

West of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership

Minute of meeting of the West of Scotland Transport Partnership held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 27 January 2006.

Present:	Argyll & Bute:	Councillor Duncan MacIntyre
	East Dunbartonshire	Councillor Alan Moir (deputy)
	East Renfrewshire:	Councillor George Napier (deputy)
	Glasgow:	Councillor John Mason
	Glasgow:	Councillor Alan Stewart
	Glasgow:	Councillor Alistair Watson (Chair)
	Inverclyde:	Councillor Eric Forbes
	North Ayrshire:	Councillor Sam Taylor
	North Lanarkshire:	Councillor David Fagan
	North Lanarkshire:	Councillor Tom Selfridge
	Renfrewshire:	Councillor John McDowell
	South Lanarkshire:	Councillor Davie McLachlan
	South Lanarkshire:	Councillor Chris Thompson
	West Dunbartonshire:	Councillor Linda McColl

Apologies:	East Ayrshire:	Eric Ross
	East Dunbartonshire	Julia Southcott
	East Renfrewshire	Alan Lafferty
	Glasgow	Jim McNally
	Glasgow	Irene Graham
	North Lanarkshire	Barry McCulloch
	South Ayrshire	Robert Campbell

Attending: John F Anderson, Interim Secretary; Valerie Bowen, Clerk; Valerie Davidson, Interim Chief Financial Officer; Aidan O'Donnell, Interim Director General, SPT; W Iain Wylie, Director of Corporate Services, SPT and Rodney Mortimer, Westrans Core Team Manager.

1. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 12 December 2005 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

2. Minute of Recruitment Committee meeting

The minute of the Recruitment Committee meeting of 12 December 2005 was submitted and noted.

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3. RTP branding

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 17 January 2006 by the Interim Secretary,

- (1) reminding members
 - (a) that the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, and a subsequent Order, The Establishment, Constitution and Membership (Scotland) Order 2005, had been enacted on 1 December 2005 and had set out the boundaries and generic names of the seven RTPs for Scotland; and
 - (b) that although the Order had named the Partnership embracing the twelve council areas in the west RTP as the *West of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership*, under the Order, Section 3, paragraph 4, there was provision for the Partnership to change the name given to the region and if it so decided, the Partnership was required to notify the Scottish Ministers and its constituent councils;
- (2) intimating
 - (a) that, as the West RTP would be assuming many of the functions and responsibilities of Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority and Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive, this made it fundamentally different to other RTPs which until 1 December 2005 had been a set of voluntary partnerships;
 - (b) that although the branding of say HITRANS and NESTRANS was recognisable to a degree on some infrastructure in their respective regions and on their reports etc, the considerable capital and revenue expenditure made in the west of Scotland on branding and indeed the branding strategy, was both very significant in terms of the investment by the public purse over many years and to the promotion of an integrated multi-modal system servicing 42% of Scotland's population; and
 - (c) that SPT had always maintained a strong brand for the purposes of presenting to the travelling public the image of an integrated regional transport network of services, products and operations and this enveloping of services in a common, easily understood and recognisable design was a feature of metropolitan regional transport bodes throughout the world;
- (3) highlighting
 - (a) that another central feature of the branding was to support the aim of modal shift to public transport which was a key objective of the SPT/Westrans Joint Transport Strategy and also a central

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plank in the Scottish Executive's and Transport Scotland's policy-making and objectives;

- (b) that the strap line of the SPT branding, *joining up journeys*, gave a clear statement of what a regional transport body's central functional task was and this had not changed with the establishment of the West RTP; and
 - (c) that a substantial amount of public money (£2m-£3m) had been invested in SPT branding and if the SPT brand were abandoned, or the name SPT changed, more than £1.5 million of broadcast advertising alone would be lost; and
- (4) explaining
- (a) that the ideal solution would be to align the new name for the West RTP with the existing, well developed, SPT brand;
 - (b) that SPT could be the acronym for Strathclyde Partnership for Transport which would reflect:
 - the new transport partnership enshrined in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 retaining the key words partnership and transport;
 - that Strathclyde was the regional descriptor used by the police and joint fire broods for the twelve local authorities within the area they served;
 - SPT as the continuing brand, ensuring continuity in the public's mind on the role of the Partnership of joining up journeys, and retaining the logo at no or minimal cost; and
 - that the logo was stand-alone in signage and for most advertising and publicity currently; and
- (5) recommending that the Partnership
- (a) approve its name as Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and notify the Scottish Ministers and its constituent councils accordingly; and
 - (b) approve, on the grounds of cost and public awareness, the continued use of the SPT logo and branding as the adopted RTP logo and branding for the West RTP.

After considerable discussion and having heard Mr Anderson and the Chair in answer to members' questions, the Partnership approved the recommendation at (5) above.

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4. Structure for committees of the Regional Transport Partnership

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 12 January 2006 by the Interim Secretary

- (1) reminding members
 - (a) that the Establishment Order which had set up Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) empowered RTPs to set up such committees or sub-committees as they considered necessary for the efficient discharge of their business;
 - (b) that It had been agreed at the meeting on 12 December 2005 that an ad-hoc committee be set up with the remit of managing the process for the appointment of the Chief Executive and a further ad- hoc committee be set up to manage the process regarding the appointment of non-elected members of the RTP; and
 - (b) that, in addition to these ad-hoc committees, it had been noted that a scheme of administration for the RTP would require to be developed that would encompass all aspects of the decision making process including, amongst others, a committee structure, remits for the committees as appropriate and a scheme of delegation;
- (2) intimating
 - (a) that the first stage in developing the decision making structure was to determine in principle how the RTP wished to set up its committee process and after this had been determined, a scheme of administration could be set up to support the overall principles;
 - (b) that the fact that the RTP had only twenty elected members created a challenge in ensuring that there would be sufficient involvement of all of the RTP members whilst streamlining the number of decision making forums to key areas thereby avoiding duplication;
 - (c) that the key areas, in addition to the fundamental duties to prepare public passenger transport policies and a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), that the RTP or any committees of the RTP would require to consider were summarised as follows:-
 - (i) Implementation Strategy and Project Delivery

Consideration would require to be given to the detail of how the overall public transport policies and RTS could

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be delivered and also to monitor and review the performance of the organisation in delivering agreed projects to support the policies and RTS;

(ii) Resources and Direct Services

The RTP would require to consider the management of the organisation including financial and budgetary matters, monitoring of the services provided directly by the RTP, dealing with personnel matters and property and asset related matters;

(iii) Operations

The RTP would require to continue to deal with the acquisition of public transport services from third parties (mainly subsidised bus and ferry services) which would have a local impact within a strategic context;

(iv) Consultation

The legislation and guidance governing RTPs had placed a large emphasis on consulting and developing relationships with as wide a variety of organisations as possible and therefore it was likely that there would be an increasing requirement to have some mechanism for ensuring adequate consultation;

(v) Audit and Standards

The new organisation would require to ensure that appropriate measures were promoted to ensure the effective and efficient operations, good financial practice and compliance with laws and regulations as well as compliance with the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000; and

(vi) Appeals

The RTP would require to consider matters such as staffing appeals;

(3) explaining

(a) that there were two main options open to the RTP in relation to the decision making at RTP or committee level:

(i) the first option would be to develop a committee structure based on the areas outlined above. This would result in a meeting cycle that would include a meeting of

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the RTP and 4 Committees with two ad-hoc committees or sub-committees. In setting up the committees regard would have to be had to the geographical, gender and party political spread which, in view of the number of members, would require the committees, apart from the Audit and Standards Committee and the ad-hoc committees to have around 10 members in addition to the Chair and Vice Chairs as appropriate. The likely cycle for meetings would be eight- weekly and this was likely to have an impact on the time commitment required by members; and

- (ii) the second option would be that instead of having a committee structure as outlined above, the RTP could meet on a three-weekly cycle with the meetings and supporting documentation in relation to the meetings being split into the categories outlined above. An audit and standards committee would still require to be established to provide robust and transparent scrutiny and there would require to be ad-hoc sub-committees established as and when required to deal with appeals; and
 - (b) that the advantage of option (ii) was that all members would be more involved in the decision making process and there would be no need to try to reflect geographical, gender or political balance. The disadvantage would be that the meetings might take longer; however, if supported with an appropriate scheme of delegation, this impact would be lessened; and
 - (c) that, in considering whether committees should be provided as part of the RTP structure, the RTP would also have to consider what role non-elected members should have in any committee proposed as well as their overall voting rights, bearing in mind the restriction on voting on matters which had a budgetary impact on the constituent authorities.
- (4) requesting that the Partnership agree on the most appropriate approach to the committee structure in order that an appropriate Scheme of Administration could be drawn up.

After consideration and having heard Mr Anderson in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Partnership approved the option outlined at 3(a)(ii) above with the RTP meeting on a four weekly cycle instead of the suggested three weekly cycle, subject to review.

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5. RTP draft revenue budget 2006/2007

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With reference to the minute of 12 December 2005 (page 7, paragraph 10) when the Partnership had

- (1) noted
 - (a) a draft revenue budget for 2006/2007 which totalled £39.214m and had included the cost of SPTA, SPTE, Westrans and costs which previously were outwith the PTA area, together with a schedule which had illustrated the level of requisition for each of the constituent councils; and
 - (b) that on the basis outlined above, a deficit of £4.791m would arise; and
- (2) agreed
 - (a) to approve in principle that the RTP budget should seek to minimise the increase to the requisition to no more than 2.5%, bearing in mind that the requisition could not be finalised until such time as more information became available; and
 - (b) to consider the budget position further within the timescales needed to inform the funding partners' budgetary decisions, ie prior to the end of January 2006,

there was submitted a report (issued) of 19 January 2006 by the Interim Chief Financial Officer,

- (i) intimating that since that meeting, the opportunity had been taken to refine, where possible, the draft budget to take account of known changes and, as a result, the draft budget was now £40.372m with a potential deficit of £4.516m;
- (ii) advising members that constructive discussions were continuing with the Scottish Executive in an attempt to bridge the deficit; and
- (iii) explaining that, to ensure no delay to other funding partners, the twelve constituent councils had been advised of the RTP's agreement to limit an increase in the requisition to 2.5% which would allow the individual councils to plan and prepare their own budgets.

After consideration and having heard Mrs Davidson in further explanation, the Partnership agreed that the matter be discussed further at its meeting on 24 February 2006 to allow a balanced budget to be considered.

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6. RTP draft capital budget 2006/2007 to 2008/2009

[Click here to view report](#) With reference to the minute of 12 December 2005 (page 8, paragraph 11) when the Partnership had

- (1) noted an initial plan and capital budget of £28.417m, £54.906m and £109.110m for the financial years 2006/2007 to 2008/2009, respectively based only on SPT's capital spend priorities;
- (2) approved a list of capital projects, subject to the final funding being announced; and
- (3) agreed that a final budget be presented to a future meeting of the Partnership to take account of the available funding and any movements between the current year and 2006/2007,

there was submitted a report (issued) of 19 January 2006 by the Interim Chief Financial Officer,

- (a) intimating that since that meeting, work had continued in the development of the plan and budget to ensure that the approved projects could be delivered within the timescales and adjustments had been made to reflect movement from one financial year to the next;
- (b) advising members that a grant awareness letter (not a formal offer) had been received from the Scottish Executive outlining capital grant of £25.2m, together with a total of additional specific project grants continuing into 2006/2007 of £7.982m and an indication that there was an expectation that a minimum of 70% of the available grant would be used to support public transport projects; and
- (c) outlining the draft capital budget as follows:

	2006/2007 £'000	2007/2008 £'000	2008/2009 £'000
Priority 1	28,101	39,739	67,988
Priority 2	2,942	9,789	20,000
Priority 3	3,804	5,378	21,122
TOTAL.	34,847	54,906	109,110

After consideration and having noted that the budgets would require to be amended further following the end of the financial year to take account of any additional movement between the current financial year and future years, the Partnership

- (i) noted the draft capital budget for priority 1 and priority 2 of £31.043m for 2006/2007;
- (ii) approved the projects detailed in the report for delivery; and

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- (iii) agreed that the matter be discussed further to allow a balanced budget to be considered.

7. High speed rail link: Response to the Eddington Transport Study

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There was submitted and approved a report (issued) of 17 January 2006 by the Director of Corporate Services, SPTE,

- (1) reminding members that in the 2005 Budget, it had been announced that the Secretary for State for Transport and the Chancellor had asked Sir Rod Eddington, outgoing Chief Executive of British Airways plc, to work with the department for Transport and HM Treasury to advise on the long term impact of transport decisions on the UK's productivity, stability and growth
- (2) advising members
 - (a) that various visits had been carried out within the UK by Sir Rod Eddington and his team of 10 civil servants drawn from the DfT and the Treasury to engage with local regional bodies such as the Regional Development Agencies, Regional Assemblies, PTEs and local authorities on how transport connectivity supported economic growth within the regions; and
 - (b) that the Scottish Executive had arranged a visit in west central Scotland and at that visit it had been indicated that responses to his consultation were required by 6 January 2006, despite the fact that SPT had not been notified previously of the consultation and the majority of the intervening period had been taken up by Christmas and new year holidays;
- (3) explaining
 - (a) that early in the new year, SPT had been contacted by SESTRANS to ascertain whether it would be interested in producing a joint response to the study as previous discussion had taken place between the bodies on the matter of high speed rail links; and
 - (b) that, as time was of the essence, it was agreed between the Chairs of SPTA and SESTRANS that a joint report be prepared in consultation with Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils and reported for homologation to the first meetings of their respective bodies; and
- (4) enclosing the joint response submitted by SPTA and SESTRANS to the Eddington Transport Study which put the case for high speed rail links both to and within Scotland in the context of reports into the value of transport links to conurbations and city regions in relation to economic growth.

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8. Airdrie - Bathgate rail link

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 18 January 2006 by the Director of Corporate Services, SPTE

- (1) intimating
 - (a) that the Central Scotland Corridor Study in 2002/03 had identified the reinstatement of the rail line between Airdrie and Bathgate as a key infrastructure enhancement for Scotland and an initial technical feasibility study had been carried out in 2004; and
 - (b) that in 2005, the Scottish Executive had invited Network Rail to act as promoter of the scheme on its behalf and, as a result, they had approached SPT for assistance with the project which had been agreed and was being provided by SPT's Head of Rail Development;
- (2) outlining Network Rail's role as promoter of the scheme;
- (3) informing members
 - (a) that it was proposed that an electrified double track be provided between Airdrie and Bathgate with four passenger services per hour in each direction between Helensburgh and Edinburgh Waverley;
 - (b) that SPT's current services timetabled from Helensburgh to Glasgow Queen Street would simply be extended; and
 - (c) that there had been no detailed consultation with SPT regarding the feasibility of this journey extension and no proposal for new or additional rolling stock being procured as part of the project;
- (4) advising members
 - (a) that, although the Scottish Executive had indicated that it was for them to consider/develop/deliver any rolling stock solution as part of their overall rolling stock strategy for Scotland, SPT were not aware of the Scottish Executive having called any meetings with stakeholders on the rolling stock strategy;
 - (b) that as acquisition of new rolling stock was notoriously protracted and fraught with difficulty, it was a matter of concern that the Scottish Executive had not given this more priority as, if the project met its delivery timetable of December 2010, without swift progress being made on the rolling stock issue the existing fleet would need to be re-deployed; and

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- (c) that as matters stood, Network Rail were planning on the "worst case" scenario and had proposed that the SPT liveried 334 fleet be re-deployed;
- (5) explaining
 - (a) that, as the number of current services serving Airdrie were approaching capacity and the class 334s had less capacity than the units they would displace, as the intention of the project was to grow patronage between Edinburgh and Glasgow, it was not apparent how this could be achieved under the present proposal without an immediate and unacceptable worsening of services within the SPT area;
 - (b) that because of the focus of the technical study on the restoration of the link and Network Rail's role in relation only to the infrastructure part of the scheme, the consultation had concentrated on the towns affected between Airdrie and Bathgate; and
 - (c) that following a presentation on the project from Network Rail to the Chair and officers from SPT, the need to consult with Argyll & Bute, East and West Dunbartonshire and Glasgow City Councils was raised and agreed in recognition of the potential adverse impact of the service proposals on them; and
- (6) concluding that, whilst SPT remained very supportive of the scheme in principle, it would oppose any proposal to diminish the level or quality of service in its area, lobby the Scottish Executive to ensure that it addressed the rolling stock issue and liaise with the councils west of Airdrie to ensure that they received answers to any concerns they might have about the project.

After consideration and having heard Mr Wylie in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Partnership note the terms of the report.

9. **West of Scotland Freight Workshop**

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 11 January 2006 by the Core Team Manager, Westrans,

- (1) advising members
 - (a) that on 5 December 2005, WESTRANS had hosted a freight workshop jointly chaired by WESTRANS and the Freight Transport Association;
 - (b) that the purpose of the workshop was to consider the possible aims of a freight strategy for the west of Scotland, to identify the

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key freight issues across all modes and to discuss possible delivery mechanisms; and

- (c) that a number of important issues had been identified :
- it was recommended WESTRANS should meet with the Scottish Executive to discuss its Freight Quality Partnership Guidance (a meeting took place on 13 January 2006);
 - the west Partnership should establish a regional Freight Quality Partnership with the involvement of key stakeholders, including members of the RTP. This would improve communication between the freight industry and local authorities, assist with the development of a regional freight strategy and identify freight initiatives. The Quality Partnership would review issues raised in the workshop;
 - a study should be undertaken to establish the needs/drivers/constraints of freight in the west of Scotland to identify baseline data requirements which would enable targets to be set and to review best practice;
 - the freight industry should be surveyed to establish its views;
 - public relations should be improved e.g. provide information about improved emissions levels;
 - the RTP should consider implementing a trial project, perhaps involving a study into freight movements to and from a major freight hub; and
 - the perceived administrative difficulties experienced by operators in accessing rail freight grant; and

- (2) recommending that the Partnership
- (a) approve the establishment of a regional Freight Quality Partnership with the involvement of key stakeholders, including members of the RTP. This would improve communication between the freight industry and local authorities, assist with the development of a regional freight strategy and identify and implement freight initiatives; and
- (b) note the main findings and recommendations identified in the freight workshop.

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After consideration, the Partnership approved the recommendation at (2) above.

10. Strategic Sea Crossings study

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 11 January 2006 by the Core Team Manager, Westrans,

(1) advising members

(a) that early in 2005, HITRANS had commissioned a study to review current ferry services and to identify opportunities to develop them over the medium to long term;

(b) that the study's aim was to draw up a programme of action to help to set the specification for the 2013 tendering round of the Strategic Sea Crossings contracts including:

- Shetland to the Scottish mainland;
- Orkney to the Scottish Mainland;
- Argyll Islands;
- Hebrides Calmac Network; and
- Clyde crossings serving Arran, Bute, Cowal and Cumbrae; and

(c) that the key issues which had emerged from the extensive consultation exercise undertaken as part of the study had included:

- high fares on some longer routes;
- poor frequency on some routes serving small islands;
- long passage times on some routes because of slow vessels;
- ferry terminal constraints (limited channel depths, historical locations);
- short sailing day with few late services;
- livestock welfare; and
- poor road access to some terminals;

(2) explaining

(a) that the study had identified that the socio-economic development of the islands and remote communities must be achieved by investment in the future development of ferry services;

(b) that as the economic potential of our islands was now recognised with niche products being developed and good IT connections enabling them to participate in the knowledge economy, these, combined with an attractive lifestyle quality,

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could attract new inward investment and develop existing businesses;

- (c) that although improved transport links and better accessibility were crucial to economic development, the transport network as a whole was resistant to change and there were routes where the historical timetables did not meet the needs of island residents and where economic opportunities were being missed;
- (3) highlighting that the development opportunities in the study report had included the introduction of fast ferries, rationalisation of the Minch crossings for more frequent and quicker journeys, improvement of the main terminals to accommodate all vessels and develop their hinterlands as gateways, the provision of fixed links on the shorter crossings and improvement of the transport network to link the ferry terminals and fixed links; and
- (4) recommending that the Partnership
 - (a) note the findings and development opportunities identified by the Strategic Sea Crossings Study; and
 - (b) approve the inclusion of the Partnership in a working group with the Highland and Islands and Shetland Transport Partnerships, and the Public Transport Users Committee for Scotland. This body would build up knowledge and test new development ideas; prepare a long term strategy; and, working with operators, the Scottish Executive and community (planning) interests, would act as the focus for specifying future improvements.

After consideration, the Partnership approved the recommendations at (4) above.

11. Planning etc (Scotland) Bill

[click here to view report](#)

There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 16 January 2006 by the Interim Director General, SPTE,

- (1) informing members
 - (a) that on 19 December 2005, the Scottish Executive had published the long-awaited Planning Bill to reform Scotland's planning system which would introduce major changes to the planning regime;
 - (b) that following the launch of the white paper in June 2005, the Planning etc (Scotland) Bill set out the details of the new regime which would allow Ministers to streamline the planning process

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by designating projects as being of strategic national importance;
and

- (c) that the Bill included changes regarding application for planning permissions, consultation processes and arrangements for environmental impact assessments;
- (2) highlighting
- (a) that the Bill proposals would make the National Planning Framework a more powerful instrument, as it was intended to set out the Scottish Executive's long term development priorities;
 - (b) that the next Framework would be published in 2008 and would provide a strategy for the period until 2028; and
 - (c) that as the Executive's budget for infrastructure projects, of which £3bn had been allocated over 10 years for transport projects, it was hoped that Ministers would be provided with the opportunity to debate in depth the *delivery* of projects with the proposed powers;
- (3) explaining
- (a) that the detail of the Bill would require careful scrutiny as the test would be how the Scottish Executive could effect the cultural change which was felt necessary to deliver the intentions of this Bill to speed up the development process for the community at large and for the Scottish economy; and
 - (b) that unless the Bill adopted practical steps to drive the change, combined with measures to enforce against those who did not embrace the new culture, there was a risk that the Scottish Executive's intentions would be difficult to achieve;
- (4) outlining the Bill's procedure through the Scottish Parliament;
- (5) concluding
- (a) that as the RTP was very likely to become a statutory consultee, it was vital that the Partnership took every opportunity to influence the process through the parliament's committees (the bill would be scrutinised by several committees in so far as it affected their interests and responsibilities), working with MSPs, and through advocacy in terms of the Partnership's stakeholders; and
 - (b) that active engagement would provide the opportunity to help shape a planning regime fit for purpose for the 21st century and, more importantly, support the transport

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developments which were required to underpin the west of Scotland economy; and

- (c) that non councillor members of the RTP would be able to bring their own expertise to the debate and might, depending on the scope of interests represented, play a major part in supporting the procedure of the Bill through Holyrood; and
- (6) recommending that the Partnership
 - (a) note the contents of this report; and
 - (b) note that as the Planning etc (Scotland) Bill progressed through the parliamentary process, further reports would be produced as matters arose in so far as they might affect the interests of the RTP.

12. Conference: Scotland's Transport Puzzle - Connecting National and Regional Strategies

The Partnership agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chairs, together with Councillors Mason, McColl and Taylor, should attend the Scotland's Transport Puzzle - Connecting National and Regional Strategies Conference on 13 March 2006 in Edinburgh.

13. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Friday, 24 February, 2006 in Consort House, Glasgow.