

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 14 DECEMBER 2004

SCOTLAND'S TRANSPORT FUTURE – PROPOSALS FOR STATUTORY REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS

Report By Executive Director of Development & Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is :-

1.1.1 To advise the Committee that the Scottish Executive have now published their final consultation paper on “Scotland's Transport Future: Proposals for Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships” (RTP's).

1.1.2 To advise the Committee that WESTRANS will be submitting a response to the Scottish Executive on behalf of the WESTRANS constituent local authorities.

1.1.3 To suggest a procedure for the compilation of an individual response from East Ayrshire Council

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting on 16 December 2003, the Committee considered the Scottish Executive's Consultation Document: “Scotland's Transport: Proposals for a New Approach to Transport in Scotland”. Following that consultation exercise the Scottish Executive published its white paper “Scotland's Transport Future” in June 2004. The white paper sets out the Executive's proposals for national and local government transport delivery structures in Scotland. The Scottish Executive have now published their final consultation document: “Scotland's Transport Future: Proposals for Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships”. This current consultation focuses on the detailed proposals for the constitution and funding of the regional transport partnerships, how they will operate and what functions they will have.

3. OUTLINE OF THE PROPOSALS

3.1 A copies of the consultation document has been placed in the Member's Information Point at London Road for reference. A copy of the Consultation is also available on the Scottish Executive's website: www.scotland.gov.uk.

3.2 Boundaries

The Scottish Executive's proposals envisage that the regional transport partnership (RTP) in the West of Scotland will be based on the current SPT area, but bringing into the partnership those parts of East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire that are currently outwith the SPT area.

3.3 Constitution

The white paper sets out a number of basic criteria regarding the membership of RTP's:

- There will be one representative from each of the Councils in the geographic region covered by the partnership;
- Each Councillor / Members vote would be weighted (in effect counting for 1, 2, 3 or 4 votes) according to the relative population of their council;
- Around a third of the voting membership (external members) would be drawn from the business sector and other organisations in the region;
- Non-voting external (observer) members could also be appointed

3.4 Functions

The Executive outlines three possible models for the RTP's to consider when first set up:

Model 1: Regional strategy and limited transport powers

Model 2: Regional strategy and some transport powers transferred

Model 3: Regional strategy and significant public transport powers transferred.
This model reflects the current arrangements in the SPT area in west central Scotland.

3.5 Funding

As set out in the white paper, RTP's will have 3 major sources of funding:

- Requisition from their constituent councils;
- Borrowing under the prudential borrowing regime;
- Grant from the Scottish Executive

4. Consultation Questions posed by the Scottish Executive

4.1 Summary of Questions

Boundaries

1. We would welcome views on these proposed regional transport partnership boundaries. Would you suggest any modifications?
2. What are the benefits and/or disadvantages of these proposals from the perspective of your organisation or the council area in which you live? Could a regional partnership based on these boundaries deliver improvements to transport in your area?

Constitution

3. What should the role of external members be?
- (a) To what extent do you think that external members should be:
- (i) representative of other stakeholder organisations;
 - (ii) experts in particular spheres related to transport ;
 - (iii) representative of interests outside the transport world?
- (b) Do you agree that external members on the board of the partnership, once approved, should be there on the basis of the personal contribution, skills and experience they bring rather than representing a particular organisation or interest group?

It will in most cases be possible for RTP boards to have a sufficient number of external members to cover a range of interests.

4. Do you agree that decisions on who are appointed as external members are taken by RTP's themselves on conformity with guidance issued by Scottish Ministers?
5. How should the RTP involve people and stakeholders within its region? For example:
- (a) Is there merit in co-opting key stakeholders to work at management team level?
 - (b) would a stakeholder forum be a practical way of including broader interests?
 - (c) Are there any other means of ensuring wider engagement?
 - (d) How can RTPs make best use of Community Planning to deliver better transport solutions? What should the Executive do to support them in this?
6. Are there some particular organisations that you believe ought to be represented on some or all of the new partnerships? Are there any organisations that should not be represented?
7. Do you agree that on occasions when a vote is needed to reach a decision, that this ordinarily be decided by a simple majority?
8. On what issues (e.g. on issues involving the sharing or transferring of local authority transport functions should decisions require a larger majority?

Functions

Model 1

9. What current local authority functions could be appropriate for an RTP to exercise concurrently with its constituent local authorities (in your region)?

Model 2

10. What current local authority transport functions could be appropriate for delivery at regional level by an RTP (in your region)?

Model 3

11. Do you agree that this model should be adopted by a West of Scotland RTP in order to ensure the continuity of the public transport services provided by SPT?
12. What powers currently held by local authorities in the SPT Area would it make sense to deliver alongside SPT's existing public transport powers in a new West of Scotland RTP?

General questions on functions

13. Which of these 3 models would you like to see in your region adopt?
14. Do you envisage that the RTP in your region will gain further functions as it develops? If so, which ones?

Funding

15. Do you agree that there is no alternative to requisition if regional transport partnerships are to have a stable and secure source of funding?
16. What classes of expenditure (e.g. core staffing, running costs, provision of services, capital investment) are best met through (a) requisition, (b) prudential borrowing, (c) grants from the Scottish Executive?

5. The Consultation Timescale

- 5.1 The Scottish Executive has invited responses by Wednesday 19 January 2005.

6. Response to the Consultation

- 6.1 The proposals will be considered by Members and Officers of WESTRANS and the SPT, and a joint response made to the Scottish Executive on behalf of all WESTRANS constituent authorities.

- 6.2** However, at the meeting of the WESTRANS Management Committee on 11 November, it was agreed that WESTRANS and SPT would compile separate responses to the consultation as both have slightly different functions.

A draft response from WESTRANS was discussed at the WESTRANS Joint Committee on 13 December.

In view of the short timescale for consideration of the issues and the submission of a response, it is proposed that the Committee agree to the following procedure for the compilation of a response from East Ayrshire:-

1. Copies of the draft response from WESTRANS to be circulated to all Members of the Committee.
2. Any issues or points which Members wish to be considered in East Ayrshire's response be communicated to the Chair or the Executive Director by the end of December.
3. A formal response to be drafted by the Chair and the Executive Director in early January 2005, for submission to the Scottish Executive by 19 January 2005.

- 6.3** The Scottish Executive have offered to send officers to brief Local Councillors on the proposals and answer any queries. If the Committee wishes to take up this offer the Executive Director could try and arrange an informal meeting, open to all Members of the Committee, in December or early January.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** Initially there are no legal implications for the Council. However the Scottish Executive envisages that as the RTP's develop there could be a transfer of functions from the local authorities in the partnership to the RTP itself. This would be through secondary legislation and would only take place following appropriate consultation.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** As set out in the Consultation document, the Regional transport partnerships will receive the majority of their running costs through requisition from their constituent councils. This would include any expenses associated with the delivery of services where particular functions had been transferred to the RTP. The clear principle would be that where a transfer (or sharing) of functions takes place that this should be supported by the requisition. In support, the Scottish Executive will also provide, as at present, some additional funding for core running costs.

- 8.2** The Council currently contributes £3,500 to the annual running costs of WESTRANS, which is expected to merge its current management team with SPT in the new West of Scotland RTP.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is requested to:-

1. Note that the Scottish Executive have now published their final consultation paper on the proposals for statutory regional transport partnerships; and
2. Note that WESTRANS will be submitting a response to the Scottish Executive on behalf of the WESTRANS constituent local authorities; and
3. Agree to the procedure for the compilation of an individual response from East Ayrshire Council, as outlined in the Report.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services
25 November 2004
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information please contact Sandy Gillatt on 01563 555734

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