



National Transport Strategy Consultation – SPT response

Date of meeting 20 September 2019

Date of report 28 August 2019

Report by Assistant Chief Executive

1. Object of report

To recommend approval of SPT's response to the consultation on the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2). The closing date for responses is 23 October 2019 and SPT's draft response is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Background

Further to earlier reports¹, members will recall that Transport Scotland (TS) has been preparing a new National Transport Strategy (NTS). On 31 July 2019, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, launched a three-month public consultation on the draft NTS2². The draft strategy has been developed following an extensive review process which SPT has been involved in and provided input through various NTS2 working groups.

3. Outline of proposals

- 3.1 The Cabinet Secretary, in the foreword to the strategy, states that it “sets out an ambitious and compelling vision for our transport system for the next 20 years, one that protects our climate and improves lives”. The draft NTS2 sets out a Vision, which is underpinned by four Priorities, each of which in turn have three associated Outcomes. The current and emerging challenges the NTS2 will need to address are then set out, along with how those challenges will be met, which Transport Scotland propose is achieved through 14 policies and 38 ‘enablers’. There is also a section on transport governance, and lastly, next steps. Additional NTS2 reports are also available, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment, and various other supporting documents.
- 3.2 Transport Scotland has emphasised that it is not intended that the finalised Strategy will set a framework for funding or identify infrastructure priorities, but will inform the new Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2), National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and also Regional and Local Transport Strategies, and Local Development Plans. In support of this approach, Transport Scotland will prepare an NTS Delivery Plan after the Strategy has been finalised and agreed, which they anticipate will be by the end of 2019.

¹ See section 3.1.1 of this report: http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP080219_Agenda10.pdf and also section 3.1.1 of this report: http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/SP300819_Agenda8.pdf

² Draft NTS2: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/45149/national-transport-strategy-draft-for-consultation-july-2019.pdf>

3.3 The key points of our response are as follows:

- In principle, SPT supports the Vision, Priorities, Outcomes, Policies and Enablers set out in the draft NTS2;
- SPT would emphasise that, in taking the NTS2 forward, there must be a much clearer and stronger focus on addressing some of the main issues we as a country face including, for example, the climate emergency/net-zero carbon, inclusive growth, poverty, health, city/regional development, rural access, and others. Similarly, and specifically in relation to transport, the NTS2 must lay out a clear, committed and deliverable plan to arrest the effects of and decline in bus network size and patronage;
- We believe that the stronger focus required at national level and highlighted above should be demonstrated through the NTS Delivery Plan, STPR2 and NPF4, based on the content of relevant Regional / Local Transport Strategies. Building on this, Transport Scotland should utilise in a greater way the strengths of Regional Transport Partnerships and their Regional Transport Strategies – which are statutory documents approved by Scottish Ministers – to help deliver national priorities;
- Further to the above point, and our later point about governance, SPT believes that the format of the NTS Delivery Plan should very much follow a regional theme, and be developed in partnership with and input from regional and local stakeholders. Transport Scotland should utilise the opportunity of the Delivery Plan to provide clarity and certainty about future initiatives, workstreams and crucially, revenue and capital funding, and the organisations tasked with taking them forward;
- In addition, given the seriousness of the main issues needing addressed, opportunities to utilise existing or emerging legislation (e.g. new Transport Bill) in support of delivering national priorities should be fully and robustly explored, and should these not prove suitable, or indeed not deliver the level of change required, new legislation should be brought forward to address this; and
- In relation to changes to transport governance, SPT supports the conclusions of the NTS Roles and Responsibilities group, namely that there is a case for change, that future governance should be based on a regional model, and that further analysis and development is required to create a deliverable and workable solution. Notwithstanding this however, SPT, a highly successful example of a regional transport body, believes that any future changes should be made via development of existing models.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 This is a critical time for Scotland's transport system. While there is much to be proud of and positive progress being made, there remain significant issues which, if left unaddressed, could have wide ranging societal impacts over coming years, such as the climate emergency, poverty, and the decline in bus and its wider societal effects.
- 4.2 The new National Transport Strategy provides an opportunity to consider the main issues facing Scotland currently and in future, and the most appropriate means of addressing them. SPT's response is a positive contribution to that debate, and takes the opportunity to emphasise the key role Regional Transport Partnerships have to play in future. Officers will continue to work with TS and partners in taking the NTS forward and keep the Partnership updated as progress is made.

5. Partnership action

The Partnership is recommended to approve SPT's draft response to the NTS Consultation attached at Appendix 1.

6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with the RTS.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None at present.</i>

Name Valerie Davidson
Title Assistant Chief Executive

Name Gordon MacLennan
Title Chief Executive

For further information, please contact *Bruce Kiloh, Head of Policy and Planning* on 0141 333 3740 or *John Binning, Principal Policy Officer* on 0141 333 3248.