

LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

2012

ABERDEEN
CITY AND
SHIRE

*a brighter
outlook*

Moving
Aberdeenshire
Forward

LTS 2012

Foreword

Addressing the issues of congestion, climate change, physical inactivity and the prospect of future fuel scarcity, the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) is clear in its objectives to deliver real, measureable improvements.

The development of the LTS has required careful consideration of strategic national and regional transport priorities, seeking to align its objectives with those of our partners at Nestrans – as set out in the North East Regional Transport Strategy – and the Scottish Government. If Aberdeenshire is to grow and continue to be economically vibrant, an efficient transport network is vital in supporting these aspirations.

In this current economic climate, the overarching philosophy of Aberdeenshire's LTS has been developed to maximise our existing resources. Central to our approach and the actions promoted within this document is the guiding principle encouraging individuals and businesses to consider ways to travel **less**, travel more **actively** and, where vehicular travel is necessary, how journeys could be undertaken more **effectively**.

This will be achieved by recognising that, geographically, Aberdeenshire has a mixture of urban and rural settlements, with each of its local areas experiencing unique issues and, importantly, opportunities. The LTS has been developed to support transport across Aberdeenshire, working at a local level to achieve the wider aspirations. With this approach, the LTS reflects the broader priorities of Aberdeenshire's citizens who seek road network improvements, improved public transport provision and greater opportunities to undertake sustainable journeys, addressing these priorities at a local level first.

The LTS has also been developed in recognition that traffic generated in Aberdeenshire can have an adverse effect on congestion in Aberdeen City and it is therefore imperative that the Strategy supports our City partners in the delivery of the Aberdeen City LTS.

At its heart, the LTS recognises that every method of transport has an important role to play. The LTS aims to maximise these transport opportunities by ensuring that, as citizens, we make the right travel choices and that, where possible, travel options are supported and developed. In this way, the LTS will help Aberdeenshire address the difficult transport challenges that we face.

Councillor Peter Argyle
Chair, Infrastructure Services Committee

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	The Local Transport Strategy	3
1.2	The Guiding Principle	4
1.3	Delivery Mechanism	4
2	Where we are.....	5
2.1	Progress to Date.....	5
2.2	Developing the LTS	6
2.3	Main Issues	6
3	Where we want to be	9
3.1	Vision.....	9
3.2	Aims.....	9
3.3	Objectives.....	9
3.4	Targets	10
4	How we get there	11
4.1	Travel Less.....	11
4.2	Travel Actively	13
4.3	Travel Effectively	16
5	Monitoring, Reporting and Promoting	23
6	Delivery Plan	24

Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

The best area

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

The best council

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future

1 Introduction

Since publication of the previous LTS in 2007, the economic climate has changed considerably and the Council has an even greater obligation to ensure that the transport challenges of today are confronted in an efficient and economical way. With effective climate change legislation¹, there is also a real need to demonstrate Aberdeenshire’s ability to report on, adapt to, and mitigate against climate change.

This LTS document sets out how the Council will aim to cater for the needs of all transport users across the region, ensuring that existing resources are used and developed to their full potential.

1.1 The Local Transport Strategy

Aberdeenshire’s LTS aims to deliver transport solutions for users of the local transport network. The Strategy identifies the key transport issues affecting Aberdeenshire and sets out an approach that is shared by citizens, businesses and the Council including its partners, backed up by a series of actions which will support delivery of our vision:

“Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland”

The LTS has been developed to support the delivery of a range of wider strategic transport objectives and priorities as set out in the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), its associated Action Plans and the Scottish Government’s National Transport Strategy (NTS). The Strategy also supports the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum’s (ACSEF) Economic Action Plan, the Aberdeenshire Economic Development Strategy and the Council’s wider aims as set out in the Single Outcome Agreement.

Taking into account the impact of commuter traffic generated from within Aberdeenshire into Aberdeen City, the LTS aims to support partners at Aberdeen City Council in the delivery of their own LTS and the main development plans². The link between the LTS and other relevant plans and guidance documents is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

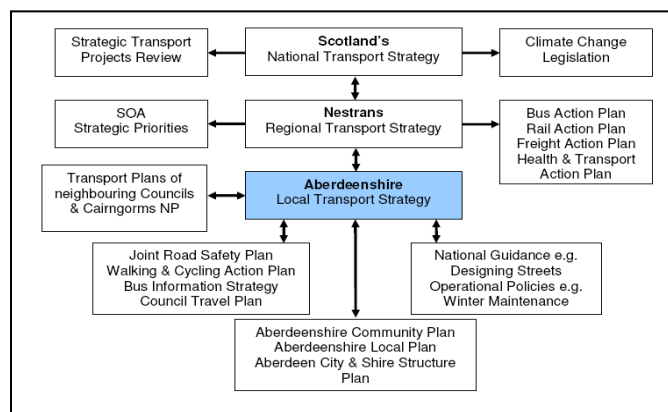


Figure 1.1: LTS Hierarchy

Alongside the strategic considerations, the LTS takes into account the results from extensive public and stakeholder consultation which considered the problems and opportunities that the Strategy should seek to address over the next three to four years.

¹ Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

² These include the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009), the emerging Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan and the emerging Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan.

1.2 The Guiding Principle

Drawing upon lessons learned from previous transport strategies and taking into account the challenges we face today, the LTS embraces a simple guiding principle. The LTS will aim to encourage individuals and businesses to consider ways to travel **less**, travel more **actively** and, where vehicular travel is necessary, how journeys could be made more **effectively**.

Adopting this approach, the LTS can consider all modes of transport as well as options designed to support a reduced need to travel. In addition, as our transport network is governed by its capacity, safety and maintenance, these issues can be taken into account when considering our approach to maximise the effective movement of people and goods.

For some, the change in travel behaviour required to adopt the above guiding principle may be difficult or unfeasible. However, there are those who are ready to change, requiring only a modest level of input from the Council to support these changes. Recognising this allows us to concentrate efforts on those ready to adopt new travel behaviours, ensuring that our efforts are better directed. By understanding *who* can change their travel behaviour and supporting the interventions required to facilitate this, the opportunities to achieve the LTS objectives will be greatly increased.

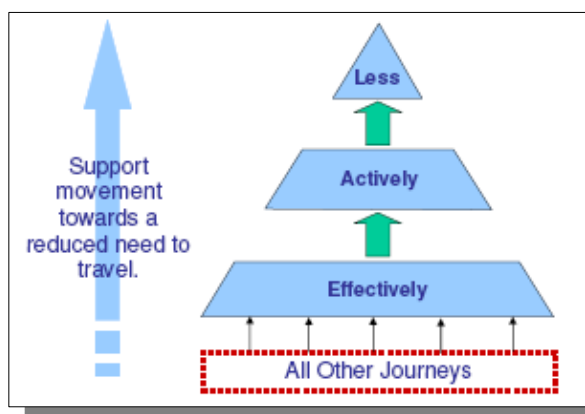


Figure 1.2: The Guiding Principle

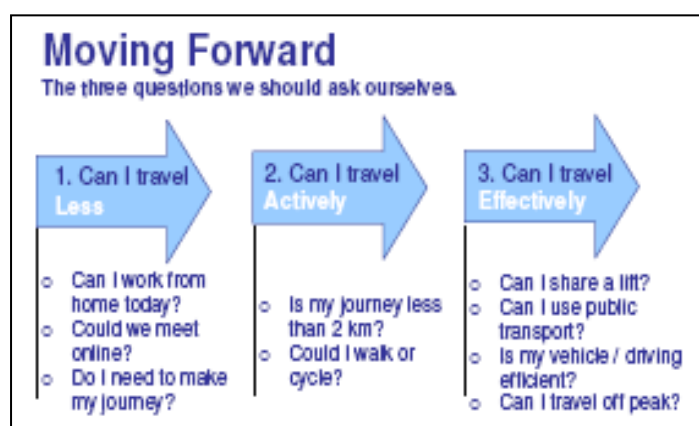


Figure 1.3: The Guiding Principle in Practice

We will therefore:

- Identify those primed for change;
- Promote small changes first;
- Maximise use of existing infrastructure;
- Remove barriers;
- Support longer term change; and
- Encourage individuals to question their journeys.

1.3 Delivery Mechanism

Aberdeenshire is a diverse region with many complex and competing issues across the area. Taking this into account, it is intended that the LTS will be delivered at a local level, working closely with communities to ensure that local problems are addressed and the bigger issues are tackled collaboratively with partners. By working closely with local communities to identify the real issues, tailor-made solutions can be delivered. In addition, this approach creates greater opportunities for funding and resource pooling. We will monitor our approach closely to ensure that our efforts are effective, allowing time to adjust to change and reflect on our progress on a regular basis.

2 Where we are

2.1 Progress to Date

This is the Council's fourth LTS, following on from previous publications in 1998, 2000 and 2007. A review of progress made by the previous LTS reveals success in a number of areas, as set out below:

- In the field of **Travel Planning**, the Council has proactively encouraged the development of Travel Plans for residential, retail and employment developments and The *GetAbout* Partnership was launched to promote sustainable travel.
- Through sustained commitment to safer routes to schools, some 92% of Aberdeenshire schools are now involved in the **School Travel Planning** process which has resulted in reduced car use for school journeys.
- To promote **Walking** and **Cycling**, the Council produced its first Walking and Cycling Action Plan in 2009. Initiatives developed have included local footpath networks, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming measures and promotions such as 'Walk Week' and Scotland's first 'No Excuse Zone' marketing campaign.
- In terms of **Passenger Transport**, the Council continues to be a key member of the longest standing Quality Partnership for Public Transport in Scotland. Over recent years, several Bus Route Development projects have been completed, while new interchanges and pioneering on-street, interactive journey planning facilities have been implemented. The Council's first Bus Information Strategy was published in 2010.
- Other successes include increased patronage on Aberdeenshire A2B Dial-a-Bus network with over 53,000 trips made in 2009/10. Patronage at Ellon Park and Ride has continued to increase, while local passenger satisfaction surveys undertaken for the network as a whole in 2011 indicate that service delivery exceeds the national benchmark in four of the five national bus quality indicators.
- The Council continues to manage and maintain the condition of the existing road network to a high standard. This is reflected in the annual national Scottish **Road Maintenance** Condition Survey where we continue to be one of the top 5 areas in Scotland.
- Aberdeenshire's **Road Accident Reduction** progress has been significant, particularly taking into account the length of the road network, the rural nature of the majority of that network and the area's relatively high car ownership levels. In 2011, the Council published a Joint Road Safety Plan with partners at Aberdeen City and The Moray Councils. Road safety education and engagement campaigns have been implemented with public and private sector partners.
- Building on the 2007 RTS, **Partnership Working** with Nestrans has delivered some real successes, notably the re-opening of Laurencekirk Rail Station in 2009. The Council has also helped to develop, and continues to support, the implementation of the Bus, Rail, Freight, and Health & Transport Action Plans.
- The Council has maintained a strong role in developing and disseminating best practice in transport projects in **Europe** as a

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

key partner in the North Sea Commission's Transport Group.

Our successes to date have been recognised externally with the Council receiving National Transport Awards for specific projects, and the accolade of '**Transport Local Authority of the Year**', in both 2008 and 2009, while being 'highly commended' in 2010.

In spite of the good progress, a number of areas still require attention including the need to increase public transport patronage and to address the rising levels of car use.

2.2 Developing the LTS

Critical Review

To inform the development of the LTS, an independent critical review of the 2007 document was undertaken. The review considered previous successes and identified areas for improvement, based on examination of the current issues and policies that have emerged since its publication.

The review acknowledged that the previous LTS was successful in a number of areas, was still strongly compliant with key issues and therefore provided a solid foundation upon which this strategy should be built. However, the adoption of new, innovative and fresh approaches would be required for certain areas.

A key finding of the review concerned difficulties associated with the monitoring process. It was found that many of the targets focused on outcomes with limited opportunities to record or monitor the outputs of actions. Without this stage in the monitoring process, it has been difficult to determine the success of all of our actions. This issue has been considered in developing the LTS and its monitoring process and is set out in section 5 of the Strategy.

Consultation Findings

In addition to the critical review, an extensive consultation process has been undertaken to develop this LTS, including:

- A survey with the Citizen's Panel in autumn 2010, gathering around 650 responses.
- A wide-reaching questionnaire promoted to the general public, generating over 450 responses.
- A series of draft actions were then developed for final consultation with Councillors, communities, partners and the general public.

2.3 Main Issues

The challenges for the LTS are to manage carbon emissions from transport while supporting *sustainable economic growth*; growth which has historically been linked to an increase in road network journeys. Sizeable land allocations identified within the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan indicate that supporting infrastructure will also be required. This needs to be balanced against a backdrop of stringent budgetary constraints and rising fuel costs affecting service delivery.

Individual travel choices still remain habitual, despite transport improvements and alternatives becoming more widely available. If we are to deliver significant modal change, we need to transform the way in which goods are moved, services delivered and personal journeys undertaken.

Economic Issues

One of the biggest challenges for the LTS is to support the traffic growth associated with economic development while ensuring that network capacity is safeguarded; an issue which the proposed Aberdeen

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) will aim to address at a strategic level.

Consultation findings suggested a need to consider public transport improvements. However, with a long term trend towards declining motoring costs and increasing bus and rail fares, as shown in Figure 2.1 below, the task of matching policy with the impact of economic growth is becoming increasingly difficult.

With a large rural population often reliant on vehicular transport, these issues are of concern. With increasing pressure to face these issues in a more cost effective manner, the LTS faces a significant challenge.

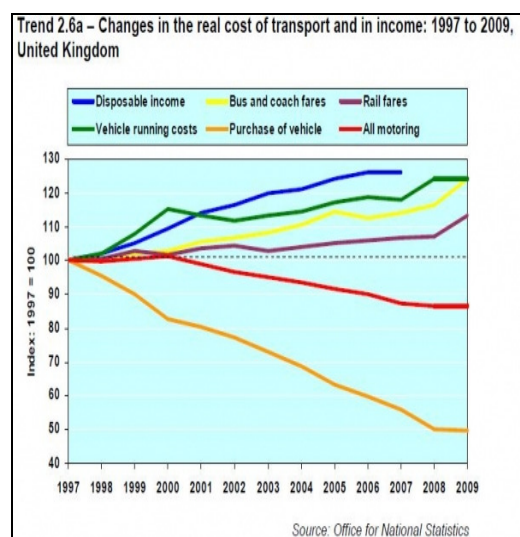


Figure 2.1: Relative Costs of Motoring³

Accessibility & Social Inclusion

Predominantly rural and with an ageing demography, maintaining access to health, local services, employment opportunities and education continues to be a key issue for the Council.

³ Figure 2.1 shows that between 1997 and 2009, in real terms the overall cost of motoring (inclusive of purchase, maintenance, petrol and oil, and tax and insurance) decreased. During the same period, public transport fares increased, with real term increases in bus and rail fares of 24% and 13% respectively.

Public transport will have an important role to play if we are to address these issues. It is therefore vital that existing services are maintained and new links developed if the LTS is to support improved accessibility to services and social inclusion across the region.

Environmental Issues

In 2006, transport accounted for 24% of Scotland's total carbon emissions. Reducing the level of carbon emissions from transport is one of the NTS's key strategic outcomes and is reflected in the commitments of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.⁴

Consultation highlighted that measures to reduce emissions and encourage a shift from car to public transport use are areas that should be prioritised. However, when doing so, it has to be taken into account that when compared to the national averages, the area's residents are more likely to use their car and typically drive further⁵ when they do so.

Safety Issues

Providing a transport network that is safe for all users is of paramount importance. The Council has an obligation to ensure that road casualty reduction is a main priority and the LTS will support the delivery of the Joint Road Safety Plan⁶. This approach is endorsed by findings of the LTS consultation where road improvements and education are notable priority areas alongside continued management and maintenance of our road network.

⁴ The 2012 climate change legislation will require public bodies to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050, based on 1990 levels.

⁵ 78% of Aberdeenshire's residents use a private car for travel to work. This is 12% higher than the national average. The average journey to work/place of study is 11 miles in Aberdeenshire, exceeding the national average by almost 3 miles. (2008 Scottish Household Survey)

⁶ Joint Road Safety Plan 2011-2015

The guiding principle of the LTS aims to encourage individuals to change their travel behaviour. If we are to succeed in achieving this, our citizens must feel comfortable and safe whether walking, cycling or using public transport or when choosing to drive.

Integration Issues

Integration between different travel options and transport services will be key to improving cross regional links.

Locally, improved integration between various methods of travel is vital if we are to encourage a greater uptake in more active and effective journeys.

Many of these issues can be addressed from the outset, provided that new developments are served with public transport early on and making sure that walking and cycling routes are developed across and between new commercial and residential developments.

In a wider context, Aberdeenshire needs to be able to maintain its position contributing to the North East's appeal as a great place to live and work. Improving the integration with the rest of the UK and beyond continues to be a major component of the RTS which the LTS will continue to support.

3 Where we want to be

3.1 Vision

The LTS aims to support the Council's over-arching strategic vision:

“Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland.”

The LTS aims to create and sustain the best quality of life for all and by doing so will support us in our aspiration to become the best area and the best council in Scotland.

The LTS will be innovative in its approach, exploring new technologies and processes to increase the carbon efficiencies of our journeys and support sustainable and active travel.

The LTS should be capable of accounting for its progress and flexible enough to accommodate changes or pursue other avenues if progress in particular areas is deemed ineffective.

To bring about the change required in our travel behaviour, the Council will lead by example, recognising that we have a role to fulfil to influence, inspire and encourage individuals and organisations to follow our lead.

3.2 Aims

The aims of the LTS are to:

- Reduce Non-Sustainable Journeys
- Increase Active Travel
- Make Travel More Effective
- Improve Health
- Reduce Carbon Emissions from Transport

We will do this by:

- Maximising existing and new assets;
- Developing and promoting sustainable travel where genuine opportunities exist;
- Improved promotion of what is available, addressing common travel misconceptions;
- Working with local communities to identify the real issues and developing tailor-made solutions to address social exclusion in rural areas.

3.3 Objectives

The LTS objectives are to:

- **Promote Sustainable Economic Growth** – maximise the effectiveness of the transport network, services and facilities.
- **Promote Social Inclusion and Accessibility** – improve connections within and between communities, increasing accessibility of the transport network.
- **Protect the Environment** – remove barriers to active and sustainable travel helping to improve health and reduce emissions.
- **Improve Safety** – enhance the safety of all users of the transport network.
- **Improve Integration** – develop and improve integration between all forms of transport and improve connectivity within and beyond Aberdeenshire.

These objectives will be underpinned by the Council's strategic priorities and in recognition of the pillars of early intervention, economic development and demographics.

3.4 Targets

Previous experience has shown that targets set and monitored on an Aberdeenshire-wide basis are difficult to monitor efficiently. A limited number of high level indicators will be set and

monitored in partnership with Nestrans and other partners. In addition, each action within the LTS will have its own delivery plan which will include focused targets. These will feed into the outcome monitoring set out by the Council's Strategic Priorities and Single Outcome Agreement.

4 How we get there

4.1 Travel Less

The LTS will aim to support and develop opportunities leading to a reduced need to travel. The business community will be encouraged to develop opportunities for remote and flexible working and adopt technologies which support this.

Sustainable Development

Objective

To ensure that sustainable and active travel infrastructure is incorporated into new developments at an early stage and that travel options are fully explored, promoted and managed at a local community level with Council support.

The LTS has an important role to play in helping to achieve the strategic and local plan development aspirations and should help to provide continuity across planning, development management and roads policy.

The LTS will support the infrastructure priorities of the Structure Plan, the emerging Strategic Development Plan and

the emerging Local Development Plan. The LTS will also continue to support the development of the AWPR and the delivery of the Inverurie Eastern Bypass, junction improvements at Thainstone/Port Elphinstone and Laurencekirk. Early intervention is fundamental in ensuring that future developments are planned and designed taking into account the need to cater for sustainable travel.

New residents and employers will be made aware of the need to reduce travel, highlighting the benefits of reduced travel by promotion of flexible working.

The LTS will explore opportunities such as the social enterprise model⁷ to help deliver some services across local communities and will disseminate best practice designed to help communities develop their own sustainable transport networks.

Actions

- Continue to ensure that active travel infrastructure is included in major planning applications.
- Disseminate the benefits and best practice from the Council's Worksmart initiative to private businesses and individuals.
- Complete a review of the effectiveness and future need of the IT Hot Spots initiative.

⁷ Social Enterprise businesses address social or environmental need with profits re-invested into the business or community.

Planning Travel

Objective

To make Travel Plans mainstream and recognised as standard practice for employers, schools and Council buildings.

Taking the time to consider how we travel is a step towards reducing habitual journeys. By developing a culture where we *consider* our journeys first, the aim is to reduce the impact of transport activity on the environment, helping to deliver cost and time savings by releasing network capacity.

We will continue to work with partners to support the development of travel plans. Through *GetAbout*⁸ we will continue to work with Nestrans and other partners to build links between public and private sectors and facilitate the sharing of best practice across the North East. Leading by example, the Council will continue to develop its own travel plan and school travel plans.

Actions

- Continue to offer guidance and assistance to those preparing compulsory, voluntary and school travel plans.
- Work with GetAbout partners to promote travel planning as a mainstream exercise.
- Develop the Council's Travel Plan as an example to others.
- Review all existing travel plans produced by GetAbout and Health & Transport Action Plan partners to establish best practice.
- Continue to ensure that travel plans are an integral part of the planning process.
- Support the Council's ongoing work to develop a robust, carbon emissions monitoring regime.
- Continue to develop and promote accessible public transport information, including Real Time Passenger Information, that supports personal travel planning.

⁸ Campaign group includes Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Robert Gordon University, the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen College, NHS Grampian and the Energy Savings Trust.

4.2 Travel Actively

When it is necessary to travel, the Strategy will ensure that active options are widely known, barriers preventing a change are removed and when change does occur, that this new behaviour is supported. The LTS will communicate the need to make small changes first such as substituting an occasional journey for a more active alternative.

Walking

Objective

To increase levels of walking by being specific in terms of who we can get walking more often and focused in terms of how we develop our infrastructure, promotion and marketing.

Walking has many benefits: it can improve health and wellbeing, reduce the impact of emissions on the environment and reduce levels of local congestion.

The Council is committed to encouraging people to walk more often and in 2009 produced its award-winning Walking and Cycling Action Plan, which will continue to

be the primary means through which actions to increase levels of walking, both for travel to work and for recreation, are taken forward.

Future active travel starts in schools, educating children to become responsible, safe and confident pedestrians. The Council remains committed to this through the school travel planning process and the development of Safer Routes to Schools.

In recent years, there has been considerable investment in our long-distance path networks, with both the Deeside Way and the Formartine and Buchan Way benefitting from significant investment. At a local level, important links in the network will be developed through the implementation and promotion of paths identified in the Council's Core Paths Plan.

Actions

- Deliver all outstanding walking related actions in the current Walking & Cycling Action Plan.
- Refresh the Walking & Cycling Action Plan.
- Based on best practice, develop and monitor the effectiveness of a demonstration 'walk to work' promotion campaign.
- Develop a Walking Challenge website to encourage and monitor walking across Aberdeenshire.
- Support local community walking initiatives as they develop.

Cycling

Objective

To increase levels of cycling by being targeted, using an approach which considers people, place and purpose. Consider the places people *would both want to cycle to and be able to cycle to* and only then work towards making those journeys more attainable.

In recognition of the value of cycling, the Scottish Government launched in 2010 'The Cycling Action Plan for Scotland'⁹, an ambitious approach to 'get more people cycling more often' such that by 2020, 10% of all journeys taken in Scotland will be by bike.

Given the rural nature of much of Aberdeenshire, it is difficult to envisage how the nationally set target will be met.

The approach of the LTS is to increase cycling levels primarily in our main settlements and we will monitor these on a localised basis rather than regionally.

The Council aims to build upon the existing Walking and Cycling Action Plan, turning to our local and European neighbours to share experience and best practice. Local communities will be encouraged to develop their own initiatives and the LTS will aim to provide support where possible.

Actions

- Deliver the Cycling Demonstration Town Action Plan for Peterhead.
- Develop a Cycle Challenge website to encourage and monitor cycling across Aberdeenshire.
- Deliver all outstanding cycling related actions in the current Walking & Cycling Action Plan.
- Support and promote local community cycling initiatives as they develop.
- Encourage better integration between cycling and bus and rail services.

Active Lifestyles

Objective

To remove perceived barriers and help encourage people to consider walking and cycling more regularly through improved and specific local information.

As the level of physical activity involved in a short walk or cycle is moderate, these activities can be built into a daily routine such as travelling to work or the shops. The existing Walking and Cycling Action Plan provides an excellent base from which

we can further develop active travel opportunities as a means of improving health.

The role that bus travel can play in the development of healthy active travel should not be overlooked; travelling by bus will typically involve a short walk at either end of the journey, helping to introduce some form of moderate activity. For those living more rurally, it may be necessary to cycle to a bus stop. In these instances, being able to secure a bicycle safely or carry the bicycle on the bus are issues which will be explored.

Encouraging people to be more active during their leisure time provides an opportunity to introduce them to the idea of walking or cycling more gradually and, in time, this can impact on commuting habits.

⁹ Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, Scottish Government (2010).

Actions

- Produce an Active Travel Plan for one town in Aberdeenshire in each year of the Strategy.
- Support the Health and Transport Action Plan and lead on delivering the "Promoting Active Lifestyle" Programme.
- Promote health benefits of walking and cycling through the LTS website.
- Produce a series of maps with short and long distance walking routes across Aberdeenshire.
- Produce a series of maps with short distance cycling routes across Aberdeenshire.
- Disseminate maps with long distance cycling routes across Aberdeenshire.
- Introduce cycle parking facilities at public transport interchanges and other key points in the network.

4.3 Travel Effectively

The LTS will aim to make passenger trips more effective by encouraging shared or linked purpose journeys, a principle which can equally be applied to freight movements. Efficiencies of fuel for both private and commercial vehicles will be promoted using techniques such as eco-driving, promotion of 'greener' fleets, car-sharing and support of new fuel technologies. Public transport is one of the most efficient methods of travel and efforts will be made to improve access to bus and rail services.

Passenger Transport

Objective

To work in partnership with local transport operators and communities with the aim to deliver improved services and address perceived barriers relating to public transport.

Passenger transport forms a key element of the transport network in Aberdeenshire, providing travel opportunities within the area between towns and villages and onward to Aberdeen City. Bus travel offers the potential to combat the adverse economic and environmental effects of increasing traffic congestion in and around local areas.

Many of the issues faced during the previous strategy will continue to be relevant in the context of this LTS. We will build on the achievements to date and continue to strive to make public transport a viable and more attractive option for Aberdeenshire residents and visitors to the area.

The LTS will undertake a comprehensive review of the passenger transport network to seek out new opportunities to deliver improved services, interchanges, information and ticketing across the commercial and subsidised bus network. This review will also consider the role of Community and Demand Responsive Transport, Park & Choose, School Transport, Social Work Transport, and Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles. Integration opportunities at bus and rail stations will also be considered along with the specific accessibility needs of young people.

Partnership working through the Local Area and Bus Operator Forum (LABOF) will continue to remain important as the Council strives to meet the delivery of the targets set out in the Quality Partnership for Public Transport agreement, and the implementation of Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (BPIPs) to improve the reliability of public transport across the region. Area Bus Forums and links to the Community Planning Partnership will continue to be key aspects of our engagement with our communities.

Actions

- Promote passenger transport.
- Continue to support Nestrans in the delivery of their Bus Action Plan through LABOF.
- Publish a revised Public/Passenger Transport Policy Statement.
- Develop a Fares and Ticketing Strategy.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of how to deliver an integrated passenger transport system.

Effective Car Use

Objective

To support initiatives that reduce single-occupancy car journeys and encourage the use of more efficient vehicles.

It is recognised that there are many instances where car use is necessary. In these circumstances, options are available to maximise the efficiency of these trips. The LTS will aim to motivate individuals to

question the effectiveness of their journey, supporting options that facilitate more effective car use.

With the number of car-sharing registrations across Aberdeenshire increasing year-on-year, there remains further scope for growth. The LTS will stimulate this by communicating the important role of car-sharing and will support the implementation of local car share clubs.

Maximising fuel efficiency is important to the Council in its efforts to manage carbon emissions, part of which can be delivered through more efficient driving. With longer term fuel consumption savings in the region of 5%, a program of eco-driving amongst the Council's employees will be developed and the concept promoted to external organisations.

With hybrid and electric vehicles beginning to emerge in the marketplace, the Council is keen to play its part in supporting the uptake of these vehicles and alternative fuel types and will support the adoption of new initiatives where appropriate.

Actions

- Promote the benefits of car-sharing and eco-driving.
- Support local car share clubs as they develop.
- Support new low carbon vehicle initiatives and implement associated infrastructure where appropriate and feasible.
- Support and organise training and information on eco-driving to all Council staff.

Road and Winter Maintenance

Objective

To continue to manage and maintain the network to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of the road network across Aberdeenshire including roads, footways, bridges, drainage, signs, street lights and verges.

Not only does our road network perform a crucial role in the day-to-day lives of our residents and visitors, the 1,600 bridges are important in terms of our built heritage. By continuing to develop, and invest in, an Asset Management based maintenance programme, we will seek to secure the long-term future of our infrastructure. With this approach, the Council will strive to maintain a position among the top performing councils in Scotland, ensuring that Aberdeenshire's 3,500 miles of road continue to meet the needs of its citizens in the future.

We will continue to review the management of the overall network as required to ensure an appropriate balance is achieved to allow the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across the network while not detracting from the general

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

amenity of our communities. Where appropriate, this will include the promotion of network management solutions and the development of physical infrastructure to support and encourage active travel modes.

This balanced approach extends to our winter maintenance procedures, where we will rely on the hierarchical treatment of our extensive network to ensure that finite natural resources are used to maximum effect. Treatment regimes will continue to be developed based on available best practice, while allowing sufficient flexibility to adapt to local circumstances.

Actions

- Continue to deliver annual roads and winter maintenance programmes.
- Inform and influence the national review of road maintenance policy and techniques taken forward by the Scottish Government.
- Inform and influence the national review of winter maintenance policy and techniques taken forward by CoSLA.

Road Safety

Objective

To contribute to the national road safety targets by implementing specific actions within the road safety pillars of Education, Engineering, Enforcement, Encouragement and Engagement, and using Evaluation to assess our progress.

Road casualty figures in North East Scotland are relatively low when compared to national levels. Following a period of targeted work and campaigns, the number of casualties in North East Scotland has reduced year on year since 2006.

Our road safety focus during the life of this LTS will be on contributing to the delivery of the ambitious national casualty reduction targets for the period to 2020 set out in the Scottish Government's Road Safety Framework 2020. Work in this regard will be concentrated on delivering the Joint Road Safety Plan¹⁰ for the North East, which was developed in 2011 with partners at Aberdeen City and The Moray Councils. We will engage with partners and the public through a range of media and consultation with evaluation being used to ensure all road users understand and buy into our safety messages.

Improving the safety of all road user groups requires a co-ordinated partnership approach. The development of the first Joint Road Safety Plan puts us in a stronger position to achieve this by promoting knowledge transfer and resource sharing amongst all partners, which in turn will allow energies to be focused on the development of cost effective solutions.

Actions

- Work with partners to deliver the Joint Road Safety Plan.
- Through accident reduction analysis and other means, evaluate the effectiveness of different road safety initiatives.
- Reduce speed limits across the network where appropriate for improved road safety.
- Continue to investigate, evaluate and implement projects to ensure the safety of schoolchildren using school buses.

¹⁰ Joint Road Safety Plan, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and The Moray Councils (2011).

Car Parking

Objective

To develop parking policies, tariff structures and pay systems that continue to support and strengthen the economic vitality of our town centres in partnership with local communities.

The Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of 109 car parks across the region covering some 4,000 spaces. Just over 1,100 of these are Pay & Display spaces, with the remainder being either free or set aside for blue badge holders. Parking permits are also offered to residents who live within defined zones. Parking is enforced

through the use of parking operatives using excess charge notices.

In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on more flexible parking systems, with many authorities across the UK now offering more options for paying, including cashless parking, to better respond to customer needs and deliver a more efficient system for managing Pay & Display car parks.

A range of parking options will continue to be offered, including free spaces, on-street waiting restrictions and Pay & Display parking. Tariff structures will support the policy of encouraging a high turnover of short term parking in the most valuable town centre spaces. New technologies will be explored that aim to extend the payment options available and improve the efficiencies of car park management.

A Regional Parking Strategy being developed by Nestrans, sets out the continued commitment to the development of Park & Ride/Choose sites across the North East, an aspiration supported by the Council.

Actions

- Prepare a Strategy on Car Parking Charging Regime for the period 2013-16.
- Undertake a review of the balance of free and pay car parks in town centres at a rate of three towns per year.
- Develop a Machine Replacement Programme taking account of all available technologies.
- Support the Regional Parking Strategy and particularly the ongoing introduction of Park & Choose/Interchanges where appropriate.

Motorcycles

Objective

To promote motorcycling as a cost effective method of travel.

Motorcycling is a low cost form of transport and can be particularly convenient where public transport is limited and walking or cycling is not feasible. However, safety remains an issue and despite making up

only 2% of the motoring public, motorcyclists accounted for 26% of the fatal collisions that occurred on North East roads in 2009.

In response to this issue, in 2010 the Council partnered with Grampian Police and other public and private sector partners to launch the Operation Zenith motorcycle safety campaign. The campaign uses a range of education, engineering, enforcement, encouragement and engagement approaches to promote safe riding

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

skills and raise awareness of biker safety. The campaign is a five year programme with each partner working towards the shared target of a 15% reduction in casualties by 2015.

Actions

- Continue to support the implementation of the Operation Zenith Campaign to increase the safety of motorcycling in the North East.
- Implement motorcycle parking in town centres where appropriate.

Towns

Objective

To introduce local transport measures that support the economic vitality of our towns.

Aberdeenshire's town centres are vital to the local economy and play an important role for local communities. Our towns provide valuable social, shopping and recreational spaces and rather than being simply traffic

corridors, these areas can provide much more in a social context.

By creating towns that are attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, and accessible by public transport, we can improve the public realm, improve health and help to address local congestion issues. Adopting the Designing Streets¹¹ philosophy, the LTS will support the concept of 'place making', aiming to redress the balance away from motor vehicle dominance in favour of non-vehicle users.

Through the LTS, Traffic Management Reviews will continue to be undertaken using local community consultation to examine opportunities to improve local amenity and implement measures which support the socio-economic development of local towns.

Actions

- Support the implementation of Designing Streets to improve the amenity of local town centres.
- Undertake ongoing reviews of issues and opportunities for improving traffic in local town centres using Traffic Management Reviews, taken forward in association with related economic strategies.

Freight

Objective

To work with Nestrans and the Freight Forum to deliver initiatives that support the reliable and efficient movement of goods across the region.

The efficient and effective movement of freight is vital to the development of the region's economy.

In 2009, Nestrans published the Regional Freight Action Plan setting out a series of policies and actions to assist

the delivery of more effective and efficient freight operations and has established a Freight Forum to deliver the actions.

¹¹ Designing Streets, Scottish Government (2010)

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

As a key partner in the Forum, the Council has been involved in the delivery of some of the early actions in the Plan including surveys to assess the level of demand for overnight lorry parking facilities and the design of Area Freight Maps to assist hauliers in the industry. Studies have also been undertaken through the European funded StratMoS project which seeks to promote and facilitate the shift of freight from road to rail and sea transport, and the Council will continue to examine opportunities through European programmes to further influence this.

Actions

- Support Nestrans in the delivery of their Freight Action Plan.

Rail

Objective

To work with partners at Nestrans to increase opportunities for rail travel in Aberdeenshire.

Since 2004/05, rail passenger numbers across the North East have increased by 63%, with travel patterns also indicating that shorter, more local rail trips are more prevalent than longer-distance inter-city journeys¹².

As part of the RTS, Nestrans has published a Draft Rail Action Plan 2010-2021 outlining how best to deliver rail service improvements across the North East, including a new station at Kintore. Building on recent achievements, most notably the successful re-opening of Laurencekirk Rail Station in 2009 after almost 40 years of closure, the Council will continue to work through Nestrans and its Action Plan to lobby for strategic improvements to the North East's rail services.

Actions

- Support Nestrans in the delivery of their Rail Action Plan.

External Links

Objective

To protect and develop external links that support the local and regional economy for businesses, residents and visitors.

Although the LTS concentrates on local transport improvements, it is important that the Council continues to work with partners to make the case for strategic transport improvements at the regional and national levels,

improvements that will support and nurture the North East economy.

At the regional level, the Council will continue to work through Nestrans, ACSEF and the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority to safeguard existing transport connections and develop new opportunities that benefit North East businesses, residents and visitors. This includes:

- the development of strategic trunk road improvements (such as the AWPR, Balmedie-Tipperty dualling, improvements to the A96 at Inveramsay, and access into Aberdeen at existing pinch-points);

¹² Nestrans Monitoring Report, 2011

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

- lobbying for a better balance between shorter rail journey times, improved stopping patterns and new stations;
- protecting existing and developing an improved range of destinations from Aberdeen Airport;
- improving the efficiency of freight transport, including the potential for mode shift from road to rail and sea;
- encouraging increased use of our harbours and supporting Aberdeen Harbour as the lifeline link for passenger and freight ferries to the Orkney and Shetland Islands;
- helping to influence and establish a Strategic Transport Fund to ensure projects of strategic importance to reducing traffic congestion on the North East's roads are delivered through appropriate development contributions; and
- supporting the delivery of the Nestrans RTS including the Rail Action Plan, Bus Action Plan, Freight Action Plan, and Health and Transport Action Plan.

Where appropriate, the Council will also use its position and standing as a leading partner of the North Sea Commission's Transport Group to influence national and European transport policy development. In the past, this has included responding to consultations across a range of subjects from road safety and low carbon vehicles, to the national ferries review and the debate on High-Speed Rail.

Actions

- Contribute to Scottish, UK and European strategic transport consultations.
- Develop a database of best practice on transport solutions in Europe and use this to influence local transport issues.

5 Monitoring, Reporting and Promoting

Objective

To develop focused targets for each individual action within the LTS through regular monitoring to determine effectiveness and to take any appropriate action.

It is important that the progress that the Council makes in delivering the LTS is monitored on a regular and progressive basis. Difficulties were experienced in monitoring the previous LTS as the success of actions tended to be measured against target-driven outcomes, traditionally more difficult to

measure than outputs. In addition to being difficult to monitor, this approach was also extremely time-consuming.

In developing this LTS, the decision has therefore been taken to avoid setting broad targets and to instead monitor progress at the local project level. This means that the input of each individual project will be monitored and measured against the delivered output. In doing so, we will be able to quantify our efforts relative to the benefits achieved by delivering a particular action. By regular review of our inputs and outputs we will also be better placed to react depending upon the success of our efforts.

The monitoring regime will make use of existing technologies to ensure that the process is cost effective and efficient. As this will be an ongoing process, the LTS performance will be constantly tracked, providing a snapshot of where we are at any particular time.

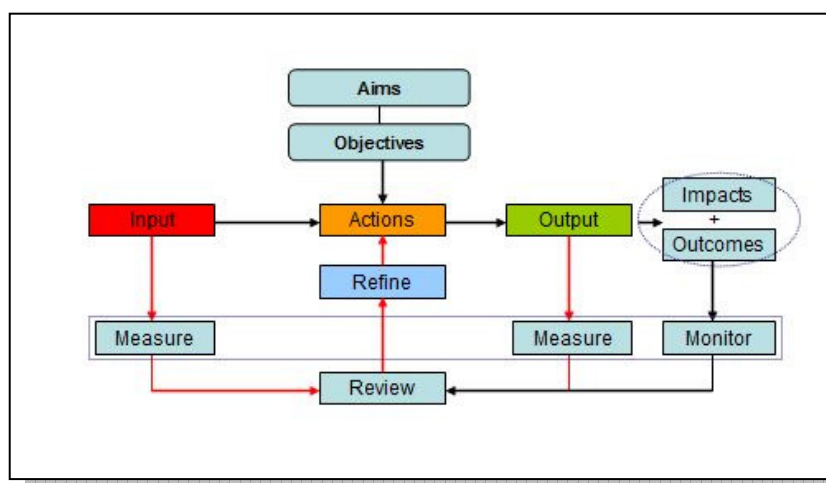


Figure 5.1: Our Monitoring Approach

Although our focus will be local level monitoring and specifically on the effects that our projects have in delivering the LTS aims and objectives, project monitoring will also feed into and support the monitoring of the high level outcomes set out by the Council's Strategic Priorities and Single Outcome Agreement.

Actions

- Develop the LTS webpages as a resource efficient method of reporting and updating the Strategy.
- Review and publish updates on a regular basis including the LTS document.
- Establish publicity campaigns with partners to help deliver the actions in the LTS.

6 Delivery Plan

Delivery Plan Themes	Actions	Delivery Date
Travel Less The LTS will aim to support and develop opportunities leading to a reduced need to travel. The business community will be encouraged to develop opportunities for remote and flexible working and adopt technologies which support this.		
Sustainable Development <i>To ensure that sustainable and active travel infrastructure is incorporated into new developments at an early stage and that travel options are fully explored, promoted and managed at a local community level with Council support.</i>	L1: Continue to ensure that active travel infrastructure is included in major planning applications.	Ongoing
	L2: Disseminate the benefits and best practice from the Council's Worksmart initiative to private businesses and individuals.	Ongoing
	L3: Complete a review of the effectiveness and future need of the IT Hot Spots initiative.	June 2012
Planning Travel <i>To make Travel Plans mainstream and recognised as standard practice for employers, schools and Council buildings.</i>	L4: Continue to offer guidance and assistance to those preparing compulsory, voluntary and school travel plans.	Ongoing
	L5: Work with GetAbout partners to promote travel planning as a mainstream exercise.	Ongoing
	L6: Develop the Council's Travel Plan as an example to others.	Ongoing
	L7: Review all existing travel plans produced by GetAbout and Health & Transport Action Plan partners to establish best practice.	December 2012
	L8: Continue to ensure that travel plans are an integral part of the planning process.	Ongoing
	L9: Support the Council's ongoing work to develop a robust, carbon emissions monitoring regime.	Ongoing
	L10: Continue to develop and promote accessible public transport information, including Real Time Passenger Information, that supports personal travel planning.	Ongoing
Travel Actively When it is necessary to travel, the Strategy will ensure that active options are widely known, barriers preventing a change are removed and when		

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

Delivery Plan Themes	Actions	Delivery Date
change does occur, that this new behaviour is supported. The LTS will communicate the need to make small changes first such as substituting an occasional journey for a more active alternative.		
Walking <i>To increase levels of walking by being specific in terms of who we can get walking more often and focused in terms of how we develop our infrastructure, promotion and marketing.</i>	A1: Deliver all outstanding walking related actions in the current Walking & Cycling Action Plan.	December 2012
	A2: Refresh the Walking & Cycling Action Plan.	June 2013
	A3: Based on best practice, develop and monitor the effectiveness of a demonstration 'walk to work' promotion campaign.	March 2013
	A4: Develop a Walking Challenge website to encourage and monitor walking across Aberdeenshire.	March 2013
	A5: Support local community walking initiatives as they develop.	Ongoing
Cycling <i>To increase levels of cycling by being targeted, using an approach which considers people, place and purpose. Consider the places people would both want to cycle to and be able to cycle to and only then work towards making those journeys more attainable.</i>	A6: Deliver the Cycling Demonstration Town Action Plan for Peterhead.	March 2014
	A7: Develop a Cycle Challenge website to encourage and monitor cycling across Aberdeenshire.	March 2013
	A8: Deliver all outstanding cycling related actions in the current Walking & Cycling Action Plan.	December 2012
	A9: Support and promote local community cycling initiatives as they develop.	Ongoing
	A10: Encourage better integration between cycling and bus and rail services.	Ongoing
Active Lifestyle <i>To remove perceived barriers and help encourage people to consider walking and cycling more regularly through improved and specific local information.</i>	A11: Produce an Active Travel Plan for one town in Aberdeenshire in each year of the Strategy.	Each September
	A12: Support the Health and Transport Action Plan and lead on delivering the "Promoting Active Lifestyle" Programme.	Ongoing
	A13: Promote health benefits of walking and cycling through the LTS website.	March 2012
	A14: Produce a series of maps with short and long distance walking routes across Aberdeenshire.	March 2013

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

Delivery Plan Themes	Actions	Delivery Date
	A15: Produce a series of maps with short distance cycling routes across Aberdeenshire.	March 2014
	A16: Disseminate maps with long distance cycling routes across Aberdeenshire.	Ongoing
	A17: Introduce cycle parking facilities at public transport interchanges and other key points in the network.	June 2014
Travel Effectively The LTS will aim to make passenger trips more effective by encouraging shared or linked purpose journeys, a principle which can equally be applied to freight movements. Efficiencies of fuel for both private and commercial vehicles will be promoted using techniques such as eco-driving, promotion of 'greener' fleets, car-sharing and support of new fuel technologies. Public transport is one of the most efficient methods of travel and efforts will be made to improve access to bus and rail services.		
Passenger Transport <i>To work in partnership with local transport operators and communities with the aim to deliver improved services and address perceived barriers relating to public transport.</i>	E1: Promote passenger transport.	Ongoing
	E2: Continue to support Nestrans in the delivery of their Bus Action Plan through LABOF.	Ongoing
	E3: Publish a revised Public/Passenger Transport Policy Statement.	December 2012
	E4: Develop a Fares and Ticketing Strategy.	December 2012
	E5: Undertake a comprehensive review of how to deliver an integrated passenger transport system.	December 2013
Effective Car Use <i>To support initiatives that reduce single-occupancy car journeys and encourage the use of more efficient vehicles.</i>	E6: Promote the benefits of car-sharing and eco-driving.	Ongoing
	E7: Support local car share clubs as they develop.	Ongoing
	E8: Support new low carbon vehicle initiatives and implement associated infrastructure where appropriate and feasible.	Ongoing
	E9: Support and organise training and information on eco-driving to all Council staff.	Ongoing
Road and Winter Maintenance <i>To continue to manage and maintain the network to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.</i>	E10: Continue to deliver annual roads and winter maintenance programmes.	Ongoing
	E11: Inform and influence the national review of road maintenance policy and techniques taken forward by the Scottish Government.	Ongoing

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

Delivery Plan Themes	Actions	Delivery Date
	E12: Inform and influence the national review of winter maintenance policy and techniques taken forward by CoSLA.	Ongoing
Road Safety <i>To contribute to the national road safety targets by implementing specific actions within the road safety pillars of Education, Engineering, Enforcement, Encouragement and Engagement, and using Evaluation to assess our progress.</i>	E13: Work with partners to deliver the Joint Road Safety Plan.	2015
	E14: Through accident reduction analysis and other means, evaluate the effectiveness of different road safety initiatives.	December 2013
	E15: Reduce speed limits across the network where appropriate for improved road safety.	Ongoing
	E16: Continue to investigate, evaluate and implement projects to ensure the safety of schoolchildren using school buses.	Ongoing
Car Parking <i>To develop parking policies, tariff structures and pay systems that continue to support and strengthen the economic vitality of our town centres in partnership with local communities.</i>	E17: Prepare a Strategy on Car Parking Charging Regime for the period 2013-16.	December 2012
	E18: Undertake a review of the balance of free and pay car parks in town centres at a rate of three towns per year.	August 2012 and each 4 months thereafter
	E19: Develop a Machine Replacement Programme taking account of all available technologies.	December 2012
	E20: Support the Regional Parking Strategy and particularly the ongoing introduction of Park & Choose/Interchanges where appropriate.	Ongoing
Motorcycles <i>To promote motorcycling as a cost effective method of travel.</i>	E21: Continue to support the implementation of the Operation Zenith Campaign to increase the safety of motorcycling in the North East.	Ongoing
	E22: Implement motorcycle parking in town centres where appropriate.	Ongoing
Towns <i>To introduce local transport measures that support the economic vitality of our towns.</i>	E23: Support the implementation of Designing Streets to improve the amenity of local town centres.	Ongoing
	E24: Undertake ongoing reviews of issues and opportunities for improving traffic in local town centres using Traffic Management Reviews, taken forward in association with related economic strategies.	Ongoing
Freight <i>To work with Nestrans and the Freight Forum to</i>	E25: Support Nestrans in the delivery of their Freight Action Plan.	Ongoing

Aberdeenshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2012

Delivery Plan Themes	Actions	Delivery Date
<i>deliver initiatives that support the reliable and efficient movement of goods across the region.</i>		
Rail <i>To work with partners at Nestrans to increase opportunities for rail travel in Aberdeenshire.</i>	E26: Support Nestrans in the delivery of their Rail Action Plan.	Ongoing
External Links <i>To protect and develop external links that support the local and regional economy for businesses, residents and visitors.</i>	E27: Contribute to Scottish, UK and European strategic transport consultations.	Ongoing
	E28: Develop a database of best practice on transport solutions in Europe, and use to influence local transport issues.	Ongoing
Monitoring, Reporting and Promoting		
<i>To develop focused targets for each individual action within the LTS through regular monitoring to determine effectiveness and to take any appropriate action.</i>	M1: Develop the LTS webpages as a resource efficient method of reporting and updating the Strategy.	June 2012
	M2: Review and publish updates on a regular basis including the LTS document.	Every 6 months
	M3: Establish publicity campaigns with partners to help deliver the actions in the LTS.	Ongoing



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