

PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
15TH DECEMBER 2006

**Held in the SESTRAN Offices, 8b McDonald Road, Edinburgh,
EH7 4LZ**

Present	
Charles Anderson	Non-Councillor Member
Graham Bell	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr David Bryson	Falkirk Council
Cllr Neil Calvert	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Eddie Carrick	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr Maureen Child	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Gordon Edgar	Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Norman Hampshire	East Lothian Council
Cllr Ricky Henderson	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Russell Imrie (Chair)	Midlothian Council
Cllr Allan Jackson	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Lawrence Marshall	City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Antony Martin	Fife Council
John Martin	Non-Councillor Member
Jim McFarlane	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Alice McGarry	Fife Council
Cllr Jim Muirhead	Midlothian Council
Cllr Jim Philp	Fife Council
Sandy Scotland	Non-Councillor Member
Cllr Phil Wheeler	City of Edinburgh Council
In Attendance	
John Angell	Falkirk Council
Gillian Bartlett	SESTRAN Office Manager
Alasdair Black	City of Edinburgh Council
Alistair Clyne	Fife Council
John Connarty	City of Edinburgh Council (Finance Advisor)
Natasha Farrell	Scottish Executive
Andrew Ferguson	Fife Council, (Legal Advisor)
Trond Haugen	SESTRAN Co-ordinator
Paul Ince	East Lothian Council
Keith Irving	SESTRAN Travel Plan Officer
Alex Macaulay	SESTRAN Partnership Director
Graeme Malcolm	West Lothian Council
Iain Mathie	SESTRAN Programme Manager
Bob McLellan	Fife Council
Douglas Muir	Midlothian Council

Mac West	Clackmannanshire Council
David Peace	SESTRAN Secretariat
Lisa Pratt	SESTRAN Receptionist
Keith Rimmer	City of Edinburgh Council
Alastair Short	SESTRAN Strategy Manager
Roger Stewart	CDU Limited (Clerk)
Brian Young	Scottish Borders Council

The Chair welcomed Gillian Bartlett, SESTRAN Office Manager / P A to the Director and Lisa Pratt, SESTRAN Receptionist / Administrative Assistant, to their first SESTRAN Partnership Meeting. With the exception of the Communications Officer, Andrew Dougal, who was due to start on 28 December 2006, the SESTRAN staff compliment was now up to full strength for the initial operation of the Partnership.

1. Order of Business

It was agreed that an additional paper on Delegated Powers for Responding to other RTPs RTS's would be taken as Item 6.1 on today's agenda.

Two other papers relating to additional project funding for capital projects in 2006/07 were also tabled for discussion under Agenda Item 10.2.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr Spears, Cllr Matchett, Cllr King, Cllr Bartholomew, Mr Neil Renilson and Mr Phil Flanders.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Wheeler, Jackson, Child and Henderson declared an interest as directors of **tie** Limited and Cllr Henderson also declared an interest as a Director of Transport Edinburgh Limited.

4. Minutes

Mr Martin and Mr Anderson had both issued their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting of 24 October 2006, but these appeared to have been missed off the Minutes.

Cllr Jackson requested that his forename be correctly spelt with 2 'i's rather than the one as shown in the Minutes.

With the exception of the above, the Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Matters Arising

Mr Stewart reported that there had been some confusion over the issue of whether or not the 24 October meeting had been quorate for its entirety. For the avoidance of any doubt, Mr Stewart requested that the Partnership homologate the decisions under Agenda Items 9-13 inclusive

of the meeting of 24 October 2006. The Partnership approved the decisions.

Cllr Carrick, supported by Cllrs Hampshire, Wheeler, Henderson and Jackson, raised the issue of the timing of the circulation of papers for the Partnership meetings. The Cllrs suggested that more time was required in order to be able to give full consideration to the subjects of the papers. Mr Peace responded that the timings were set out in the Standing Orders.

During the following discussion, Mr Scotland pointed out that Members were supposed to act in the best interests of the Partnership, not merely bring their Council's position to the table, Cllr Martin reminded the meeting that the processes followed under the voluntary predecessor to the Statutory SESTRAN were no longer pertinent, and it was reported that Officers of the constituent councils had adequate input into the issues through the Liaison Groups. Cllr Imrie proposed reviewing the timings as set out in the Standing Orders in order to alleviate Member's concerns regarding having enough time to properly consider meeting papers. Mr Macaulay accepted responsibility for the delayed issue of some papers for this meeting, but reported that due to the fast pace of current issues, it was hard to keep Members fully apprised and yet give them enough time to consider the issues at length. He reported that he would convene another meeting of the Chief Officers of the constituent councils and would have a forward programme of all Liaison Groups drawn up that would co-ordinate with the agreed forward timetable for Partnership meetings.

Mr Anderson and Mr Martin both requested further detail on the Minister's responses to the questions raised with him at the 24 October meeting. Mr Macaulay expanded on the 7 bullet points set out in the minutes of 24 October.

- 1) The NTS was now out and no further comment was necessary at this time.
- 2) The Minister had given the requested reassurances regarding the East Coast Rail Franchise operation, although subsequent events had now overtaken these.
- 3) The Minister had supported the principle of investment in bus services to enhance social inclusion but subject to budgetary constraints.
- 4) The Minister was aware of the concerns regarding revenue implications of the proposed capital project programme and the Scottish Executive were working to address the concerns.
- 5) It was reported that NTS would encourage close working with Transport Scotland on major projects, but no definition was given regarding the difference between National and Regional projects.
- 6) Regarding the issue of the future direction and funding of the RTPs, particularly in relation to what powers and functions the RTPs might seek, the Minister reiterated that this was an issue for each RTP.
- 7) Regarding the issue of tolled bridges and the Forth Crossing, the Minister reported that the work was ongoing regarding a decision on

the Forth Crossing and the Tolloed Bridges Review had not yet been published.

5. Directors Report

Mr Macaulay spoke to the circulated paper and suggested that Section 3 of the paper should be taken-as-read as it concerned items addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

Under Item 2.4 of his report, Mr Macaulay asked for the Minute to show his and SESTRAN's appreciation for the hard work of CDU Limited in their supporting role to SESTRAN over recent years. In particular Mr Macaulay thanked Mr Stewart for his role as the Clerk to the Partnership and Mr Peace for his role in establishing the new SESTRAN Offices and being the main contact point for the SESTRAN contract. The contract with CDU Limited was to end on 31 December 2006 and the Secretariat and support roles carried out by Mr Peace would now be performed in-house by Gillian Bartlett and Lisa Pratt. CDU Limited would continue to manage the SESTRAN website.

The Partnership endorsed the vote of thanks and also approved the proposal to appoint Mr Andrew Ferguson, Fife Council, who already provided Legal Advice to the Partnership, as the new Clerk to the Partnership.

Mr Stewart responded on behalf of CDU Limited, and acknowledged the support and co-operation of Officers and Members during the term of the contract with special mention of the contributions of Mr Rimmer and Dr McLellan when they were Chairs of the Management Team and of Natasha Farrell of the Scottish Executive for her assistance.

Under Item 2.7 of the Director's Report, Cllr Imrie, as Chair of SESTRAN, reported on two meetings. The first had been with Douglas Alexander, MP, Secretary of State for Transport, held at SPT in Glasgow. SESTRAN had been lead to believe that the meeting was to allow all of the RTPs to put their issues to the UK Minister. However, it transpired that the meeting was just SESTRAN, SPT and the Secretary of State and that most of what was discussed at the meeting was SPT issues. Cllr Imrie had since written to the Chair of SPT, Cllr Alistair Watson, and requested that any future meetings were not so SPT centric. Cllr Imrie was also going to approach the Minister for a separate meeting just for SESTRAN to air its issues.

The second meeting was with Mary Mulligan and Cathy Peattie, both MSPs, concerning the A801 Avon Gorge road. Cllr Imrie had been briefed by John Angell of Falkirk Council on the project and both MSPs had agreed to lobby "internally" within Holyrood for the project. Cllr Imrie had agreed to act as a conduit for information on the project between the project team and the MSPs.

Under Item 2.8.7 of his report, Mr Macaulay reported that following the 13 December meeting, he had circulated to the Chief Officers of the

constituent councils on a confidential basis a copy of the progress report on a new multi-modal Forth Crossing. Various sites were reported to be being considered and there was no decision yet on whether a tunnel or bridge might be the better option. Mr Macaulay had requested that authorities directly adjacent to the crossing corridor should be represented on the reference group and Transport Scotland were considering this.

Under Item 2.9 of his report Mr Macaulay reported that the presentation to Transport Scotland on High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes on the approaches to the Forth Bridge had been well received. SESTRAN had been invited to lead the steering group on the issue joined by Transport Scotland.

In response to requests from Members, Mr Macaulay agreed to circulate copies of the documents mentioned under Item 2.8.7 to non-elected Members on a confidential basis.

The Partnership agreed to;

- A) Note the contents of the report
- B) Note the recommendations contained in the reports elsewhere on the agenda
- C) Approve the appointment of Andrew Ferguson as Clerk to the Partnership from 31 December 2006
- D) To promote the inclusion of relevant Local Authorities in direct discussions with Transport Scotland and the Scottish Executive on the Strategic Transport Project Review

6. RTS Update

Mr Short spoke to the circulated paper. He reported that, in addition to the availability of the consultation questionnaire and RTS on the SESTRAN and Council websites, a radio advertising campaign had been commissioned and press releases issued. The press releases had not been picked up very much and other promotional ideas were being investigated.

Under Item 3.5 of his report, Mr Short explained the reasoning behind the appointment of Mr John Saunders. It was due to his extensive knowledge of Local Authority processes and his reputation and experience in the transport field. Mr Macaulay further explained that the intention was not to bypass local authorities in any way, but rather to obtain impartial and independent advice. If he had suggested using constituent council officers for this work it could have led to conflicts of interest and if he had done the work himself it could similarly have led to accusations of self-promotion. It was important that such a key issue was seen to be addressed as impartially as possible.

Under Item 3.6 of his report, Mr Short explained that although tight, the timetable was worked back from the Scottish Executive deadline of 31 March 2006 for the submission of the RTS. The proposed period between the Workshop on 9 March 2007 and the Special Partnership meeting on 30 March 2007 was an additional consultative stage not required under the legislation. The date of 29 March for the end of this phase was proposed to be brought

back to 22 March in order to allow the timeous circulation of papers for the Special Partnership meeting on 30 March. It was important that all worked to either fit this timetable into council meeting cycles or to get delegated powers from their council to enable them to approve the RTS on behalf of their council.

Mr Macaulay clarified that the RTS had to be submitted on 31 March 2007, but that the issue of powers and functions for SESTRAN was to be a longer running debate. The RTS had to state whether or not SESTRAN would seek powers and functions in the future, but did not require detailed explanation of what those powers would be or how they would be achieved. Thus there was the opportunity to consider in greater detail the issue of powers and functions after the RTS had been submitted. Mr Macaulay intended to report back to the February 16 Partnership meeting on the initial findings of Mr Saunders' work and this would then feed into the final version of the RTS.

The Partnership agreed to:

- A) note the progress on the RTS consultation
- B) approve the timetable for completing the RTS subject to changing the final consultation period from 9-29 March to 9-22 March
- C) approve the appointment of Mr John Saunders of MRC McLean Hazel to give guidance on the additional powers SESTRAN may or may not need to implement the RTS.
- D) Note the SESTRAN response to the Midlothian Council Draft Local Transport Strategy.

6.1 Delegated Powers to Respond to Regional Transport Strategy Consultations

Mr Short spoke to the tabled paper requesting Partnership approval for delegated powers for the Director to respond to the RTS Consultations of the other six RTPs subject to the approval of the response by the Chair or Vice-Chairs of SESTRAN.

The Partnership agreed to the recommendation that the Director have delegated powers to respond to the RTS Consultations.

7. NTS Update &

8. The Eddington Report

Mr Short introduced the circulated papers.

Several main issues were identified within both reports.

The lack of support for a High Speed Rail Link between London and Scotland in the Eddington report was condemned by Members and the logic behind the decision was thought to be flawed. The support for a higher speed link between Glasgow and Edinburgh was welcomed and the support for further investigation into a HSR Link to England was endorsed although it was recognised that it would be hard to progress if there was no support south of the Border.

On the issue of road user charging, there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not such a scheme should be supported, but it was agreed that, if it was to be implemented, only a national scheme could work. The suggestion that Scotland should be used for a trial scheme was condemned and would raise complex taxation issues if pursued. The Chair's proposal to place the issue on the agenda for the next Partnership meeting was approved.

Mr Martin was able to shed some light on the "changes" that had appeared in the NTS. He reported that the NTS included the first mention in a policy document of HSR and electrification of certain routes, the emphasis on National rather than local Road Pricing, and the first mention of the possibility of refranchising of buses since 1985. Mr Martin suggested that SESTRAN would make best use of its resources by concentrating on producing positions on these issues.

Mr Macaulay remarked on the use of the issue of "connectivity" which was thought to encompass integration.

There was concern expressed over the apparent concentration of the Eddington report on the South East of England and on air travel. It was agreed that there were a large proportion of journeys within the SESTRAN region that went beyond the stated "average" of 15 miles. The omission of a new Forth Crossing from the NTS was seen as surprising.

9. Election of Vice-Chair

The Clerk, Mr Stewart, spoke to the circulated report proposing the election of a new Vice-Chair following the resignation of Cllr Andrew Burns.

The Chair called for nominations for the position.

Cllr Child nominated Cllr Henderson and this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Henderson was duly appointed as Vice-Chair.

10 Liaison Group Reports

10.1 Chief Officer Liaison Group

The report was noted

10.2 Programme Liaison Group

Mr Mathie spoke to the circulated report. Contingency planning for an under-spend situation had been deemed prudent and was being pursued. Mr Mathie spoke to the tabled papers on the City of Edinburgh UTMC project and the Burntisland multi-modal interchange. It was explained that the change in costs for the UTMC project was the difference between estimated prices and those actually received in the tenders. It was recognised that the difference was substantial but it was a reflection of the fact that there were only 2 suppliers in the UK. Neither project was a new one, both had been already approved by

the Partnership, but both were now seeking additional funding. The Cross Forth Ferry project projected underspend of £200,000 this year was now likely to be reduced to £100,000.

Mr Mathie pointed out that, if all of the additional funding was agreed, the capital budget would be over what had been approved by SESTRAN, but still within the Scottish Executive budget.

Although there was concern voiced that only 17% of the capital budget had been spent at this point in the year, if all of the projects ran true for the rest of the year, the programme would only be £50,000 over budget. Mr Connarty confirmed that it was not abnormal for only 17% of the capital to have been spent at this stage of the year, but that careful management would be required from this point if the budget was to be met.

Members expressed concern at being asked to approve such large funding differences over budget at such short notice, but agreed to approve the additional funding as requested with the proviso that they would not be asked to provide decisions at such short notice again.

The Partnership also approved the procurement of Term Consultants as per Item 5 of the report.

10.3. Rail Liaison Group

Mr Haugen spoke to the circulated report. The Partnership noted the date of the next Rail Forum of 8 May 2007 and noted the report.

Prior to approval of the Recommendations of Agenda Item 10.4, the Partnership meeting became inquorate with the departure of Cllrs McGarry and Jackson. The Chair thus drew the meeting to a close and carried forward Items 10.4 to 16 inclusive to the next Partnership meeting to be held on 16 February 2007.

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