

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2006

### THE NEW STATUTORY REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS (RTPS)

#### Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the current progress regarding the establishment of the new Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 19 January 2005 the Committee noted the Scottish Executive's consultation paper on "Scotland's Transport Future: Proposals for Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPS)".  
The Committee agreed to endorse the comprehensive WESTRANS response to the consultation issues.

Following a period of uncertainty about the detailed boundaries and membership of the new partnerships, the Regional Transport Partnership (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005 was laid before Parliament on 21 October to be considered by the Local Government and Transport Committee and in the Chamber.

The important changes to previous proposals include a change to the boundary of the West Partnership area to include only the Helensburgh and Lomond area of Argyll and Bute in the Partnership. Cowal and Bute and the remainder of that local authority area have been allocated to the Highlands and Islands Partnership area. Dumfries and Galloway will form a single council Partnership, as will the Shetland Islands.

The new West Partnership will account for 42.38% of the Scottish population.

The second important change to previous proposals is an increase in the number of councillor members of the West Partnership from 17 to 20 (see Annex 1). This has been done by allocating an additional place to each of North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and Glasgow City Councils.

Draft Guidance on the membership of RTPs has been prepared by the Scottish Executive. At this time the Guidance has not been issued for consultation and has therefore not been approved by Ministers. However it is likely to include guidance on substitute councillor members, indicating that substitutes must be members of the same council as the absent member but that they need not be tied to individual member. A councillor member who could not be present at more than one council meeting could be replaced with different substitutes at different meetings.

Councils may wish to consider establishing a small 'pool' of substitutes who could keep abreast of RTP business. A further seven to nine non-councillor members will be appointed by Ministers having considered recommendations by councillor members of the Partnership. The Act stipulates that these non-councillor members may not vote on the amount of requisition from councils nor on a request to confer additional functions on the RTP, but the Partnership may agree to them voting on any other matter.

The Guidance recommends that the following groups or organisations should be considered as sources of non-councillor members:- Health Boards; Local Enterprise Companies; Chamber of Commerce; Scottish Enterprise; Voluntary Groups; Environmental Groups; Community Transport Organisations; Business Associations; Freight Interests; Tourist Organisations; User Groups; and Academics.

Ministers and RTPs can both appoint Observer Members who can participate in proceedings but not vote or hold office in the Partnership. It is expected that this entitlement will be used sparingly.

It is also suggested that partnerships might want to establish a Regional Consultative Forum to keep the RTP in touch with the wider community, but other ways of doing this might be tried.

### **3. THE CURRENT PROGRESS OF THE ORDER**

- 3.1** The Minister for Transport signed the Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005 on 30 November.

The order then came into force on 1 December 2005, formally establishing the 7 Transport Partnerships in Scotland.

On 1 April 2006 the new West Partnership will assume responsibility for much of the work currently undertaken by the WESTRANS Core Team and the SPT.

The Chief Executive of Glasgow City Council has been allocated the responsibility for calling the first meeting of the West Partnership.

The first meeting of a Shadow West Partnership took place on 12 December 2005.

- 3.2** Councillor Eric Ross has been appointed as East Ayrshire's Member of the West Partnership, with Councillor James Kelly as substitute. There are no plans at present to nominate a pool of substitutes.

### **4. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** One of the first tasks for the new RTPs will be to draw up Regional Transport Strategies (RTS). The West Partnership RTS will evolve from the WESTRANS 'Joint Transport Strategy for Western Scotland to 2025'. The RTS will address strategic transportation issues concerning economical development, access and social inclusion, in consultation with Community Planning Partners across the West RTP area.

## **5. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

- 5.1** The Scottish Executive has now issued draft guidance on the preparation of Regional Transport Strategies (RTS). The first statutory RTS must be completed by 31 March 2007. In drawing up the draft guidance, the Scottish Executive worked closely with the existing voluntary RTP's, including WESTRANS, SPT, CoSLA, and the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland.
- 5.2** The consultation deadline was 20 December 2005 and the Head of Roads and Transportation endorsed the comments submitted by WESTRANS; Annex 2.
- 5.3** Key issues requiring further clarification are:-
- A clearer indication is required of how the National Transport Strategy, Regional Transport Strategies and Local Transport Strategies are to be linked together to bring forward a homogeneous transport strategy for the west of Scotland;
  - Further guidance is required, either through the guidance for RTS's or through an amendment to the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance methodology to assist in the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Appraisal which is now a legal requirement for both Regional Transport Strategies and the next Local Transport Strategy that the council will produce.
  - How funding is going to be allocated to RTP's and local authorities to enable the Council to continue the improvements in public transport infrastructure that have been possible in recent years through the Public Transport Fund.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** The Order has been made under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** East Ayrshire's share of the WESTRANS Core Team budget was £5,600 in the current financial year. Under existing agreements, this will rise to £7,518 in 2006/07. This is unlikely to change as a direct result of the establishment of the new RTP, and any future proposals will be brought to this Committee.

The Executive has announced that it will make £35 million available to the RTPs to fund capital projects in 2006/07 and again 2007/08. A decision has yet to be made on how that might be distributed among the partnerships.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1** The Committee is invited to:
- i) Note the contents of the report.

**James Lavery**  
**Executive Director of Development and Property Services**  
**19 December 2005**  
SG/SC/YK

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**NIL**

For further information on the contents of this report please contact Sandy Gillatt on 01563 555734

Implementing Officer: Sandy Gillatt

## Annex 1

### REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS

#### PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP

<i>Region</i>	<i>Constituent Councils or Council</i>	<i>No of Councillor Members</i>	<i>Weighting to the votes cast by each Councillor Member</i>	<i>Range of other Members</i>
<b>West of Scotland</b>	<b>12 Councils</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>7-9</b>
	Argyll and Bute Council (Helensburgh and Lomond)	1	1	
	East Ayrshire Council	1	1	
	East Dunbartonshire Council	1	1	
	East Renfrewshire Council	1	1	
	Glasgow City Council	5	1	
	Inverclyde Council	1	1	
	North Ayrshire Council	1	1	
	North Lanarkshire Council	3	1	
	Renfrewshire Council	1	1	
	South Ayrshire Council	1	1	
	South Lanarkshire Council	3	1	
	West Dunbartonshire Council	1	1	

## **Annex 2**

### **WESTRANS response to Scotland's Transport Future: Draft Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies**

#### **1. Introduction**

The West of Scotland Transport Partnership (WESTRANS) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Scottish Executive's consultation document on the draft guidance for regional transport strategies.

We appreciate the good working relationship that has developed between the Executive and key stakeholders in creating the draft guidance. We further appreciate the opportunity given at the recent seminar to give direct feedback.

We would like to see the guidance act as the key, comprehensive document for members and officers involved in the regional transport partnerships so that regional transport strategies are consistent and of a high quality. There are a number of key issues that we wish to highlight that might improve the guidance.

#### **2. Content**

Consideration should be given to incorporating Annex J into this section.

Reference to the requirements of the Road Traffic Reduction Act should be included at paragraph 15. The RTS will need to reconcile RTRA targets set in LTSs and promote measures to achieve them.

Paragraph 17 on the guiding principles should include reference to the environment and climate change impacts.

#### **3. Scope**

Paragraph 26 of the guidance states that the RTS should be reviewed and renewed every four years *or so*. If the period is specified as four years, this could produce a complementary relationship with the LTS production process. The LTS would be reviewed upon publication of the RTS with a period of a year to produce a new strategy which would then be valid for three years. The RTS would then be reviewed and the process would be repeated. This would ensure a logical process is followed and that strategies could be genuinely representative of each other. The current situation is somewhat ad hoc and does not result in a coherent, logical process being followed. The review of the National Transport Strategy would also have to be coordinated with this timescale.

The guidance does not state how often the Investment Plan should be updated. Should this happen every four years in line with the RTS?

#### **4. Inputs**

The guidance does not set out a hierarchy of the different plans and it would be helpful to have clearer guidance. Page 34 states that the RTP should be a key partner in the drawing up of development plans, particularly the proposed strategic development plans and the RTS can be used to support this. It is unclear how this would happen and further explanation would assist RTPs.

Guidance on how the RTS should reconcile strategic land use plans and local land use plans within its area where only part of the region is covered by a strategic land use plan should be considered.

Paragraph 34 refers to non-statutory strategic plans and local development frameworks which contain strategic elements. Examples of such plans and frameworks would be helpful.

The key regional issues identified by each RTP will be an important input and paragraph 39 should be expanded to explain this.

Setting out minimum consultation requirements would be appreciated so that the RTP can determine that it has met Ministers expectations.

It has been identified that it will be more difficult to engage with the community on regional issues since many transport issues are local. It is suggested that RTPs should consider establishing a consultative forum. Are these intended to be for the public, stakeholders or both? It would be helpful to understand if establishing such a forum would play a role in the requirement to participate in the community planning process.

**5. Process**

We note the Executive's commitment to agreeing an appropriate assurance process to give RTPs confidence that they are on course to achieve Ministerial approval. Minimum requirements for key aspects of the RTS such as consultation should be included in this assurance process. Response times by the Executive should be set out in the same way as are set out for SEA.

The process will need to follow STAG. However, local authorities and the voluntary regional transport partnerships are unfamiliar with appraising packages of options and additional guidance would be welcomed. This section should be expanded to ensure that a consistent approach is taken to RTS and LTS preparation. It may be worth setting out the minimum number of packages of options that an RTP should consider. An annex containing a one page summary of STAG would also be beneficial.

It should also set out how RTPs will be expected to prioritise the projects in the chosen package so as to ensure that Scottish Executive expectations are met and consistency across Scotland is achieved.

Reference is made to SEA and its website which has more information. It would be helpful to include a one page summary of SEA as an annex.

We note that Annex H outlining data sources is to be added to the final version. The development of indicators for the RTS is suggested and it would be useful for the guidance to set out what are the key indicators that the Executive wish each RTP to monitor and what are the data sources. The data should be available in such a way that the performance of a region can be monitored e.g. in the west partnership, data should be available for the Helensburgh and Lomond part of Argyll & Bute. Each RTP will also have its own indicators related to specific objectives/targets.

Reference should also be made to transport modelling, how this relates to the development of the RTS and the guidance and information that is available.

The timetable in Annex G indicates the Ministers will respond within three months of submission of the RTS. This should also be stated in paragraph 75.

**6. Implementation**

Paragraph 91 states that other funding may come from the Executive to fund particular projects or services. The guidance states elsewhere that the RTS should make the case for projects or services but this is not mentioned in the funding section.