

WESTRANS – JOINT TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION

1. Summary

Westrans and SPT have prepared a consultative draft Joint Transport Strategy for Western Scotland to 2025 and are seeking the views of all stakeholders on the strategic issues they see as key to improving transportation into the West of Scotland. This report invites the Committee to consider the Council's response.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the response as detailed in Paragraph 4.

3. Detail

- 3.1. Argyll and Bute Council are members of Westrans which is a partnership formed to consider strategic transportation issues facing the West of Scotland. The membership is made up of the 12 ex-Strathclyde Regional Council unitary authorities, Strathclyde Passenger Transport, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.
- 3.2. Westrans, assisted by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Team, have prepared a draft joint transport strategy, which has now been issued for consultation prior to it being formally adopted by the partnership and presented on the transportation issues faced by the west, and the way in which transportation should develop in the medium to long term.
- 3.3. The document has not covered all aspects of the issues faced on an equal basis, and it is accepted by Westrans that the rural elements of the strategy and the mechanism for strategic appraisal are not adequately covered in the current document and must be promoted as an area for early future action. Without the rural dimension the strategy cannot be considered to be truly inclusive.
- 3.4. The content of the Strategy is summarised in Appendix 1, hard copies having been provided to members of the Transport Policy Development Group and electronic copies to other Members for their consideration. A hard copy has additionally been available in the Members lounge.
- 3.5. The Policy Development Group considered the document on 5th July and the recommendations in this paper reflect the views of both the group and other responses received from individual Members.

4. Response

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the following response being sent to Westrans reflecting the Council's view on the content of the Consultative Draft Strategy.
- 4.2 The Council thanks both Westrans and SPT for producing its Draft Strategy, which seeks to address the complex range of strategic transportation issues faced in the West of Scotland. We would offer the following comments for consideration by the partnership prior to the document being finalised and submitted to the Scottish Executive as the view of the region on the future direction in which transport investment should move in the next 20 years.
- 4.3 The Strategy correctly identifies the key issues of connectivity and accessibility as critical to economic regeneration and promotion of social inclusion within the region. It identifies the need for significant improvements in Public Transport and demand management in and around the conurbation to deal with the increasing congestion problems in this area as critical to the strategy. While this is agreed, the need for efficient strategic transport corridors for the transport of freight and people across the conurbation is equally important in the generation of economic competitiveness within the area.
- 4.4 An equally significant issue for the region as a whole is the continuing depopulation a low GDP of the area's large rural hinterland covering South Lanarkshire, Dumfries and Galloway, the Ayrshires, and Argyll and Bute. Demand management is generally not an issue in these areas, the need being for the provision of a high quality strategic transport network to overcome geographical disadvantages and diseconomies of scale.
- 4.5 In this regard the Council welcomes the commitment in the Document to incorporate solutions to strategic transport and land use problems for the rural areas at the earliest date, by addressing these issues at a strategic level. The means of strengthening the area's lifeline transport corridors by improving the strategic road network and ferry services should be investigated, minimum acceptable standards of access agreed, and a programme of strategic investment established. The Council is particularly concerned that early consideration be given to improvements on the A82 which is in many ways the forgotten strategic artery to the West Highlands and Islands, and the possibilities of linking the proposed mass transit and rail network prospectively servicing the Clyde Waterfront and Glasgow Airport to significantly improved ferry access on the Firth of Clyde. Such investments could significantly impact on the economic regeneration of the area by improving the attractiveness of the area as a centre for future investment while improving the conditions for those currently living in the areas affected.

5.0 Implications

Policy: The draft Joint Transport Strategy identifies a number of the key strategic transportation issues faced by this Council and reflected in our Local Transport Strategy, but stops short of true accessibility planning. Additional work on developing the Strategy will be required if the document is to equally reflect urban and rural issues.

Financial: None

Personnel: None

Equal Opportunity: None

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Head of Transportation and Infrastructure
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Appendix 1 – Summary of Key Issues

WESTRANS
JOINT TRANSPORT STRATEGY
CONSULTATIVE DRAFT

Summary of Key Issues

June 2004

The Vision

‘To invest in and maintain the best possible sustainable transport system for Western Scotland that supports the economy, promotes social inclusion and enhances the environment for the people who live, work, visit and enjoy the region’

The Joint Transport Strategy

- Sets out a 20 year integrated development and transport framework that will achieve sustainable economic growth and social justice in Western Scotland
- Outlines the location and timing of transport management and investment priorities that will support economic & social activity and planned development, and enhance strategic accessibility
- Incorporates Scottish Executive priorities and programmes with direct relevance to Western Scotland
- Provides a strategic context for Local Transport Strategies
- Complements SPT’s Public Transport Strategy

Objectives

- External Connectivity
 - Improve the economic competitiveness of the region by tackling capacity constraints, enhancing service reliability and addressing congestion on the transport networks that link the region to its international and national networks
- Internal Connectivity
 - Increase capacity on transport networks to support economic activity, freight and rural 'life-line' linkages
- Economic Regeneration
 - Support the regeneration of the Partnership area
- Social Justice
 - Enhance access to job opportunities and community facilities through the development of accessible and affordable public transport
- Planned Development
 - Improve access to strategic development locations
- Glasgow City Centre
 - Support and enhance Glasgow City Centre as the regional 'economic hub' by improving public transport capacity and integration between different modes of transport
- Sub-Regional Centres
 - Support the role of sub-regional centres as 'drivers' in the regional economy by improving access to them
- Promoting Public Transport
 - Improve public transport accessibility, capacity and integration on key corridors
- Demand Management
 - Introduce demand management policies to address traffic growth, reduce congestion and support investment in public transport

Strategic Problems

Interim Assessment

Rail constraints

- Glasgow Central station
- Glasgow Central to Paisley Gilmour Street
- Queen St High Level
- Hyndland to Partick
- Barrhead to Kilmarnock
- East Kilbride Line
- West Coast Main Line (local services)

Road constraints

- M8 Kingston Bridge
- M8 Hillington to Glasgow Airport
- M74 Raith
- M77 link westbound to M8
- A77 (sections)
- A75 (TEN) Dumfries to Stranraer
- A82 sections
- Access to Loch Lomond National Park

External Connectivity

- West coast
- Edinburgh-Glasgow rail line
- M74 corridor
- A80/M80 corridor
- A8/M8 corridor
- Access to airports

- Level of accessibility to key economic areas & restraints on planned regeneration and renewal
- Airports' development centres
- Business centres
- Town centres

Conflicting transport demands

- Between passenger and freight rail movements
- Traffic from Hunterston
- West Coast Main line and local rail movement

- Between strategic & local road traffic on trunk & strategic road network
- Local & strategic traffic on motorway network in central conurbation (especially Kingston Bridge)

- Integration between transport modes, land use and transport services
- Quality of physical interchanges for rail, bus, subway and ferries
- Integrating with new developments & public transport
- Integration of ticketing across services and modes

Fundamental Components

- Enhanced rail connectivity between:
 - Glasgow City Centre and Glasgow International & Glasgow Prestwick Airports – being promoted by SPT towards a Parliamentary Bill
 - the northern and southern rail networks across Glasgow (Crossrail, including Strathbungo and St John’s Links) – proposals being drawn up by SPT
- Improved public transport accessibility by Mass Transit in the conurbation– under review by SPT
- Removal of strategic capacity constraints on the M8 which constrain key economic locations e.g. Glasgow City Centre, Glasgow International and Glasgow Prestwick Airports and Eurocentral

Road Capacity

- M8 capacity in the vicinity of Glasgow Airport (junctions 26-29) is a key issue for the:
 - regeneration of the Clyde Waterfront
 - planned long-term development of Bishopton
 - continued development of Inverclyde Rebuilt
- Further investigation is required to identify appropriate strategic intervention to maintain good strategic accessibility

Freight

- Consideration has been given to further priority actions to ensure the efficiency of the freight network
- Rail freight – movement of coal, particularly from Hunterston is an issue
- Need to enhance capacity of heavy rail network south & west of the City Centre
- Road freight – key corridors will be addressed by motorway upgrade
- Issues relating to movement of timber & coal in some rural areas will require further investment
- Way forward is to establish a Forum with the freight industry to understand and assess the industry issues

Demand Management

- To complement the improved transport network, demand management measures will be introduced
- Initially this will involve the development of a car parking strategy aimed at restricting all-day commuter parking at certain locations
- Further work is required to confirm locations on the strategic network where congestion is caused by commuter traffic
- Councils will introduce parking-based demand management controls in the medium to long-term
- Need to monitor effectiveness in achieving modal shift, traffic reduction and relief of road congestion
- The position on congestion charging will be kept under review

Other Strategic Priorities

- Rural Services and Ferries
 - Policy requires further development
- Cycling & Walking
 - Policies are specified in Local Transport Strategies
- Travel Planning
 - Aims to reduce the reliance on the car for travel to work
 - Is an example of local action with the potential for impact on strategic problems
- WESTRANS will assist local authorities with the development of Green Travel Plans, monitoring progress and including effective policies in future revisions of the JTS

Other Potential Transport Improvements

Short Term

- Rural priorities
- Freight priorities
- Clyde ferries

Medium to Long Term

- Fast commuter ferries on the Clyde between Argyll & Clydeside
- Tourist-related water based transport
- Local ferries on the inner urbanised Clyde
- New bridging opportunities on the Clyde to enhance connectivity north and south of the Clyde

Short to Medium Term

- Park & Ride for rail and bus
- Interchange at rail and subway stations
- Strategic employment sources and travel plans
- Integrated ticketing

Policy Themes

The Strategy will be supported by action based on three key policy themes:

- A Integrating land-use and transportation – investment priorities
- B Management and development of the public transport network to maximise capacity of the existing system
- C Demand management on the road network

Strategy Development

- Given the range and complexity of the JTS, its long term nature and the delivery mechanisms and agencies involved, it is not possible to address all strategic issues in the initial draft
- Further survey, analysis and scenario testing of policy and scheme implementation is essential
- Monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness is vital – indicators and targets require to be agreed
- The JTS is an evolving strategy which will develop in response to external changes