

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28 AUGUST 2001

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUND 2002-2003

#### Report By Director of Development Services

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:-

- (a) advise the Committee that the Scottish Executive has invited the local authorities and the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority (SPTA) to apply to the Public Transport Fund (PTF) as part of the capital allocation arrangements for projects commencing in 2002-2003; and
- (b) seek the Committee's endorsement in principle of proposals which form the basis of a bid for an allocation from the Public Transport Fund which has been submitted to the Scottish Executive in accordance with their timescale.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scottish Transport White Paper announced that a Public Transport Fund would be created to assist local authorities in providing value for many enhancements to the public transport network. The bid for 2002-2003 has to be set in the context of the East Ayrshire Local Transport Strategy (LTS) which was approved by the committee last year.
- 2.2 Eligible projects are limited to those which have the primary aim of encouraging the use of public transport, reducing road traffic volumes, improving the local environment, promoting social inclusion and improving air quality.
- 2.3 East Ayrshire Council was successful in 1999 in its bid for an additional capital allocation of £590,000 from the Public Transport Fund to upgrade the Kilmarnock and Cumnock Bus Stations. The council was also successful in 2000 in its bid for an additional capital allocation of £670,000 for walking and cycling projects in Kilmarnock.

## 3 LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

3.1 Public Transport Fund allocations play an essential part in the implementation of the Local Transport strategy. Bids are being compiled on the basis of a staged implementation programme set out in the Local Transport Strategy:

200/01          Bus station improvements (Kilmarnock and Cumnock)

2001/02        Pedestrian and cycling improvements (Kilmarnock)

2002/03	Package of measures to improve public transport and vehicle movement in Kilmarnock town centre, and public transport and pedestrian infrastructure plus preliminary work for future bids
Future	Future bids are planned for public transport quality corridors serving Cumnock, the Irvine Valley, Stewarton and the route leading to Ardrossan – these bids may include new stations and road schemes to relieve congested community centres.

#### **4 CURRENT BID – PROPOSALS**

**4.1** The last two years' bids to the PTF have tackled 2 of the 5 components identified as part of the Town Centre Action Plan set out in the Local Transport Strategy, ie:

- (a) public transport interchanges
- (b) parking
- (c) pedestrian and cycle routes
- (d) safety
- (e) traffic circulation

**4.2** The latest bid will address the remaining elements of the Action Plan: (b) parking; (d) safety; and (e) traffic circulation/management as well as introducing the Quality Bus Corridor measures in the town centre as identified in the LTS. It is intended to extend the town centre quality corridor concept out to the 3 areas in Kilmarnock: North West Area; New Farm Loch; and Shortlees (including Bellfield). The Town Centre Action Plan will also provide the basis for future PTF bids for Quality Corridors to the Irvine Valley, Cumnock, Stewarton and the route leading to Ardrossan (in conjunction with North Ayrshire Council) as set out in the LTS.

**4.3** The key elements of the bid are:-

- (i) introduction of quality bus corridor measures including modern low floor buses, improved timetable information, schemes to address concerns about personal safety and otherwise make buses more convenient and attractive;
- (ii) introduction of a traffic light control system ('SCOOT') and bus priority system to reduce delays in the town centre for buses, pedestrians and other essential service vehicles;
- (iii) town centre pedestrian safety and access improvements to ease pedestrian movements, enhance the pedestrian environment, improve integration between the bus station, railway station and the town centre and substantially improve safety in the town centre where the accident rates are almost three times the national average and where pedestrians make up almost one half of the casualties;

- (iv) introduction of parking controls to bring about a shift from car travel to public transport, walking, and cycling and to manage the parking stock in those locations where demand exceeds supply;
- (v) introduction of a bus service linking Queen's Drive and Glencairn to the town centre
- (vi) introduction of a Shopmobility scheme to help people with a disability in accessing town centre shops (see previous report to Committee)

**4.4** The one-way system around the town centre carries approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. There are frequently delays in peak periods, particularly on Titchfield Street and John Finnie Street. The bus services are often delayed. The present traffic signal system cannot provide priority for buses. The traffic model originally commissioned by Strathclyde Regional Council has been updated to evaluate options for changing the flow of traffic and introducing bus lanes and improved traffic light signal control. These suggest that the most straightforward option of reintroducing two-way flow into Sturrock Street and John Finnie Street would provide no benefits which could not be achieved more cost effectively through the introduction of improved traffic light control and other traffic management measures. Estimates required for the PTF bid have been drawn up on this basis. If, however, the bid is approved further evaluation and consultation on a wider range of options will be undertaken. These will also include options to change the circulation at the north end of the town to assist in integrating development opportunities in the town centre. (See separate agenda item for this Committee meeting).

**4.5** At present more than 23,000 pedestrians a day cross the one-way system and Titchfield Street. The accident rate is more than double the national average and pedestrians account for almost a half of the injury accidents. The proposed pedestrian safety and access measures will greatly enhance the pedestrian environment on Titchfield Street and John Finnie Street, improve safety and assist crossing movements into the core shopping area. Particular emphasis has been placed in improving crossing facilities for the disabled.

**4.6** The bus station currently caters for approximately 12,000 passenger arrivals and departures each weekday. Almost a fifth of these originate from the three regeneration areas. The North West area (Altonhill, Longpark and Onthank), Shortlees and New Farm Loch. It is proposed to put in place measures to improve personal security and the attractiveness of bus travel i.e. lighting and information at each bus stop, bus shelter renewal and refurbishment programme, and facilities to enable the disabled to access buses unaided. Stagecoach Western has indicated that it will bring forward the programme for the provision of new, low floor buses on the routes, if the bid is successful.

**4.7** There is extensive illegal parking in the town centre at present. An extended controlled parking zone is proposed to improve controls within the town centre and adjacent residential areas increase the turnover of parking usage and reduce car dependency for commuting to town. The strategy has been the

subject of extensive initial consultations. It is intended to consult on detailed options later in the year.

- 4.8** A bus service is proposed to link the railway station, bus station, town centre, Queens Drive and Glencairn Retail Park to facilitate multi-modal trips and reduce car dependence. This project has been promoted by town centre traders and has the support of bus users in the town.
- 4.9** A Shopmobility base at the bus station is proposed, along with a new stance at the bus station for the Dial-A-Bus service. This will improve accessibility to the central shopping core for the disabled and elderly.

## **5 POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- 5.1** The bid is in accordance with the policies set out in the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the East Ayrshire Council Local Plan: Consultative Draft. The proposals also conform to the approved aims and the objectives set out in the East Ayrshire Local Transport Strategy and provides a strong basis for realising the Council's five transportation aims i.e.:-

Aim 1 – To promote economic activity and regeneration in East Ayrshire;

Aim 2 – To promote an integrated transport network that increases the relative attractiveness of public transport, walking and cycling and reduces car dependency;

Aim 3 – To improve personal safety and security;

Aim 4 – To protect the environment and enhance communities;

Aim 5 – Improve accessibility for vulnerable groups.

## **6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** A Traffic Regulation Order under the terms of The Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984, will be required for the implementation of the Kilmarnock Controlled Parking Zone.

## **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** The total cost of the scheme would be £4.9m. This includes £1.1m committed by Stagecoach for easy access buses, £0.2m by SPT for enhanced park and ride facilities and £0.3m from EAC.
- 7.2** The total value of the bid to the Public Transport Fund is £3.4m. It is proposed that the bid for funding shall be phased over 3 financial years, ie 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2-004-05. The bid includes pump-priming funds for the proposed new town centre bus service and Shopmobility scheme
- 7.3** The EAC contribution can be met from funds allocated to relevant projects within the Council's projected capital programme.

## **8 RECOMMENDATION**

**8.1** It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (a) endorse the bid for an increased capital allocation from the Public Transport Fund outlined above; and
- (b) note that the details of the scheme will be the subject of further consultation prior to implementation if funding is approved.

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**

**20 August 2001**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**PTF Bid 2002 - 2003**

**For further information please contact Kerr Chalmers on 01563 555714**

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**AGENDA**