

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 06 June 2017 09:48
To: Minister for Transport and the Islands; Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work; Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity
Cc: Transport Scotland Ministerial Submissions List; [Redacted]
Subject: Aberdeen to Central Belt - Reference Group - Ministerial Update - On behalf of [Redacted]

PS/Minister for Transport and the Islands, Cabinet Secretaries for the Rural Economy & Connectivity and Economy, Jobs and Fair Work.

Ministers,

I can advise that the inaugural meeting of the Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Reference Group was held on 22 May. This is the group intended to identify the optimum use of the £200 million investment (announced alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal); which will focus on improving journey time and capacity on the route between Aberdeen and the Central Belt.

There was good levels of participation and all of the group have committed to playing their full part in delivering the best outcome for the route. The group will; review and assess timetables, rolling stock and infrastructure options, which includes consideration of whether double tracking between Usan Junction and the South Esk viaduct at Montrose will offer the best enhancement or whether alternative options provide the best possible return from the £200 million investment.

The group decided to manage our work through two work streams: Rail Freight, and Journey Time and Capacity. I am pleased with the collegiate approach being taken by our stakeholders, noting that there was strong support for improving journey times in reference to public transport competitiveness, and modal shift. Indeed the stakeholders will be leading, under my oversight, the two work streams.

As set out in the Ministerial Submission of February 2017 and within the Terms of Reference attached, I will provide a regular and comprehensive progress update, which will be provided at least every four months.

Meanwhile, if there is any matter requiring clarification do not hesitate to contact me or Caroline Connelly who provides the secretariat for the Group.



Aberdeen to
Central Belt - Mi...



Aberdeen to
Central Belt - Re...

Kind Regards,

[Redacted]
Transport Scotland
[Redacted]

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

From: [REDACTED]
Transport Scotland
February 2017

To: Minister for Transport and the Islands

ABERDEEN TO CENTRAL BELT - REVIEW TEAM MEETING

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the Aberdeen to Central Belt Project following the Ministerial meeting with the Chairman and Director of Nestrans on 17 November 2016.

Priority

2. **ROUTINE**

Background

3. The £250 million Aberdeen City Region Deal was signed on 21 November 2016. This includes joint Scottish and UK Government commitments. The City Region Deal includes the Oil & Gas Technology Centre, Biotherapeutic Innovation Centre, Agri-Food & Nutrition Innovation Hub, Digital Infrastructure, Strategic Transport Appraisal and supporting infrastructure for Aberdeen Harbour Expansion.
4. The funding package for the Deal will be provided over a period of up to 10 years subject to detailed business cases, statutory processes and implementation plans.
5. In addition to the Scottish Government's contribution of £125 million to the Aberdeen City Region Deal, the Scottish Government is also providing £254 million to allow a more significant step change to the economy of the North East. This sum includes £200 million to help improve journey times and increase capacity on key rail links between Aberdeen and the Central Belt.

Actions arising from meeting with Chairman and Director of Nestrans on 17 November 2016

6. You agreed to establish a Review Team with a remit to ensure that the railway industry takes all appropriate steps to drive forward work on the project to achieve improved journey times and increased capacity on the route between Aberdeen and the Central Belt, and to provide you with regular information and assurance on progress to achieve that objective.
7. Given the challenging economic environment, it is crucial in exploring all options to help support this worthwhile project, that we consult with relevant

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

train and freight operators and welcome input from regional transport partnerships, whom have local knowledge and expertise which can be of immense benefit to this project.

8. The Review Team will consist of senior representatives from Transport Scotland, representatives from both parts of the ScotRail Alliance, and additionally the Director and the Transport Strategy Manager of Nestrans have agreed to participate.
9. We will also consult with train and freight operators on this key corridor, and extend an invitation for representation on the Review Team.
10. To underline, the importance that you attach to the issue, the Team will be chaired by [REDACTED] TS [REDACTED]
11. The Team will commence activity in the coming month and subsequently provide you with regular updates on progress. Relevant Cabinet Secretaries will also be kept similarly apprised.

Media

12. It is our intention to issue a media release for the Aberdeen area to stress the positive partnership working arrangements with local interests (Nestrans); and to reaffirm the Government's intention to make good on its commitment to deliver capacity and journey time improvements between Aberdeen and the Central Belt. A draft media release will be produced in advance of the local government pre-election period.

Recommendation

You are invited to:

note the establishment of the Aberdeen to Central Belt Review Team and note that a draft media release will be produced for review.

[REDACTED]
Rail Policy
[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constituent Interest	General Awareness
Minister for Transport and Islands Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities	X		X		X
Transport Scotland Submissions List Transport Scotland Directors Press Transport Scotland P/S Transport [REDACTED]					

Draft for consideration

Aberdeen to Central Belt – Reference Group - Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group exists to:

- provide assurance to the Minister for Transport and the Islands, as well as to the Cabinet Secretaries for Rural Economy & Connectivity and Economy, Jobs & Fair Work , that progress is being made to improve connectivity between Aberdeen and the Central Belt ; through improved journey times and enhanced capacity.
- identify rail related initiatives that seek to exploit the economic and social value of the line to the communities it serves; and
- seek to secure the best possible return from the £200 million investment committed to the development and operation of this rail corridor.

Terms of Reference:

In specific terms, the Reference Group will work collaboratively to:

- review and assess timetable, rolling stock and infrastructure options to improve journey time and enhance capacity between Aberdeen and Central Belt (including consideration of the value of double tracking Usan Junction and the South Esk viaduct).
- assess rail freight journey time and capacity needs and business opportunities ,how these might most efficiently be addressed and realised. identify and promote initiatives (with, as necessary, other stakeholders) that exploit the potential of the line between Aberdeen and Dundee, Central Belt for the benefit of proximal communities, business and tourism.
- take cognisance of the opportunities arising from current rail projects being delivered within the North East; including; Aberdeen to Inverness and Revolution in Rail service improvements, and have regard to the competitive journey time impacts of the AWPR, A96, A9 road projects.
- commission work-streams to inform its considerations.

Membership:

The Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group shall comprise:

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| ██████████ | ██████████ Transport Scotland |
| ██████████ | ██████████ Network Rail |
| ██████████ | ██████████ ScotRail Alliance |
| ██████████ | ██████████ DB Cargo (UK) Limited |
| ██████████ | ██████████ DFT |
| ██████████ | ██████████ , RDG |
| ██████████ | ██████████ Nestrans |
| ██████████ | ██████████ Tactrans |
| ██████████ | ██████████ Transport Scotland |

Draft for consideration

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] (Secretariat)

Participation:

- The Reference Group shall be led by [REDACTED]
- The Reference Group shall determine its modus operandi at its inception meeting.
- The Reference Group shall comply with any obligatory confidentiality rulings
- Transport Scotland shall provide the secretariat.
- Transport Scotland shall meet any venue costs associated with meetings.
- Any costs associated with membership of the Reference Group will be met by the relevant participant's home organisation.

Products:

- The Reference Group Lead will provide the Minister for Transport and the Islands and the Cabinet Secretaries for Rural Economy and Connectivity and Economy, Jobs and Fair Work with a progress update at least every four months.
- Ensure that DfT (as the Authority for cross border franchises), RDG (as the body representing all passenger and freight rail companies), Caledonian Sleeper rail franchise and relevant local authorities (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Dundee City, Perth & Kinross and Stirling & Fife) are regularly apprised of relevant aspects of the Group's work.

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 December 2017 15:11
To: Minister for Transport and the Islands
Cc: Transport Scotland Ministerial Submissions List; [Redacted]
Subject: Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group
Attachments: Aberdeen to Central Belt - Reference Group - Ministerial Update - Cleared by [Redacted] - 08 December 2017.docx

PS/Minister for Transport and the Islands, Cabinet Secretaries for the Rural Economy & Connectivity and Economy, Jobs and Fair Work.

Ministers,

As set out within Terms of Reference for the Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group please find attached an update on the work of the Group.

If there is any matter requiring clarification do not hesitate to contact me or [Redacted] who provides the secretariat for the Group.

Kind Regards

[Redacted]

Transport Scotland

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Transport Scotland | Scottish Government.
Ext [Redacted] Blackberry [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Buchanan House, 7th Floor, 58 Port Dundas, Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF

Working days: Monday - Friday



From: [REDACTED]
Transport Scotland
12 December 2017

Minister for Transport and the Islands
ABERDEEN TO CENTRAL BELT - REFERENCE GROUP

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the activities of the Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group.

Priority – ROUTINE

Background

2. In addition to the Scottish Government's contribution to the Aberdeen City Region Deal, the Scottish Government is also providing £254 million to allow a more significant step change to the economy of the North East. Of that £254 million, £200 million will be used to improve capacity, performance and journey times between Aberdeen and the Central Belt, through identified rail initiatives which support the Scottish Government's aspirations for the corridor.

3. The work being undertaken to progress initiatives is being directed, under the Chairmanship of [REDACTED] by the Aberdeen to Central Belt Reference Group, which has a membership drawn from across the rail industry as well as local government and interested parties. The Group is currently progressing the development of potential options, including double tracking between Usan to Montrose, through two work streams (Rail Freight and Journey time & Capacity).

Update

4. The Group has been working well with active engagement of all participants with a clear focus to realise the agreed outcomes. In October, the Group commissioned the investigation of a comprehensive option assessment of the route. That detailed work is expected to conclude in the summer.

5. Mindful of the need to ensure that wider local stakeholders are kept fully apprised, presentations were given at the NESTRANS quarterly meeting (6 November) and the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee (10 November) on the work of the Group. As work progresses further updates will be provided.

6. On the wider political front over the last 4 months there has been parliamentary interest with ministerial correspondence and 6 parliamentary questions. Liam Kerr MSP has submitted 4 of the parliamentary questions seeking clarification on the consideration of dualling the rail track between Montrose and Arbroath at Usan and the proportion of the £200m which will be allocated to achieving this. There have been a few press enquiries seeking details on the progress of the Group and the work of the Group has been subject to an FOI request.

Conclusion

7. The Minister is invited to note progress to date.

[REDACTED]

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constituent Interest	General Awareness
Minister for Transport and Islands			X		
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work					X
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity			X		
Transport Scotland Submissions List Transport Scotland Directors Press Transport Scotland P/S Transport Scotland Communications DG Economy [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]					