

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE	Subject: COUNCIL RESPONSE TO STRATHCLYDE PARTNERSHIP FOR TRANSPORT'S REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION, "A CATALYST FOR CHANGE"
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	
Date:	

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report asks Committee to homologate the corporate response, attached in Appendix 1, to the consultation document on the Regional Transport Strategy for the West of Scotland 2007 – 2021, "A Catalyst for Change".

2. Background

2.1 On 2 August 2006 the Director of Planning and Environment reported to Committee on SPT's progress in producing a new Regional Transport Strategy for the West of Scotland and noted that further update reports would be provided as and when required.

2.2 A consultation paper has now been produced following a number of pre-consultation events held by SPT at which the Council was represented. This consultation is welcome and we recognise that it takes on board comments which we have made during earlier consultations.

2.3 Within the consultation document SPT have posed a number of questions and asked for responses by 23 February 2007.

2.4 Committee should note that a further opportunity will be given to Council's to make comments once the final draft strategy is produced.

3. Comment

3.1 The RTS consultation document identifies the SPT's Vision, Goals and Objectives for transport in the West of Scotland as follows,

Vision

- A world-class, sustainable transport system that acts as a catalyst for an improved quality of life for all.

Goals

- To develop the economy
- To promote social inclusion and equality
- To improve health and protect the environment

Objectives

- **Safety and Security**, To improve safety and personal security on the transport system,
- **Modal Shift**, To increase the proportion of trips undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport,
- **Excellent Transport System**, To enhance the attractiveness, reliability and integration of the transport network,
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency**, To ensure the provision of effective and efficient transport infrastructure and services to improve connectivity for people and freight,
- **Access for All**, To promote and facilitate access that recognises the transport requirements of all,
- **Environment and Health**, To improve health and protect the environment by minimising emissions and consumption of resources and energy by the transport system and,
- **Economy, Transport and Land-Use Planning**, To support land-use planning strategies, regeneration and development by integrating transport provision,

and asks 7 questions of consultees. While we agree with the high level objectives contained within the report and are happy that they fit with our Corporate Priorities, these questions have been examined by the Department and comments are attached in Appendix 1.

4. Corporate Considerations

- 4.1 The RTS will set the regional transport strategy and will guide capital investment in strategic transport infrastructure in the west of Scotland for the next 15 years.

5. Sustainability Implications

- 5.1 The vision for the strategy has sustainability at its core.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that Committee homologate the comments contained in Appendix 1 which were submitted to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport by the closing date of Friday 23 February 2007 following discussion with the Convenor.



David M. Porch
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
21 February 2007

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact John Marran, on 01236-616253

APPENDIX 1

Regional Transport Strategy Consultation SPT's "A Catalyst for Change" Consultative Draft (dated December 2006)

North Lanarkshire Council's Response to Consultation Questions

1. Do the vision, shared goals and objectives identified in the strategy fairly reflect the challenges facing transport in the West of Scotland?

a) Accessibility – Although there are references to the issue within the document, there should be more emphasis on the linking of areas of high unemployment to key employment centres. There is a need to identify missing walking/ cycling/ public transport links between these areas, to use as an element in the prioritising of future investment, with the aim of reducing one of the barriers to employment opportunities. This will in most cases need public transport improvements which may require a review in the legislative framework as detailed in the strategy.

b) Vision - The vision statement could be more direct and inspiring. This could read as ' A world class, sustainable transport system that improves the quality of life for us all.' The insertion of the word 'us' helps to create more of a sense of ownership.

c) Glasgow - The document appears to be too Glasgow-centric. While acknowledging that a significant amount of investment should be targeted towards Glasgow (in recognition of the employment opportunities, economic activity, educational facilities, sports facilities, and the like) there appears to be a disproportionate amount of schemes and funding identified for Glasgow. That could potentially be to the detriment of all other local authority areas.

With the current significant weighting towards Glasgow it may be questioned whether or not the document is a driver for change (in economic, social and environmental terms) for the whole region.

d) Shared goals:

Develop the Economy: through improving connectivity for business freight, enhancing transport effectiveness and efficiency, providing access to employment, education, shopping and leisure, and by improving transport integration.

Scotland's Framework for Economic Development highlights a key role for transport in the development of a *competitive and cohesive* economy. It is important that transport planning complements the wider planning system and that interventions and projects are linked directly to regional and local land-use planning priorities and regeneration objectives.

To develop a cohesive economy it is important that we attract investment that supports areas of economic opportunity and need. A key regional economic development instrument used to meet this objective is Regional Selective Assistance. In the 5 years to end March 2006, businesses in

Scotland have accepted over 800 offers of RSA totalling in excess of £280m. These offers relate to projects with planned investment of £1.2bn and have helped create or safeguard over 41,000 jobs.

The European Commission has approved a new Assisted Area map for 2007-2013. The aim is to establish economic growth in key areas to promote the development of cohesive regions. It is therefore important that Regional Transport interventions promote developments consistent with this map. This will ensure that SPT's strategic objective to 'Develop the Economy' is consistent with Scottish National, UK and European regional economic policy that is being directed towards the development of cohesive economies. The A8/M8 corridor offers significant development potential and will be eligible for Regional Selective Assistance over the period 2007-2013. A map of eligible assisted areas should be included in the final Regional Transport Strategy. The approved map is available from the Scottish Executive.

e) Promote social inclusion and equality: by providing a transport system that safe, accessible and affordable to all sections of the community.

It is important that the Regional Transport Strategy is not too narrowly focused, in support of projects that are more 'city-centre' than 'city-region' in nature. While acknowledging that a significant amount of investment should be targeted towards Glasgow there is a disproportionate amount of schemes and funding identified for the Glasgow area. This is to the detriment of other local authority areas and will restrict efforts to develop a cohesive economy.

For many that are out of work, particularly if they live within deprived and remote communities, transport can be a barrier to participation within the labour market. A key aim of the regional transport strategy should be to link deprived communities, defined by the defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), to areas of economic opportunity. The Regional Transport Strategy should also prioritise effective public transport connections to further and higher education institutions. The Scottish Executive has created a Community Regeneration Fund to Close the Opportunity Gap experienced by many within disadvantaged areas. The Regional Transport Strategy should contribute positively to this agenda and seek to complement Social Inclusion projects and services within Community Regeneration Areas SIMD. The SIMD should be used to guide where increased connectivity would promote social inclusion. The strategy identifies potential BRT, LTR and Quality Bus Corridors in Appendix 5. Consideration should be given to extending the Hamilton/Motherwell/Coatbridge corridor to Cumbernauld/Kilsyth. Also consideration should be given to extension of the Fastlink project along the length of the corridor of growth identified in the Structure Plan to include Strathclyde Business Park, Mossend and Eurocentral.

A key Social Inclusion intervention should be to influence the structure of the deregulated bus market, which is failing many neighbourhoods with services commonly not provided or poorly provided out with peak periods. A common factor is that services should be commercially viable. This objective is often at odds with national social-inclusion policy with bus routes within many peripheral areas being limited. The draft strategy section 5.14.1 acknowledges that the current bus-market is a major policy issue that left unchecked will restrain efforts to promote social inclusion. The regional transport strategy should state more clearly how it would mitigate factors, including the structure of the bus-market, that limit travel from disadvantaged areas.

There should also be consideration of how public bodies can assist the private sector in applying for Bus Route Development Grants (BSDG). The strategy should consider ways to encourage the uptake and implementation of Bus Route Development Grants; the option of bus franchising; an examination of the level of subsidies; and how to achieve better integration of community transport schemes and services and educational transport provision.

f) Improve Health and protect the Environment: by minimising emissions and consumption of resources and energy, by promoting active travel, quality public transport modal shift.

Sustainable development is an underlying principal of the regional transport strategy. It is important that the strategy and its interventions are used to support housing developments that are linked to good public transport links and that limit environmental impacts. Within North Lanarkshire Community Growth and Housing Expansion Areas have been identified. Six locations in North Lanarkshire (Cumbernauld South, Gartcosh and Glenboig, East Airdrie, Coatbridge North/West, East Motherwell and South Wishaw) have been identified to meet a significant proportion of the areas need for new housing in the medium-term from 2011 to 2018. The Location Criteria being used to select sites for development supports the principles outlined in the Regional Transport Strategy:

- strength of link to urban renewal;
- impact on environmental assets;
- relationship to public transport;
- impact on green belt;
- relationship to community facilities;
- access to, and support for, town centres.

The correlation between low income and poor health is well established. A key intervention and social inclusion priority for the Regional Transport Strategy should be to directly influence the establishment of efficient transport options to health services across the SPT area. This is now even more pertinent following NHS's recent rationalisation proposals for health service provision within Lanarkshire, in particular the reduction in emergency and admission units from three to two acute hospitals within Lanarkshire. The removal of the emergency inpatient services from Monklands Hospital, in favour of Wishaw and Hairmyres hospitals, will result in a transport logistical barrier for those communities. Public transport travel options are very limited for the various communities who use Monklands, which includes areas to the north such as Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, who will now have to travel to Wishaw or Hairmyres hospitals. It is likely to result in a higher flow of patients to Glasgow (Stobhill and the Royal Infirmary) and to Falkirk and in the longer term to the new hospital at Larbert. Monklands serves some of the most deprived communities in Scotland, with lower than average car ownership levels. This will increase demand on a public transport network that currently is very limited between these hospital areas.

2. The strategy contains a series of key interventions. Of these, which best support the strategy in addressing the needs of the West of Scotland?

a) Freight – It is not possible to comment on any proposed interventions without the benefit of having seen the Freight Sub-strategy. However, it is hoped that the RTS will identify specific key freight hubs, and detail specific interventions to address the transportation issues associated with them. Within North Lanarkshire, Eurofreight Terminal (Mossend) and Gartsherrie Container Terminal, including Kilgarth (Coatbridge), are of particular significance, as well as a number of major distribution centres.

b) Healthcare – It is not possible to comment on any proposed interventions without the benefit of having seen the access to Healthcare Sub-strategy. However, the healthcare service rationalisation has particular concerns within North Lanarkshire, primarily with the changes proposed at Monklands Hospital and Stobhill Hospital (see 1 f) above).

It is hoped that the sub-strategy makes specific reference to positive interventions in respect of the communities that will be affected by the rationalisation.

One of the emerging recommendations in Para 6.4.2 is the “undertaking audits of existing service locations and current travel patterns”. That should be extended to include an assessment of the significantly different travel patterns that will emerge following the rationalisation of the services at these hospitals.

c) Urban/ Rural – There is perhaps a tension between the priority that should be given to accessibility in rural areas as against the priority to be afforded to urban SIMD areas. In general, the urban SIMD element should carry a higher weighting, as interventions affecting those areas would generally impact on a greater number of people and contribute more to the achievement of the identified goals.

d) Subway - In Para 5.1.1 'Revitalising the Subway' is identified as a Priority Project. Initial impression is that the subway is primarily a Glasgow scheme (and hence for Glasgow City Council) rather than being a regional scheme. We would seek some clarification as to what extent the subway forms part of a 'longer journey' for travellers from out with the Glasgow conurbation, as opposed to merely facilitating journeys for Glasgow residents.

e) Ravenscraig - In Table 5.2, 'Ravenscraig Transport Corridor' should be moved to the "Large Scale Intervention" category, as Ravenscraig is identified as one of three Metropolitan Flagship Initiatives within the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006. The Structure Plan also links the development of Ravenscraig to the restructuring of Motherwell and Wishaw.

f) Reference should be made in Table 5.2 to the A73 corridor. The A73 is identified as a strategic route within the strategy and although not a trunk road it carries a significant volume of strategic traffic, and a considerable percentage of freight vehicles, between the M8/ A8 at Newhouse and the A80 at Auchenkilns. Part of the route is undergoing STAG assessment with a view to identifying possible interventions which will improve public transport links, benefit the economic viability of the area, improve air quality (the route already has one Air Quality Management Area designated) and would also be tied in with significant housing land release adjacent to future heavy rail provision.

g) M8 - Reference should be made in Table 5.2 to the M8 upgrade proposals between Newhouse and Baillieston. There is a reference to the M8 in that table (in terms of access to the M74) although that appears to relate to the section within Glasgow that would be relieved by the M74 extension. Although the M8 proposals are being promoted by the Scottish Executive, it will have a significant impact on the adjacent businesses and communities.

h) Community Transport – With a view to tackling specific area interventions, particularly in assisting people to get to employment and learning opportunities, Community Transport could be significantly expanded from its current limited role.

The document refers to 'Mainstreaming Community Transport' – it should be clarified what that actually means, as well as how it would be achieved/ funded.

i) Bus Intervention – Bus intervention measures would certainly be a key element of the RTS, however, more details are required concerning the specifics of any proposed measures. It may well be covered within the detail of the sub-strategies, however, within the current draft of the document it is not clear.

Some work has taken place on the potential for an orbital bus service serving various discrete areas around Glasgow. The lack of, and hence need for, such a service has been raised at a number of forums in North Lanarkshire, to provide access north-south within North Lanarkshire, as well as into East Dunbartonshire and South Lanarkshire.

3. Do you agree that our approach to produce a "blended" strategy is the best way forward?

a) Yes, as many interventions can relate and impact upon more than one of the main 'Goals'. It would have been very difficult, and possibly detrimental, to have attempted to try to identify just one main 'Goal'.

b) Scheme Appraisal – An agreed method of appraisal, consistent with STAG principals, should be established to ensure that interventions are directly linked to the strategy objectives, to ensure that highest priority schemes are indeed funded and delivered, as well as to ensure that there is equity across the region. The list of interventions should not be viewed as exhaustive, as the document should allow for new schemes to emerge over the duration of the strategy. As well as clear and consistent appraisal through the STAG process there has to be clear criteria within the strategy for the prioritisation of interventions and projects across the strategy area.

Further, the appraisal would need to ensure that any measures proposed relate back to the overall Vision.

4. Are there any interventions not listed which could be added to improve the strategy?

a) Local Air Quality - The impact of the Regional Transport Strategy on local air quality needs to be more fully assessed before the document is finalised.

Areas within North Lanarkshire, which currently experience poor air quality as a result of transport emissions, have been identified. Three areas are predicted to fail the 2010 annual mean objective set down the Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations and Air Quality (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2002. These sites have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and are located at:

- Motherwell Town Centre
- Lauchope Street/Main Street, Chapelhall
- Whifflet/Shawhead, Coatbridge

North Lanarkshire Council now requires to prepare an Air Quality Action Plan which will outline the measures proposed for dealing with the breaches of the air quality objectives. Clearly since these breaches are the result of transport emissions any changes in transport strategy, which affect the AQMAs, will impact on the success of the action plan.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment, which accompanied the Regional Transport Strategy consultative draft, stated that the strategy should aim to improve local air quality. The strategy should state clearly how its proposals intend to achieve this objective.

b) Tourism – Further comment is required on how to address transport issues affecting tourist routes and destinations. Reference could be made to the Lanarkshire Tourism Action Plan, as well as to other such plans that will likely exist in other Structure Plan areas, as well as the Homecoming Study.

Within North Lanarkshire, reference should be made to the potential of the Kelvin Valley as well as Carron Valley.

c) The priority business and employment investment locations do not identify Gartcosh, Eurocentral or Kilgarth. Gartcosh and Eurocentral are identified in the structure plan as regeneration and renewal priorities and Gartcosh as a preferred location for long term expansion. The Kilgarth railway triangle is also identified as a strategic rail related location.

5. What additional powers, funding, delivery structures or other measures are needed to make the strategy successful?

a) Bus -The 'Structure of Bus Service Delivery' is identified as one of the Priority Measures, however, more detail is required as to where bus Quality Partnerships/ Quality Contracts/ Bus Route Development Grants might apply. For instance, is it envisaged that these would only be

suitable for key bus routes into and within Glasgow, or for Glasgow Orbital services, or could they potentially be introduced anywhere?

It may be that changes to the regulations governing bus Quality Partnerships/ Quality Contracts are required, to overcome the various barriers that have inhibited take up of this in the past. At the very least, an indication, if not guidance, would be helpful to advise on how to overcome these barriers.

b) Deliverability – Although a significant number of actions and interventions are identified, there should perhaps be some indication of their deliverability and implementability, as well as how much it may be aspirational. That could consider resources, time, affordability, availability of funding, and the like.

c) Roads' Legislation – It is noted in the document that roads' legislation will be used to effect changes, however, it does not clarify which particular legislation it is referring to or how it could be used. That should be clarified.

d) Regional Roads – There is reference made to Regional Roads and the potential roles for Transport Scotland/ the RTP/ the local authorities. There is a need to clarify precisely what is being suggested.

6. How can SPT best work with the public and other stakeholders to deliver the strategy?

a) Partners' Roles – It would be helpful for the document to provide clarity as to the various parties' roles in effecting or contributing to the delivery of the RTS aims.

b) Sections 2.4 and 6.11 refer to an equalities sub-strategy, to address specific transport needs of certain groups who may be excluded. While I can appreciate the potential benefits of such a sub-strategy, it is not immediately apparent as to why some of the 'groups' mentioned would require specific consideration; it would be hoped that effort is concentrated on those groups who have identifiable travel issues.

c) Community Planning Partners from a variety of professional backgrounds, health, transport, economic development, planning and social inclusion, have contributed to the development of the Regional Transport Strategy. Consideration should be given to how the skills and insights offered by all of these groups are maintained once the Regional Transport Strategy document is published.

7. Do you have any other comments on the strategy?

a) Section 3.13.8, this text should be replaced with:

Lanarkshire: Following its establishment in 2001 the Lanarkshire Local Economic Forum developed a shared economic strategy *Changing Gear; Towards 2010*. The strategy recognised that Lanarkshire's economic success relies upon its location and its people. The strategy *'underlines the need for a closer alignment between the economic development and transport domains, and recognises the contribution an improved public transport network can make to the area's economic, social and environmental targets.'* Lanarkshire's economic strategy is underpinned by a shared-action plan that promotes the following themes:

Growing Businesses through:

- Supporting entrepreneurship
- Growing innovative, competitive and sustainable businesses,
- Encouraging Market Development,

Promoting Skills & Learning through:

- Developing the workforce,
- Supporting Employability & Jobs Access,

Developing an Attractive Place to Live & Work through:

- Creating an integrated and sustainable transport infrastructure for Lanarkshire,
- Regenerating Lanarkshire and providing a quality environment,
- Assisting businesses to meet their location and property needs,
- Enhancing Lanarkshire's image.

b) Key Locations – While appreciating that it may not be practical to list all of the key strategic economic development locations, throughout the SPT area, within the main RTS document, there should perhaps be a reference to them within an appendix, for completeness. The following are listed in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2006, but have not been sufficiently made reference to in the RTS:-

- (i) Strategic Business Centres – Cumbernauld and Motherwell.
- (ii) Strategic Industrial and Business Locations – Cumbernauld North West, former Lanarkshire EZ sites, Newhouse and Newhouse West (including Eurocentral), Ravenscraig, Gartcosh, and Righead/ Bellshill/ Strathclyde Business Park.
- (iii) Core Economic Development Areas – Ravenscraig/ Motherwell/ Wishaw, and Airdrie North.
- (iv) Safeguarded Amenity Locations -
 - (a) Nationally Safeguarded Single User Sites – Faskine/ Woodhall
 - (b) Regionally Important – Gartcosh, Ravenscraig
- (v) Tourism Development Areas – Campsies (potential regional park), Forth & Clyde Canal Corridor, Strathclyde Park, and Summerlee, Coatbridge.
- (vi) International Transport Facilities – Eurofreight Terminal (Mossend), Gartsherrie Container Terminal, including Kilgarth (Coatbridge).

c) Urban Expansion – More emphasis should be placed on the urban expansion areas identified within the various Structure Plans, to ensure that transport needs and provision take due account of emerging growth areas. The urban expansion areas should be noted within the RTS, to ensure that they are considered alongside any other proposals for the locale.

d) The tight timescale has constrained the ability of local authorities, and others, to consider options and prepare responses and to get those decisions ratified by their respective local members.

It is noted that partner organisations are to get to view the final revised draft of the RTS, as well as the finalised sub-strategies, prior to being submitted to the Scottish Executive at the end of March. However, it is questionable, in consideration of the submission deadline, whether or not partners will actually be able to have sufficient time to comment on those revised documents and whether or not there would be any time for SPT to make any significant alterations that may be highlighted by the partners.

e) Consistency – There appear to be some inconsistencies in the terminology used throughout the document. For instance, there are references to “major healthcare’ and regional healthcare’ centres. It would appear that these both mean the same, however, if they are referring to the different categories of facilities that should be clarified, whereas if they mean the same, then a consistent term should be used throughout.

f) Glasgow Conurbation – Reference is made in the document to both Glasgow City Region and to Glasgow Conurbation. The limits/ geographic area of each of these should be clarified.

Regardless, it may refer to some other terminology, but it does not appear appropriate to refer to Glasgow City Region when this document concerns a (Strathclyde) Regional Transport Strategy.

g) Rail Stations – A number of potential new rail stations are identified in the document. Within North Lanarkshire, that aspirational list should also include Flemington, Abronhill, Wishaw Hospital, Mossend, Ravenscraig and Plains.

h) Motherwell Station – Motherwell Station is a key transport hub, providing direct access to West Coast and East Coast main line rail services, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and Falkirk and Stirling. A study is currently being carried out to examine options for substantially improving the facilities in, and the accesses to, the station. In consideration of the regional importance of the station, more emphasis should be attributed to it within the RTS.

i) Developer Contributions – One of the emerging recommendations in the Land-use Planning and RTS Integration Sub-strategy, in Para 6.5.2, is to “investigate options for developer contributions for transport provision”. Historically, contributions have sometimes been obtained from developers, for instance to mitigate impacts on the adjacent road network. At the present time, it is probably not possible to determine which project priorities will be targeted, specify which elements of any project may be eligible, or to estimate the amount of any potential financial contribution that may accrue from developers. There is also typically a similar demand placed on any such monies received from developers to go towards, community facilities, school provision, etc.

Further, as the whole issue of such developer contributions is currently being examined by the Scottish Executive, it may be inappropriate to place too much emphasis on this element at the present time.

j) Walking and Cycling – The recommendations in Para 6.9.2, concerning Smarter Choices, including Walking and Cycling, should go further, requiring new developments to provide walking and cycling links to public transport facilities and into adjacent communities.

Further, the provision of suitable and direct walking and cycling routes should be an integral element of any new major road scheme, to ensure that non-car modes are catered for, and encouraged, along and across any such new road scheme.

k) Within section 4, Assessment Criteria for Strategic (Regional) Interventions there is justification for additional criteria to assist the sifting process e.g. within the buses section, “new services and increased services between SIMD areas and employment/health/education/training areas” and within the rail section “improved access to and provision off services on routes to employment /health/education/training. These should be included.

l) Within section 5, Priority Projects one of the core interventions which is missing is “Projects to deliver social inclusion for our SIMD areas”. The completion of the M74 section should be expanded the “The completion of the M74, M8 and M80. Regional Projects and Schemes, medium scale interventions the need for freight/road interchange interventions should be included in table 5.2.

In table 5.6 Region wide medium term interventions should include the M8 upgrading proposals(Bailleston to Newhouse) as well as M73/Kilgarth access improvements. The Regional Urban Centres, medium term interventions should include rail service improvements for, Motherwell/Cumbernauld/Falkirk/Stirling and beyond, Glasgow/Cumbernauld/ Falkirk/Stirling and beyond and Glasgow to Edinburgh via Shotts.

In table 5.7 Regional Urban Centres, medium term interventions mention should be made of support for road network improvements which reduce congestion, improve air quality and increase available road space for public transport/walking cycling provision. Within this section a strategy for taxi’s, including private hire, should be included to recognise their contribution to reducing pressure on parking provision and car use in these centres.