

PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
24TH OCTOBER 2006

Held in the SESTRAN Offices, 8b McDonald Road, Edinburgh

Present	
Graham Bell	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr David Bryson	Falkirk Council
Cllr Neil Calvert	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Gordon Edgar	Scottish Borders Council
Phil Flanders	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Russell Imrie (Chair)	Midlothian Council
Cllr Alan Jackson	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Antony Martin	Fife Council
Jim McFarlane	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Alice McGarry	Fife Council
Cllr Jim Philp	Fife Council
Sandy Scotland	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Bishop Shepherd	East Lothian Council
Tony Taylor	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Phil Wheeler	City of Edinburgh Council
In Attendance	
John Angell	Falkirk Council
Alistair Clyne	Fife Council
Pete Collins	East Lothian Council
John Connarty	City of Edinburgh Council (Finance Adviser)
Jane Findlay	Fife Council
Keith Gowenlock	WSP Consultants (For Item 5)
Trond Haugen	SESTRAN Co-ordinator
Mr Keith Irving	SESTRAN Travel Plan Officer designate
Scott Leitham	MVA Consultants (For Item 5)
Alex Macaulay	SESTRAN Partnership Director
Graeme Malcolm	West Lothian Council
Iain Mathie	SESTRAN Programme Manager designate
Bob McLellan	Fife Council
Lyn Morgan	CDU Limited (Secretariat)
Douglas Muir	Midlothian Council
Keith Rimmer	City of Edinburgh Council
Chris Rogers	Scottish Executive
Alastair Short	SESTRAN Strategy Manager designate
Roger Stewart	CDU Limited (Clerk)
Brian Young	Scottish Borders Council

The Chair welcomed Mr Tony Taylor, who had been nominated as a Non-Councillor Member by the National Health Service. He also welcomed Mr Alastair Short, the SESTRAN Strategy Manager designate, Mr Keith Irving, Travel Plan Officer designate, and Mr Iain Mathie, Programme Manager designate. All three officers would be joining the staff of SESTRAN in the near future.

1. Order of Business

It was agreed at the suggestion of the Clerk that the order be changed to take the recommendations on voting rights of Non-Councillor Members as the first item of business.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:
Cllr Spears, Cllr Hampshire, Cllr King and Cllr Bartholomew

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wheeler and Councillor Jackson declared an interest as directors of **tie** Limited.

4. Voting Rights for Non-Councillor Members

The Clerk spoke to a report recommending that the Partnership give voting rights to Non-Councillor Members on all matters excepting those specifically excluded by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.

The Partnership approved the recommendation.

5. Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)

The Partnership considered the draft version of the RTS which had been presented and discussed at a special workshop for Members held on 20 October. There was also circulated a paper containing amendments to the draft RTS which had been agreed at the workshop.

In discussion, Mr Flanders considered that references to freight transport should be strengthened in the draft, and it was agreed that Mr Flanders would discuss this matter separately with Mr Leitham.

Cllr Martin was concerned that the draft did not distinguish adequately between bridge tolling and road user charging, and, as presently drafted, supported the principle of bridge tolling. After detailed discussion, and in the light of the current review of tolling on the Forth and Tay Road Bridges, and the development of national policies on road user charging, the Partnership agreed to delete Section 9.5.8 of the Draft RTS and to amend Section 10.6.5 in accordance with more neutral wording proposed by Cllr Martin and the Partnership Director.

It was further agreed at Cllr Martin's suggestion to change references to parking "standards" in Section 5.2.5 to "framework".

Cllr McGarry noted that the draft did not express a view on powers and functions for delivery of the RTS once adopted. The Chair commented that it had been previously agreed that this matter would be discussed with the partner Councils outwith the RTS development and consultation process. The draft did, however, set out delivery options in Section 8. Subject to insertion of the amendments agreed at the current meeting, the Partnership approved the draft RTS to proceed to the public consultation phase.

6. Minutes

a) Special Partnership Board 1 September 2006

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

b) Partnership Board 18 August 2006

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

c) Management Team Meeting, 15 September 2006

The Minutes were noted.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

8. Partnership Director's Report

The Partnership Director, speaking to his circulated report, gave an account of the recent high levels of activity, particularly in relation to the development of the RTS. He thanked the RTS consultants and participating constituent council officers for their efforts over the period.

In relation to Paragraph 4.1.1. of the report, the Director's meeting with officers of the Tay Road Bridge Joint Board was held on 19 October and not 19 September as shown.

In relation to Paragraph 4.2.1, it was agreed that the Director should consult with the Vice-Chairs in developing a response to Midlothian's consultation on its draft Local Transport Strategy, and not with the Chair because of the Chair's interest as a Midlothian councillor. The Partnership also agreed to consider at its next meeting the appointment of an additional Vice-Chair following the resignation of Cllr Burns.

At the instance of Cllr Edgar, the meeting briefly discussed arrangements for representing SESTRAN at meetings on occasions where member involvement was indicated but the Chair was unavailable. The Director undertook to consult with the Vice-Chairs when any such occasions arose.

The Partnership discussed a number of topics to be raised with the Minister for Transport after his arrival at the present meeting.

The Partnership noted the contents of the Director's report and the accompanying Minutes of the meeting between RTP Chairs and the Minister for transport held on 4 October.

Note: Cllr Jackson left the meeting at this point, and the Clerk intimated that the meeting might be inquorate. It was agreed to proceed with the meeting but that any substantive decisions made from this point forward would be incompetent until homologated at a quorate meeting. It was, however, subsequently ascertained that the Clerk's advice was incorrect, and that the meeting was in fact quorate for the entirety of its proceedings prior to the arrival of the Minister for Transport.

9. Proposal to establish Officer Liaison Groups

The Clerk spoke to a report proposing the replacement, with immediate effect, of the existing Management Team and Working Groups with a Chief Officer Liaison Group and five Liaison Groups entitled:

Programme Liaison Group
Strategy Liaison Group
Bus Liaison Group
Rail Liaison Group
Sustainable Travel Liaison Group.

The Partnership approved the formation of the new groups with the composition, terms of reference and reporting arrangements as set out in the report

10. Finance Officer's Report

Mr Connarty spoke to the Finance Officer's report on the Partnership's finances.

After discussion, and noting Mr Angell's comment with reference to Paragraph 7.1.(ii) that funding would be available for the Round the Forth Cycling Project for 2007/'08 as well as 2006/'07, the Partnership noted the contents of the Finance Officer's report and accompanying appendices.

11. Human Resources Report

Proposed policies for SESTRAN employees relating to Equal Opportunities and Grievances, based on the policies of Falkirk Council, were approved by the Partnership subject to correction of a typographical error in the title page of the Equal Opportunities document

12. Rail Issues report

Mr Haugen spoke to a circulated report from the Rail Group. The Partnership noted the contents of the Report and accompanying Minutes of the Rail Group meeting of 6 October; and remitted to the Director to respond to the Scottish Rail Utilisation Strategy consultation in accordance with the draft response appended to the report. The Chair invited constituent Councils which had responded to the Rail Utilisation Strategy consultation to provide a copy to either Mr Macaulay or Mr Haugen.

13. Work Planning and Delivery Group, Sustainable Travel Group and Bus Liaison Group

The Partnership noted the Minutes of the Work Planning and Delivery Group meeting of 12 September, and continued the contents of the circulated report for consideration at the next meeting.

The Partnership continued the circulated report from the Sustainable Travel Group for consideration at the next meeting.

The Partnership noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Bus Liaison Group of 4 October.

14. Date of next meeting

Friday 15 December, 2006, 10am, SESTRAN offices.

Note: the meeting adjourned at this point for the official opening of the SESTRAN Offices and launch of the SESTRAN Tripshare Scheme by Tavish Scott MSP, Minister for Transport. On reconvening in the presence of the Minister, the meeting was inquorate.

Meeting with Minister for Transport

The Chair thanked the Minister for attending and for opening the Partnership's offices.

The Minister thanked SESTRAN for inviting him and giving him the opportunity to discuss relevant issues.

With Cllr Imrie leading the discussions, the Minister responded to questions about:

- the progress of the development of the National Transport Strategy and its three "daughter" strategy documents;
- concerns relating to the East Coast Rail franchise in the light of the GNER parent company Sea Containers having recently filed in the US courts for "Chapter 11" bankruptcy protection;
- investment in bus services to improve social inclusion;
- SESTRAN's concern to ensure that revenue funding was available to meet the recurrent costs of projects in receipt of capital funding under the RTS;
- future arrangements for sponsoring of major transport projects following the establishment of Transport Scotland;
- the future direction and funding of the Regional Transport Partnerships and the transfer of functions and powers;
- the future of bridge tolls in the East of Scotland; and about future plans for the Forth crossing.

In concluding the Chair thanked the Minister for sharing his views with the meeting and for his support of SESTRAN.