted with the locks, lockers are on delivery notice subject to ground works being completed in February 2022.

Project Title	Road Casualty Statistics 2020	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E13 & E14	Delivery	FY 2019/20
Budget	Road Safety	Progress	Ongoing

Due to the impact of Covid-19 and the associated restrictions on daily activity, there have been changes in people's travel behaviour over the course of 2020. The significant drop in casualty numbers in 2020 will have been significantly affected by these changes in travel.

From around June/July 2019 Police Scotland has been using a new accident and casualty data recording system called CRASH (Collision Reporting and Sharing). Before the introduction of CRASH, police officers would use their own judgement, based on official guidance, to determine the severity of the casualty (either 'slight' or 'serious'). CRASH is an injury-based recording system where the officer records the most severe injury for the casualty. The system then automatically converts the injuries to a severity level from 'slight' to 'serious'. It should be noted that in some cases although the most severe injury appears to be slight, if the casualty is subsequently admitted to hospital the casualty severity should be classed as serious.

Since CRASH removes the uncertainty that arises from officers having to assess the severity of casualties based on their own judgement, severity information collected in this way is expected to be more accurate and consistent. However, the move to an injury-based reporting system tends to result in more casualties being classified as 'serious' and therefore causes a discontinuity in the time series.

In 2020 there were 141 people killed in road accidents in Scotland, a decrease of 15% on 2019. With a few exceptions, figures fell in each year since 1978, showing a clear, steady long-term downward trend, particularly between 1982 and 1994. Since then, figures have been fluctuating around a less pronounced downwards trend. The number in 2020 was below the average for the previous five years.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Aberdeenshire progress to targets

Aberdeenshire Road Safety Targets	2004-2008 Average. No.	2020 Target % Reduction.	2020 No.	% reduction achieved
People killed	33	40%	7	79%
People seriously injured	166	55%	88	47%
Children (aged <16) killed	2	50%	0	100%
Children (aged <16) seriously injured	13	65%	6	54%

The figures shown above for Aberdeenshire Council have not been adjusted to account for the changes in injury severity reporting as seen by the higher levels of serious injury. However, they do show that unadjusted these are close to meeting the targets.

Nationally

Due to changes in severity reporting, progress against this target for serious and slight casualties is measured on the basis of adjusted figures provided by the Department for Transport. These figures illustrate how many casualties there would have been in previous years if they had been recorded using an injury-based recording system.

The 2020 figures show:

- 141 people were reported as killed in 2020, 52 per cent (151) below the 2004 - 2008 average of 292.
- 1,547 people were reported as seriously injured in 2020, 68 per cent (3,318) below the 2004 - 2008 average of 4,865.
- 6 children were reported as killed in 2020, meaning the average for the 2018 - 2020 period was 4 a year, this is 76 per cent (11) below the 2004-2008 average of 15.
- 144 children were reported as seriously injured in 2020, 77 per cent (482) below the 2004 - 2008 average of 626.

Our new more challenging Road Safety Targets set out in the '*Scottish Government's Road Safety Framework to 2050*' describes the Road Safety vision for Scotland, aims and commitments, and the Scottish targets for reductions in road deaths and serious injuries to 2050. Details of the Interim and Intermediate Outcome Targets to 2030 on the 2014 - 18 baseline are as follows:

Interim Targets to 2030

- Reduce by 50%, the number of people being killed on our roads.
- Reduce by 50%, the number of people being seriously injured on our roads.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Reduce by 60%, the number of children (aged <16) being killed on our roads.
Reduce by 60%, the number of children (aged <16) being seriously injured on our roads.

Project Title	Enhanced/Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT)	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E1, E5	Delivery	FY 2020/22
Budget	Local Bus Services	Progress	40%

Following a competitive tendering process, a DDRT service branded as Ready2Go Around Inverurie, and operated by Watermill Coaches, was introduced on 16 August 2021 with passengers able to book either an advance or live trip.

Overall, since introduction there has been an upward trend in patronage, although numbers seem to have levelled off in recent weeks, perhaps for weather-related reasons. On average, approximately 1,030 passengers are currently being carried per week.

The back-office management software system, supplied by Moovit, was upgraded on 24 October 2021 to guarantee advance bookings.

It was initially intended that supported Service 421 (Alford – Inverurie) be withdrawn and supported Service 49 (Ellon – Inverurie) be truncated at Oldmeldrum, with any remaining services on the respective corridors offering connections onto the Ready2Go Around Inverurie service. An analysis of current passenger usage on Service 421 has been undertaken and there appears to be sufficient capacity on the Ready2Go Around Inverurie service to cater for existing demand between Monymusk and Inverurie, albeit we do not yet have a clear understanding of unmet demand elsewhere on the DDRT service. However, it is considered that the Moovit system does not currently cater for connections in a reliable manner, so the supplier has been asked to investigate software improvements and/or recommend appropriate parameters that could improve connections without having a detrimental effect on the rest of the service.

Work also continues to determine the optimal system parameters balancing the needs of longer distance ‘rural’ trips with those of shorter distance ‘town’ trips. Given the continued need to amend and develop the software it is considered premature to withdraw/truncate Services 421 and Service 49 at this time. The ongoing need to ‘refine’ the software has also necessitated a delay in the scheduled conversion of Central Buchan A2B dial-a-bus to digital DRT operation.

Stantec UK Ltd have been commissioned to evaluate the service and various meetings have been held and data supplied to progress this work.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	ScotRail Fit for The Future – consultation on future timetabling	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E26	Delivery	2022
Budget	N/A	Progress	Ongoing

Scotrail has issued a consultation on proposed timetable changes from May 2022. This is in light of the changes in travel patterns observed during the ongoing pandemic and is aimed at balancing the costs of the railway operation with the income and subsidy required.

During the pandemic, train use collapsed by 90%. Train use is recovering following the lifting of restrictions and at the time of writing is running at around 50% of pre-pandemic levels in Scotland.

As demand increases over the coming months and years, it is anticipated passengers will use the railway in different ways, travelling at different times and for different purposes than before. At the same time, there has been a recognition that rail services require a significant level of financial subsidy despite only accounting for a small proportion of the journeys people make across Scotland

Overall the changes in service provision across the north east are minor with good coverage across the region and maintaining a regular service to the south.

Nestrans will be preparing a response to the consultation and it is proposed that Aberdeenshire Council feeds into and endorses that response through the elected Members on the Nestrans' Board.

Across Scotland, pre-pandemic, “significantly more seats were being provided than were required for the number of passengers travelling” and on a typical weekday only 23% of available seats were used across the network for the distances travelled. Seats were empty for 77% of the distance that was travelled.

However, Intercity services between the Central Belt and Aberdeen and between the Central Belt and Inverness performed better than other services in Scotland, with an average daily occupancy of around 35% to 41% of seat miles. Scotrail says it recognises the importance of reduced journey times between Scotland's cities and so it is maintaining an hourly service south of Aberdeen to Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The following is a high-level summary of the proposed service provision on the key routes in the Aberdeenshire area.

Edinburgh to Aberdeen - The May 2022 timetable will continue to provide 1 train per hour in most hours between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, calling at limited stations, to encourage long distance journeys by rail, with LNER services operating in the hours when ScotRail services do not. The intercity service will continue to be supported by local services around Dundee and Aberdeen.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Glasgow to Aberdeen - The May 2022 timetable will continue to operate 1 train per hour between Glasgow and Aberdeen, calling at limited stations, to encourage long distance journeys by rail. The intercity service will continue to be supported by local services around Dundee and Aberdeen.

Aberdeen to Inverness - ScotRail is not proposing to make significant changes on the route between Aberdeen and Inverness from the current timetable and the May 2022 timetable will provide eleven trains per day in each direction between Aberdeen and Inverness, along with additional services between Elgin and Inverness and between Inverurie, Aberdeen and Montrose. Time has been included within the timetable to enable stops to be added at Inverness Airport railway station when the station opens.

Montrose to Aberdeen - ScotRail is proposing that the May 2022 timetable will continue to provide an hourly local service between Montrose and Aberdeen for most of the day, with services extended to Inverurie, and additional services provided during peak periods. At times when local services do not run, calls will be provided in services between Aberdeen and the Central Belt. Whilst the route has poor occupancy, the service supports faster journey times between Aberdeen and the Central Belt, and journey time plays an important part in making these longer distance routes a success.

The full consultation information is available at - <https://www.scotrail.co.uk/about-scotrail/fit-future>

Members' attention is also drawn to the background study undertaken for the rail industry on current and future trends. Professor Iain Docherty's paper, "*Scotland's railways after the pandemic*" provides some additional insight into the challenges that the railway faces and how rail can play its role in the future -

<https://covid19transas.org/scotlands-railway-after-the-pandemic/>

Project Title	Rail Matters	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E26	Delivery	2022
Budget	N/A	Progress	Ongoing

Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail

The Scottish Government has committed £200 million to improve journey times and increase capacity on key rail links between Aberdeen and the Central Belt for passengers and freight. The project is progressing with preferred options now identified. Three differing elements will progress at different rates and stages depending on inter-dependencies including the electrification of the east coast mainline programme. These are:

- Signalling – modernisation to enable reduced timings between 'blocks'
- Freight Loops – to enable slower freight traffic to make way for faster passenger trains

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

- Track layout at stations and fast train paths (timetabling/allocation of slots on network)

It is anticipated the work will take between 12-18 months to complete and ground investigations have commenced to enable the next stage of design work.

Insch Station Accessible Platforms

The revised Option Appraisal was sent to Transport Scotland on 28 of August 2021. Minor feedback was received from Transport Scotland on 29 November 2021, focussing on providing a clearer explanation around one aspect of the economic appraisal. Once this is completed and resubmitted, it is understood that the appraisal can be signed off from a technical perspective. Thereafter, the attention would turn to supporting Transport Scotland and Network Rail to confirm funding and delivery pathways to implement the recommendations in this study.

Aberdeen to Laurencekirk Multi-modal Study - including case for new railway stations

The first phase of the study, referred at as the “Case for Change” has now been completed and agreed by Transport Scotland (as funder through the Rail Development Fund). Nestrans are lead partner with consultants AECOM commissioned to undertake the work. The second phase of the study which will look at the potential options to address the issues raised is now underway with a public consultation recently completed with a high response of 1,104 online surveys received.

The high-level summary of the responses is:

Active Travel

- demand for improved active travel facilities along the route
- half of respondents indicating that long distance walking and cycling infrastructure is needed
- 46% indicating that improved walking and cycling infrastructure within settlements is required.
- 23% of respondents indicated that segregated cycle lanes are required to encourage sustainable travel along the corridor.

Bus

- demand for improved bus services along the corridor
- 43% of respondents indicated that there are journeys they would like to make by bus that they are unable to currently.
- to encourage greater bus use, most popular responses were improved frequency (46%), reduced cost of fares (46%), quicker journey times (38%) and services to a wider range of destinations (37%).

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Rail

- There is demand for additional rail infrastructure along the corridor, particularly from Cove and Newtonhill
- 47% indicated that a new rail station in Cove would encourage them to use the train for more journeys
- 42% indicated the same for a new rail station in Newtonhill
- Some concerns raised regarding the potential demand for rail in light of changing travel patterns as a result of the pandemic.
- 52% of respondents noted that reduced cost of fares would encourage them to use the train for more journeys.

Road

- Good overall level of satisfaction with the road network
- Relatively few comments raised about congestion or journey times, likely reflecting the benefits that have been delivered through the opening of the AWPR
- Problems raised with the road network included, insufficient electric vehicle charging infrastructure, poor road surface and safety concerns at junctions, particularly at Laurencekirk.

Nestrans will consider the key findings of the consultation work, alongside other evidence, to respond to the queries originally raised by Transport Scotland on the Case for Change submission.

Project Title	Nestrans/Aberdeen City Regional and Cross Boundary Projects	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E24	Delivery	FY 2019/20
Budget	Aberdeen City Council, Nestrans, Infrastructure	Progress	Ongoing

Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

Aberdeen City Council has reviewed the feedback received in its consultation and made amendments to the eastern and western boundaries in light of the feedback received, it is now preparing its submission to Transport Scotland for approval before commencing the necessary statutory process. It is intended that the LEZ commence in May 2022.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	City Region Deal Strategic Transport Projects	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E4	Delivery	To 2025
Budget	City Region Deal	Progress	Ongoing

The City Region Deal agreement contains provision of £7 million to undertake a strategic transport appraisal, considering the future transport requirements of the region, taking account of the impacts arising from the investment associated with the Deal. Five million was sourced from the 2 governments, £2 million was sourced from the 2 local authorities. The programme is in the second phase of work on the Strategic Transport Appraisal.

The Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee approved the proposals to support the development of Strategic Business Cases for the following elements:

1. Strategic Modelling Work. **(Ongoing- ASAM 19 – delayed due to national modelling work impacting on data sets)**
2. Appraisal and Business Case Development for Aberdeen Rapid Transit Proposals. **(Commenced and ongoing– with significant funding awarded through the Bus Partnership Fund)**
3. Appraisal and Business Case Development for A90(N) Corridor. **(Awaiting outcome of Strategic Transport Projects Review prior to commencement)**
4. Business Case Development for A956 Wellington Road Corridor. (southern route out of Aberdeen) **(Approval from ACC Committee received)**
5. Smaller scale interventions modelled on “Live-Lab” proposals, with initial concepts addressing: **(Project work ongoing)**
 - a. Mobility Hubs – City, Suburban and Rural Small Town.
 - b. Alternative Fuelling Hubs.
 - c. Rural Mobility as a Service applications/Demand Responsive Transport.
 - d. Innovation in monitoring and dissemination of data on Road/Transport Network.
 - e. Haulage efficiency.

Each of the different proposals above are associated with individual delivery paths, dependencies, resource requirements and uncertainties.

Currently awaiting the outcome of STPR2 prior to progression of the remaining elements.

Access to Aberdeen South Harbour

An updated Strategic Business Case was considered at the City Region Deal Joint Committee on 20 August 2021 and by Aberdeen City Council on 25 August 2021 both approving a draw down of £1.2M from the City Region Deal budget for this project to progress the design and an Outline Business Case. This includes, but is not limited to, surveys and investigations, design development, obtaining all necessary approvals, permissions, licences, agreements and consents required. Comments on the Business Case from Scottish Government and Transport Scotland are currently

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

being resolved. Prior to Business Case sign off, Aberdeen City Council is progressing with preliminary works to support the design process including recruiting for additional staffing resource.

Project Title	Strategic Road and Bridge Projects	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action	LTS E4	Delivery	FY 2021-2025
Budget	Transport Scotland	Progress	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. Transport Scotland are currently assessing the options for alternative access to affected properties at Oatyhill.

A96 Dualling

Transport Scotland published their preferred route option on 21 December 2020. The A96 project is currently undergoing a review to of the project's carbon and climate change impact. The review is intended to be complete by end 2022. No further information has been shared with the Council at this time.

A947 Route Improvement and Levelling Up fund Bid

Officers are preparing a bid to the UK Leveling up Fund to be submitted by May 2022 for funding to support delivery of key upgrades to the route. This will be overseen by the Member Officer Working Group and will come back in Infrastructure Services Committee in March 2022.

Banff - Macduff Active Travel Bridge Study

The study is nearing completion with a public consultation having been completed on 30 November 2021 with a very good response rate to the 4 options presented. The final report is being prepared for review by end February 2022.

Project Title	HTAP	Action Area	Travel Effectively
Action		Delivery	FY 2021/22
Budget	HTAP	Progress	Ongoing

Health & Transport Action Plan Update

HTAP Steering Group - The Steering Group continues to meet every two months bringing together the representatives of health, social care, transport and the third sector.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Transport & Public Health Sub-Group - Transport poverty, uncertainty around future transport services and equality of access have been the focus of discussions. In the group partners have made connections relating to funding sources to support a Travel Plan prepared for Rosewell House in Aberdeen and projects which advance inclusion around active travel.

Several HTAP members attended a national training event on Health and Transport hosted by the Scottish Chief Officers of Transport group. Following this correspondence with Professor Adrian Davies of Napier University who delivered the training has led to a further developing of the HTAP connection with his work and developments at Public Health Scotland in relation to transport issues.

Access to Health & Social Care - THInC (Travel to Health & Social Care Information Centre) continues to operate providing advice to health and social care service users across Grampian. The project continues to be highly valued by partners in health and social care. The arm of THInC called THInC In The City continues to provide two accessible vehicles for health and social care trips in Aberdeen. The THInC brand is now very visible across the system.

A THInC webpage is being developed to improve on the current temporary webpage. A budget for this is provided by Nestrans.

Project Title	G-Patra Project demand responsive transport	Action Area	Passenger Transport
Action	Undertake a comprehensive review of how to deliver an integrated passenger transport system.	Delivery	FY 2023/24
Budget	ERDF Interreg support/ Local Bus Service/ School Transport	Progress	ongoing

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

Aberdeenshire’s application for extensions of both time and European Rural Development Fund (ERDF) funding has now been approved by the North Sea region programme and the project is now scheduled to run until June 2023. The project’s extension will incorporate the Council’s pilot Enhanced/DDRT initiative, with the associated Ready2Go around Inverurie DDRT service launched on 16 August 2021.

Appendix 1 – Transport Strategy Update

Project Title	HyTrEc2	Action Area	Effective Car use
Action	Support new low carbon vehicle initiatives and implement associated infrastructure where appropriate and feasible.	Delivery	FY 2023/24
Budget	ERDF Interreg 50% support	Progress	ongoing

In this match funded EU funded project HyTrEc2, Aberdeenshire Council concentrates its efforts on exploring the use of hydrogen fuel as an option for a future Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) fleet.

Aberdeenshire’s application for extensions of both time and ERDF funding were approved by the North Sea region programme under Call 12 and the project is now scheduled to run until June 2023.

The extension includes a funding contribution towards retrofitting hydrogen to a trial heavier vehicle. One additional hydrogen car has also been brought into the Aberdeenshire Council fleet through the HyTrEc2 partnership as a no-cost lease bringing the total of hydrogen vehicles currently being operated to five.