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Date	12/04/21

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**REPORT TO:** MEMBERS' LIBRARY SERVICE

**MEETING DATE:** April 2021

**BY:** Head of Infrastructure

**SUBJECT:** ESESCR Deal – Bus Partnership Fund

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the formation of a regional approach to developing and delivering bus priority infrastructure projects to improve bus journey times and support bus patronage.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Council note a collaborative approach under the East of Scotland and Edinburgh City Region Deal to explore and consider the formation of a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) and prepare a collective bid to the Bus partnership fund.
- 2.2 To note an initial bid must be made into Transport Scotland's £500 million Bus Partnership Fund by 19 April 2021.
- 2.3 To approve the principle of a programme of interventions to improve bus journey times, reliability and integration with active travel, and increase bus patronage by removing car based congestion, increasing capacity, introducing traffic management schemes or other appropriate measures subject to satisfactory public engagement and consultation.
- 2.4 To note and support the Transport Appraisal Board to prepare a collective South East of Scotland regional bid to Transport Scotland for funding from its Bus Partnership Fund, on behalf of East Lothian Council.
- 2.5 To note that the applications must be from partnerships working towards Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) status, as defined by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. A formal legal arrangement cannot be enacted until 2022 following the publication of secondary legislation, however this is a statutory requirement.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On the 16 December the Scottish Government published an update to the climate change plan: '*Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018-2032 - update*'.
- 3.2 The plan takes a co-ordinated approach recognising multiple sector interventions to support renewable energy and decarbonisation across industry. A key target is the reduction in car kilometres by 20% by 2032.
- 3.3 The national Transport Strategy lays out the ambition of the Scottish Government focusing on four priorities: reduce inequalities, take climate action; help deliver inclusive economic growth and improve people's health and well-being.
- 3.4 In support of the national transport agenda, work is progressing on the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2). The case for change, Update and Phase 1 Recommendations report, published a series of milestones to 100% net zero emissions by 2045. This is in alignment with Climate Change targets.
- 3.5 Transport Scotland as part of its response to the climate emergency, has provided a long-term investment of over £500m through the Bus Partnership Fund to deliver targeted bus priority measures on local and trunk roads. This is intended to reduce the negative impacts of congestion on bus services and address the decline in bus patronage.
- 3.6 In June 2020 following a letter from the cabinet secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, a Transport Transition Group was formed from the City Region Deal membership to prioritise Bus priority rapid deployment measures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic emergency. A successful bid into Transport Scotland's Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund, secured £1.8 million of measures to help improve bus priority during the pandemic. This group included Clackmannanshire and Falkirk and looked to explore bus priority options. It is recommended that this group lead on the application to the fund on behalf of constituent Authorities.
- 3.7 The Bus Partnership Fund will complement the powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, enabling local authorities to work in partnership with bus operators, to develop and deliver ambitious schemes that incorporate bus priority measures.
- 3.8 Initial discussions with local bus operators are supportive of a collaborative approach and have signed up in principle. A draft agreement is being prepared which will be finalised with Transport Scotland guidance and legal advocacy sought of the form of this agreement in due course.
- 3.9 The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Elected Member Oversight Committee will focus on the evidence of how bus services will be improved by addressing congestion, but the partnership approach is also expected to leverage other bus service improvements to help tackle the climate emergency, reduce private car use and increase bus patronage.

- 3.10 Transport is one of the five key themes of the City Region Deal and is integral to securing the overarching aim of achieving sustainable inclusive growth across the region. The City Region Deal agreement specified as part of the governance structure the requirement for a Transport Appraisal Board (TAB) to focus on a regional approach to upgrading existing transport infrastructure to support regional activity in innovation, employability/skills and housing.
- 3.11 The Terms of Reference for the City Region Deal include considering the benefits of collective region-based bids for external funding, and are shown in Appendix 1, and the Governance structure for the City Region Deal is shown in Appendix 2.
- 3.12 A second round of funding will become available in October 2021 and a supplementary report will be made to Council seeking authority to pursue additional funding to deliver site specific interventions, subject to public engagement, consultation, acceptability and technical evaluation.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 These proposals will contribute towards The East Lothian Plan – 2017-27 focusing on health and wellbeing, safety, transport connectivity, sustainability and protecting our environment.
- 4.2 This proposal will contribute to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan to deliver a high quality environment and that people in East Lothian are enjoying healthier lives.
- 4.3 The proposals contribute the delivery of the Local Transport Strategy key objectives.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – It is anticipated that additional grant funding can be drawn down subject to successful application. Funding is released in two phases with April's application seeking funding for the development of an outline business case with October application focusing on specific interventions.
- 6.2 Personnel – none.
- 6.3 Other – none.

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

Appendix 1: Revised Terms of Reference for the Edinburgh and South East  
Scotland City Region Deal Transport Appraisal Board (January 2020)

Appendix 2: Structure Chart

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<b>DATE</b>	26/3/21

## **Appendix 1: Revised Terms of Reference for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Transport Appraisal Board (January 2020)**

### **Membership**

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Transport Appraisal Board (hereinafter referred to as 'the Board') to comprise:

- South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran)
- Transport Scotland
- Representatives from the six constituent local authorities (inc. SESplan)
- Representative from the higher education/further education (HE/FE) sector
- City Region Deal Project Management Office (observer)

The Board is also able to co-opt representatives of other bodies and/or individuals for limited periods to address specifically defined matters.

### **Context**

Investment in transport infrastructure is a major theme of the City Region Deal, as it is an essential component of driving inclusive growth. It extends across almost all of the other City Region Deal themes. Two specific named transport projects are included in the inventory of City Region Deal investments, these being the upgrade of the A720 Sheriffhall junction, and public transport improvements at West Edinburgh. City Region Deal investment projects need to maximise opportunities for improving accessibility across the region (as well as to areas outwith the region), and need to align with appropriate strategies so as to meet the overall ambitions of the City Region Deal.

### **Purpose**

To make recommendations to the Joint Committee on the approach towards delivering the transport elements of the City Region Deal Investment Programme. This will include recognition of pertinent strategy and include matters of overall regional policy and strategy in relation to City Region Deal aims, objectives, and specific investment projects.

### **Responsibilities**

- To work as a partnership of Transport Scotland, SEStran, the six Councils (including SESplan) and the HE/FE sector in assessing and agreeing upon the optimal transport interventions to meeting the objectives of the City Region Deal; and to do so within the context of extant and emerging policies and strategies at national, regional, and local levels. These will include the National Transport Strategy, the Strategic Transport Projects Review, and the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as local transport strategies and local development plans, together with any similar relevant plans/policies/strategies, including the Regional Spatial Strategy, that emerge during the City Region Deal period.
- To recognise the role of transport policy and interventions in addressing climate change and the need for a low carbon economy.

- To use that assessment as the basis for direct transport input to the City Region Deal's Regional Growth Framework and any subsequent review or update of that document.
- To work with the statutory planning and transport authorities of the region together with the statutory agencies responsible for economic development and growth, and any other relevant bodies.
- To ensure that TAB input and resulting transport interventions, are consistent with the delivery of a regional spatial strategy.
- To ensure close liaison of the Board with the City Region Deal Boards responsible for Data Driven Innovation, Housing, and Employability/Skills.
- To ensure positive and regular engagement with the City Region Deal Regional Enterprise Council so as to be well-informed of the transport related views, issues and objectives of the commercial/business/third sectors.
- To use the extensive stakeholder base of the Board partners and the outcomes of consultation work by partners, to ensure that policy and strategy is suitably informed.
- To consider the benefits of collective regional based bids for external funding.
- To ensure a consistent approach to the business cases underpinning the specific transport projects, and those with a transport element, thereby enabling a region-wide view of the cumulative impact of transport related City Region Deal projects.

To assist in this work the Board will be expected to have regard to the following.

- The strategic rationale, demand/need, objectives, evidence, costings and delivery programme and mechanisms for projects, their relationship and phasing in the overall programme, including cumulative impact.
- Shared use of data to provide a common evidence base.
- Recognition of best practice, including Treasury Green Book, and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance.
- Access to funds and budgets.
- Maintain an overview of the impact of interventions across the region through environmental and other assessments.
- To review these terms of reference on an annual basis to ensure that they remain **relevant** and optimal in supporting the delivery of City Region Deal objectives.

## **Meetings**

Six weekly or as may otherwise be agreed by the Board; or as may be called by the Chair. Meetings will normally be held in Edinburgh to minimise travel demand on attendees. The City Deal Project Management Office will provide the secretariat.

## **Sub-groups**

Where agreed by the Board as necessary and beneficial, a sub-group comprising members of the Board and, with the agreement of the Board, any co-opted bodies and/or individuals, may be established for a specified period to consider and report to the Board on a defined relevant transport related matter.

These Terms of Reference agreed by the City Region Deal Transport Appraisal Board on 20th January 2020.

Appendix 2

