



Regional Transport Strategy – progress update

Date of meeting 21 June 2019

Date of report 22 May 2019

Report by Assistant Chief Executive

1. Object of report

The object of this report is to:

- Update on progress in preparing the new Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for Strathclyde Partnership area; and
- External factors influencing the development of the RTS, including the National Transport Strategy (NTS).

2. Background

Further to earlier reports¹, members will recall that good progress is being made on the development of the new RTS.

3. Update

3.1 The focus of activity over recent months has primarily been on early engagement with the public and stakeholders in regard to identification of key issues they wish to be addressed by the RTS. Further information on this is included at section 3.2 below. Concurrently, and in line with feedback received through the early engagement process, work has continued on development of the RTS Strategic Framework, encompassing the Vision, Outcomes and Objectives.

3.2 Engagement

The core engagement activity completed recently was the public survey. The survey used an online questionnaire and was promoted through social media, direct contact with stakeholders and a poster campaign in local areas, resulting in nearly 4,000 useable completed questionnaires, a very good response rate.

The key aims of the public engagement were:

- To identify the transport-related challenges facing people travelling within the SPT area including for specific journey purposes with a regional focus e.g. travel to work, employment services, hospital and tertiary education;

¹ RTS progress report to Strategy & Programmes Committee, February 2019:
http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP080219_Agenda8.pdf

- To gain insights into the impacts of these challenges on individuals;
- To understand the changes that people feel would improve their everyday travel;
- To identify the changes that people feel would encourage them to walk and cycle more often; and
- To gain insights into interest in electric/hybrid cars.

Demographic data was gathered to gain insights into potential differences for equality groups.

Some key insights from the public survey include:

- People who walk to work were least likely to say that they experience transport-related issues or challenges for this journey purpose, with just one in 6 (17%) respondents identifying key issues, whilst most people who travel to work by bus (88%) told us they experience issues or challenges. Table 3.1 provides further details:

Table 3.1: Key issues for travel to work by usual method of travel

Usual method for travel to work	Percentage of respondents who feel they experience transport-related issues/challenges	Top 3 issues by mode
Walk	17%	Condition of pavements Safety and security Air quality
Car (driver)	57%	Traffic congestion Condition of road surfaces Journey time reliability
Cycle	75%	Lack of segregation from motorised traffic Condition of surfaces Behaviour of other road users
Rail	80%	Reliability of services Crowding and availability of seats Cost of fares
Bus	88%	Reliability of services Cost of fares Frequency of services

- People who walk or cycle to work were most likely to say that they walked or cycled because it was 'enjoyable' and 'offered good exercise' compared to people who used other methods/modes;
- People who travel by bus to work were most likely to say they had 'no alternative travel option' compared to people who used other methods/modes;
- 50% of people who had been looking for work in the past 6 months said they felt they had been unable to take up an employment opportunity due to transport-related issues, with predominant issues being availability and directness of public transport and cost of public transport fares, especially in relation to low wage jobs;
- For those people travelling to hospital, key issues included having to travel much earlier than they wished due to fears of missing/late appointments from problems related to public transport reliability, road congestion and availability and convenience of parking at hospitals;

- About 60% of people who travel to tertiary education told us they experience transport-related issues and challenges, with 2 in 3 respondents stating that these issues caused stress;
- Respondents said that in order to encourage more cycling, they would want to see more cycle routes away from roads, more segregation from motorised traffic on roads, more direct cycle routes, less motorised traffic on roads, and better driver attitudes towards cyclists;
- People who regularly use a car said that they would be encouraged to use public transport more often instead of their car if journey times by public transport were quicker than by car, and if public transport services were more frequent, reliable and direct; and
- One in 3 people who said they are likely to purchase a new car within the next two years stated that they were 'not at all likely' to purchase an electric or hybrid vehicle, the key reasons being cost of vehicle, availability of charging infrastructure, and length of distance travelled on one charge.

The insight gained from the public survey has proved invaluable in shaping the RTS Strategic Framework and key issues as work progresses towards the first full formal RTS consultation exercise.

3.3 RTS timeline

As indicated in previous progress reports², the RTS timescales are subject to adjustment in line with those for the NTS being taken forward by Transport Scotland (further details of NTS timescales are set out in 3.4.1 below). In light of recent changes by Transport Scotland to the NTS programme, officers have adjusted the RTS timeline to bring the 'RTS Issues and Objectives' report to Partnership prior to commencing consultation in early October. It is worth highlighting this is the first of three stages of consultation planned during RTS development, with a further two periods during the options development and final draft RTS stages.

The overall programme for the RTS to be published in 2021 remains on target, and officers will continue to closely monitor this and adjust the programme as necessary to align with any further changes to the NTS, or other factors, for example, the UK's exit from the European Union. In relation to this latter point, the exact circumstances of its manifestation remain unclear, but whatever the outcome, the need will remain for a strong and robust RTS making the case for transport in the west of Scotland.

3.4 External factors

3.4.1 National Transport Strategy

Further to earlier reports³, members will recall that a new NTS is in development, and that officers have been involved at various stages throughout that process. SPT is guided that a three-month consultation on the draft NTS will begin at the end of July. Officers will therefore seek to bring a draft response to that consultation for approval to the Partnership at the end of September and in the meantime, continue dialogue with Transport Scotland, our constituent councils, and others in regard to the draft NTS and other relevant issues.

² Ibid, section 3.1

³ Strategic issues update report to Strategy & Programmes Committee in February 2019, section 3.1.1: http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP080219_Agenda10.pdf

While obviously the specific content of the draft NTS remains unknown at this time, it will set the policy and strategic framework for transport in Scotland for the long-term, and will be a key influence on the new RTS, the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR)⁴, and other related policies, strategies and delivery plans.

It is worth highlighting at this stage however, that there will likely be a section in the draft NTS on 'roles and responsibilities' in transport in Scotland, and the consultation will seek views on how these should be undertaken in future.

Members will recall from references in earlier reports⁵ that SPT was represented at officer level on Transport Scotland's NTS working group to review the current position, issues and opportunities in regards to transport roles and responsibilities (R&R) in Scotland. Transport Scotland's NTS R&R working group concluded with a broad consensus that: change needs to happen; change to transport governance should be on the basis of some form of regional model; and, further detailed work is needed to determine the exact form of that regional model and to develop a proposal capable of implementation. SPT is guided that background reports for the NTS, including those in relation to the R&R workstream are due to be published soon. For the meantime, Transport Scotland has advised that they are keen to receive initial views and feedback from the Boards of the Regional Transport Partnerships of Scotland on the outcomes of the R&R working group noted above prior to the full draft NTS public consultation.

While it is anticipated that the outcomes of Transport Scotland's NTS R&R working group will form the basis of the section on roles and responsibilities in the draft NTS for consultation, this obviously remains to be seen at this stage. Nevertheless, officers will continue dialogue with various partners to establish a clear SPT view on future roles and responsibilities, based on a developing Regional Transport Partnership model, which will form part of the response to the draft NTS which will be recommended for approval to the Partnership in September.

3.4.2 Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2)

SPT is engaged in the STPR2 process across the three regional working groups covering the SPT area (Glasgow City Region/Ayrshire/Argyll and Bute) with stakeholder workshops taking place over May and June. SPT is engaged with the STPR2 consultants in relation to sharing of information to ensure good integration across national and regional processes.

3.4.3 Climate Change Bill

Members will be aware of the recent declaration of a 'climate emergency' by the Scottish Government⁶ in response to advice to them from the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC)⁷, and subsequent similar declarations by councils across Scotland and the UK. In light of the advice received from the CCC, the

⁴ Ibid, section 3.1.2

⁵ Ibid, section 3.1.1

⁶ Statement by Climate Change Secretary: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-climate-emergency-scotlands-response-climate-change-secretary-roseanna-cunninghams-statement/>

⁷ Scottish Government response to UK Climate Change Committee's recommendations and proposed amendments to :

https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Environment/General%20Documents/ECCLR_2019.05.15_CCB_Stage1_response_RC.pdf

Scottish Government has put forward proposed amendments to the Climate Change Bill currently progressing through the Scottish Parliament to set a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest, with Scotland becoming carbon neutral by 2040. In addition, the Scottish Government are seeking to introduce interim targets to reduce emissions by 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2040.

Should these amendments to the Bill be adopted, they will have a significant impact on future plans across many fields, including transport, which in total accounts for around 37% of all Scottish greenhouse gas emissions, making it the largest contributor of any sector. Within the context of the climate emergency, this therefore places greater emphasis on organisations like SPT, and strategies such as the RTS, to take the required action needed to address the situation, and in turn puts pressure on funders to ensure resources are available to do so.

Officers will continue to monitor developments in this regard and update the Partnership as matters develop.

3.4.4 Glasgow Connectivity Commission

Further to an earlier report⁸, members will recall that the final report of the Glasgow Connectivity Commission was published in March 2019. While officers await further guidance from Glasgow City Council as to the formal status of the report and next steps in regard to the Commission's recommendations, dialogue continues with relevant partners as to the implications of these. For example, in relation to the Commission's recommendations with regard to roles and responsibilities, the consultation on the draft NTS is considered to be the most appropriate current forum for seeking views on future ways forward, although the RTS provides the opportunity to develop regional views in this regard for the west of Scotland. In addition, as regards the Commission's views on major projects and interventions, the STPR2 would appear to be the most appropriate vehicle for consideration of national level cost/scale projects, with the RTS, City Region/Growth Deals, ClydePlan, and Local Transport Strategies addressing others. Officers will continue dialogue with relevant partners and update the Partnership as matters progress.

4. Conclusion

Progress on the RTS remains good and on-track for completion in 2021. The early engagement exercise has proven very useful in terms of feedback from the public and stakeholders, and the response rate to the RTS survey was indicative of the level of public interest in transport issues and will support the development of our key issues for future consultation. Work will continue over the summer on the RTS strategic framework and development of the Issues and Objectives report for consultation in the autumn. Officers will continue to work closely with Transport Scotland and other partners to ensure that RTS aligns with and complements timescales for the NTS.

The anticipated consultation on the draft NTS from the end of July will provide a timely opportunity to input to and influence the national level framework for transport in Scotland. In relation to the potential inclusion of a section on roles and responsibilities in the draft NTS, while the working group's recommendations that a 'regional model' be the basis of future development, it is essential that SPT's views on this are taken into account as the largest Regional Transport Partnership and transport authority in Scotland. Officers will continue to

⁸ Glasgow Connectivity Commission Phase 2 Recommendations report to Strategy & Programmes Committee in May 2019: http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP100519_Agenda8.pdf

liaise with Glasgow City Council and others in relation to the Connectivity Commission report status and next steps.

5. Partnership action

The Partnership is recommended to note the contents of this report.

6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>The RTS is a statutory document which sets the policy for transport for the west of Scotland.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>Preparing an RTS is a statutory duty of SPT.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>Within existing budgets.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>Staff resource has been allocated for the development of the RTS.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>EqlA being undertaken for the RTS.</i>

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