

QUEENSFERRY CROSSING PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Briefing

Monday 6 January 2020

1. Introduction

Transform Scotland is pleased that the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee is considering evidence on the Queensferry Crossing Public Transport Strategy (PTS). On 30 January 2018 we published a briefing on the PTS;¹ a copy of this is attached.

As we noted then, Transport Scotland had convened a PTS Working Group, which met less than twice a year. It was not clear how the outstanding actions in the PTS would be progressed in the future, and after March 2015, the PTS was hardly discussed. A meeting was held in October 2017 but we are not aware of any subsequent progress.

2. A lack of progress

At a meeting of the PTS Working Group on 20 April 2017, Lawrence Shackman of the Crossing Project Team noted the need to re-visit the PTS, including the Action Programme, as the FRC was completed. Measures which had not been taken forward could be considered within the upcoming STPR. The Benefit Monitoring phase of the FRC project was 'likely to be undertaken on a 1 year, 3 year and 5 year basis after opening.'²

On 29 November 2017 Mr Shackman told the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee: *"The idea now is to reproduce the interventions table that was included in that strategy and provide an update on where they are. We will publish that in the coming months...the interventions include the introduction and implementation of hard shoulder running as part of the Fife ITS project on the north side of the Forth... That is now complete, and that measure ... is now permanent ... Some of the more wide-ranging interventions ... will be either progressed via the relevant local authority or considered further in the next stage of the strategic transport projects review. There will be a commentary on each of the interventions in the update that will be published in 2018."*³

Evidently, between April and November 2017, the aspiration of 1, 3, and 5 year Benefit Monitoring had scaled back to an update to be published in the coming months (presumably of 2018). However, we can find no evidence that an update has been published.

Transform Scotland's January 2018 briefing was completed by one of our volunteers on the basis of about one day's work examining public documents and minutes of the PTS Working Group. It is difficult to understand why Transport Scotland, with the resources at its disposal, has been unable to complete even a basic update.

3. Updating our briefing

Nevertheless, taking account of the of the Crossing Project Team's comments to the RECC on 29/11/17, we would be prepared to amend our earlier briefing to indicate that Items 7 and 8 are now complete.

On 7 November 2019 Transport Scotland announced welcome progress on smart ticketing,⁴ although this does not comprise full implementation of Item 18.

This leaves Items 2, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14 incomplete; the status of Items 6, 11, 15, 17 and 18 is unclear. As

regards Item 16, while the 'Revolution in Rail' has apparently been completed, press reports and information from our members indicate that cross-Forth rail services are still inadequate.

It is now clear that hopes for funding any of the uncompleted Items in the PTS rest on the Strategic Transport Projects Review. The Edinburgh City Region Deal did not include specific funding for these projects. Even though the PTS was initially signed in 2009, none of the outstanding (and most transformative) projects are guaranteed funding, over ten years later.

Item 5 (Newbridge interchange improvements), 9, 10, 11 (various major public transport improvements on corridors adjacent to the Queensferry Crossing), which were to be led by Transport Scotland and partners, have scarcely progressed, and passengers on local trains see little benefit from Item 16.

Transport Scotland appears to consider that the other projects, which were to be led by other stakeholders, should be financed by those stakeholders. Where they are expected to find such funding is not clear; even though they were deemed necessary to deliver a 'Managed Crossing Strategy' required as a result of a Transport Scotland project (the Queensferry Crossing).

4. Summary

Despite signing up to a Public Transport Strategy in 2009, updated in 2012:

- Little progress has been made on implementing major projects in the PTS
- Since 2009 there has been no sign of a robust funding strategy for the PTS
- It is now suggested that outstanding items be considered by the (uncompleted) Strategic Transport Projects Review (i.e. effectively started from zero, competing with all other STPR schemes)
- No assessment of PTS outcomes has been published.

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Appendix

Bus operators in the region consider that a major issue is getting bus priority into Edinburgh (i.e. on the Barnton and A8 corridors), but at an early stage it became clear that this would not happen.

The proposed reopening of the Levenmouth railway was not part of the PTS.

'Driverless' buses operating cross-Forth was not part of the PTS.

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¹ See: <http://transformscotland.org.uk/blog/2018/01/31/forth-road-bridge-failure-to-deliver-commitments-threatens-public-transport-corridor/>

² Minutes of FRC Public Transport Strategy Working Group Meeting, 20 April 2017

³ Official report, RECC, 29 November 2017

⁴ www.transport.gov.scot/news/scotlands-travel-smartcards-are-now-smarter-than-ever

Scotland's alliance for sustainable transport

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We campaign for walking, cycling and public transport to be the easiest and most affordable options for everyone. Our diverse membership brings together public, private and third sector organisations from across Scotland. We are a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).

FORTH REPLACEMENT CROSSING PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Briefing

Tuesday 30 January 2018

1. Introduction

As part of the Queensferry Crossing development, a Public Transport Strategy (PTS) was adopted in 2009. This was a collaborative process involving Transport Scotland, public transport operators, local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships. The PTS was designed to improve the public transport offering between Fife and Edinburgh and beyond. The PTS was refreshed in 2012; additional commitments were included at this stage.

Transport Scotland convened the PTS Working Group, which met less than twice a year. It is not clear how the outstanding actions in the PTS will be progressed in the future. Indeed, after March 2015, the PTS was hardly discussed. A meeting was held in October 2017 but we are unaware of any subsequent progress resulting from this meeting.

2. Lack of progress on PTS infrastructure commitments

We have serious concerns that many of the projects set out in the PTS have not been completed or even commenced, despite over five years having passed since the revision of the Strategy in 2012.

A series of actions for improving public transport infrastructure were identified as part of the PTS. As far as we can establish, other than keeping the Forth Road Bridge for buses, most of these commitments have not been met. In particular, these major commitments have not been delivered: A8 corridor bus priorities, improvements in bus priorities between Barnton and Edinburgh; a new bus park & ride at Livingston; and other bus improvements on the M8 & A8 (items 9, 10, and 14 in the table below).

We understand that little or no funding for the PTS commitments have resulted from the Queensferry Crossing project. There are a number of references in the PTS to seeking funding elsewhere. Some were deferred in effect indefinitely (e.g. to be dealt with by Transport Scotland's forthcoming Strategic Transport Projects Review, or SEStran cross-boundary project). Bus operators in the region consider that a major issue is getting bus priority into Edinburgh (i.e. on the Barnton and A8 corridors), but at an early stage it became clear that this would not happen. None of these projects have subsequently ended up as part of the Edinburgh City Region Deal.

Our understanding of the progress on the projects set out in the PTS is as follows:

		Lead agency	Progress recorded by PT Working Group (and other sources)	
1	Halbeath Park and Choose	Fife Council	In place August 2017. Halbeath Park and Ride full, may need expansion.	Completed
2	Rosyth Park and Choose	Fife Council	Fife Council prioritised Halbeath. Flood risk assessed, planning consent secured. Intervention to be retained in PT Strategy. No funding. Last discussed 30/3/15. See 1	Incomplete

3	Improvements at Admiralty Junction	Fife Council/ Transport Scotland	M9 Junction 1a improvements include new west facing slip roads to M9 & southbound bus lane in hard shoulder. Bus lane opened spring 2013. Admiralty Junction improvements included in ITS Contract.	Completed
4	Hard Shoulder Running for buses on M9 approach to Newbridge	Transport Scotland	Completed December 2013. Bus hard shoulder running from south of Humber Railway Bridge (M9) to just short of Newbridge roundabout where signals for buses.	Completed
5	Improvements to Newbridge Interchange;	Transport Scotland/ CEC	Some progress. Considered as part of West Edinburgh Transport Appraisal study. Intervention remains in refreshed strategy (2012) but work hasn't been taken forward.	Incomplete
6	New slips from B800 to M9 Spur including dedicated right turn lane	Transport Scotland/ CEC	The use of slip roads has been found to be safe, and operators want this arrangement to become permanent. As of 30/3/15, new slips had not been progressed.	Incomplete
7	Hard Shoulder Running for buses on M90 north of Admiralty (permanent corridor enhancement). Dependent on success of junction improvements (see above).	Transport Scotland	Permanent lane retained in the PT Strategy, but Transport Scotland advised 28/8/14 unlikely to progress. Southbound bus lane north of FRB starts at junction 2A; operators want extension to junction 3. Currently services diverted via Dales Road (B981) when queues southbound on M90.	Incomplete
8	Retain FRB as PT Corridor; dedicated bus connections with A90 at Scotstoun to link with Ferrytoll P&R; Fife Intelligent Transport System ITS gantries on M90 Admiralty-Halbeath; southbound bus lane in hard shoulder		No further improvements at Admiralty Junction required; 'through-junction' bus running now in the ITS contract.	Partially complete/ Unknown/ Unclear
MEASURES ADDED BY REVISED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN. AUGUST 2012				
9	Newbridge and M9 Public Transport Improvements; P&R at Kilpult, Newbridge, Winchburgh; Traffic signals at Station Rd (Ratho) on A8; queue relocation toward Newbridge Roundabout; M9 Winchburgh Junction; Possible Winchburgh Rail Station; Bus lanes on A8 westbound, A89 eastbound, southbound M9 Winchburgh-Junction 1A	CEC, West Lothian Council, Developers, Transport Scotland	Not in place. Last discussed 30/3/15. Costs indicative; extent of bus lanes to be confirmed. Intervention remains in Public Transport Strategy.	Incomplete / Largely incomplete
10	M8 Public Transport Improvements (Bus hard shoulder running on M8 eastbound Junction 3 toward Newbridge; P&R at Livingston, Junction 3)	Transport Scotland /West Lothian Council	Not in place. Last discussed 30/3/15. Costs indicative; extent of bus lanes to be confirmed. Intervention remains in Public Transport Strategy.	Incomplete

11	Improved public transport links to M90 at Masterton and Admiralty Junctions, along A823(M), A985 and A921. Could incl Rosyth Bypass, A921 improvements	Transport Scotland /Fife Council	Last discussed 30/3/15.	Unknown/ Unclear
12	Edinburgh Orbital Bus Project	SEStran	No progress. Last discussed 30/3/15.	Incomplete
13	Improve public transport connections Gogar Roundabout-Maybury Junction	CEC	Not in place. Last discussed 30/3/15.	Incomplete
14	Improve public transport connections westbound on A90 in Edinburgh, Hillhouse Rd	CEC	To meet 'public transport corridor' vision to Edinburgh, need seriously consider priority Barnton - City centre. No funding 30/3/15, no discussion since.	Incomplete
15	Additional and amended bus services	Operators /Councils/ SEStran	Some reported 30/3/15, no discussion since.	Unknown/ Unclear
16	Review and maximise rail service patronage across the Forth	Transport Scotland/ Network Rail/ ScotRail	Promised as part of 'Revolution in Rail' timetable changes planned for 2019.	Unknown/ Unclear
17	Real Time Passenger Information	SEStran	Limited progress.	Unknown/ Unclear
18	Develop One Ticket with potential migration to Smart Ticketing	Operators /ScotRail/ SEStran	Limited progress. Smart ticketing not in place across Scotland. One Ticket in place in SE Scotland, smart bus-to-bus travel to be introduced in the region in early 2018. Some operators have smart ticketing products. Stagecoach will be contactless within the next few years.	Incomplete

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