

**THE MORAY COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**MES TRANSPORTATION GROUP**

**Date:** Wednesday 10 April 2013

**Location:** Meeting Room 5, Moray Council Annexe, Elgin

**ATTENDEES:**

S Cooper, Head of Direct Services (SC)  
G Holland, Transportation Manager (GH)  
G Scott, Diageo (GS)  
D Wood, Northern Oils (DW)

Cllr G Leadbitter (GL)  
R Robertson, Director Hitrans (RR)  
L Davidson, PA to HODS (LD)

<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.0	<b>Introduction</b>	
1.1	SC introduced the meeting and welcomed Graeme Scott and David Wood to their first meeting of the transportation group since they were nominated as business representatives for the group.	
1.2	SC explained that there had not been a meeting of the group since 21 November 2012 but that the nature of the group and the type of projects being considered were longer term and did not require meetings at a more regular frequency.	
2.0	<b>Minute of last meeting: 21 November 2012</b>	
2.1	Network Rail – Forres station area – SC said that alternative sites were being looked at for the biomass plant.	
2.2	Scotrail/Network Rail – RR to liaise with F Roach to pull together some key points to share with the group.	<b>RR</b>
2.3	A9/A96 – stakeholder meeting taking place in Aviemore 17.04.13. GH attending the meeting. In relation to the dualling within Moray, factors that will be considered include: economic reasons, difficulty getting land, how easy it is to build etc. GH will find out if there are any proposed dates for a business case to be submitted and will feedback to the group at the next meeting.	<b>GH</b>
3.0	<b>MES Transportation Projects</b>	
3.1	1. Strategic review of regional public transport links within Moray – this is in relation to the Council’s decision to change from subsidised bus services and replace some of these by expanding dial-a-bus services.	

3.2	2. Improvements to traffic distribution outside Elgin centre – planning application for proposed Western Link Road expected end of 2013.	
3.3	3. Strategic connections, improvements to business park accessibility – Springfield Properties have been granted planning consent for the internal road network at Barmuckity but not for development itself. As traffic increases, the need for a roundabout on the A96 will be triggered.	
3.4	4. Develop bus links between Moray and the Central Belt (i.e. once per day service from Elgin) – RR spoke about the bus investment fund (scot govt) and said that Hitrans would be re-looking at this project this year.	
3.5	5. Lifting the spirit project – see item of the minute.	
3.6	<p>6. Improvements to the A95 – a discussion was held about the issues faced by motorists on the A95, in particular HGV's with the narrowness of some sections of the road. It is viewed as a regional rather than a national road by Transport Scotland. GH said that three particular parts of the A95 were being considered and that any improvements would increase safety and journey times. Hitrans have previously carried out a study on what volume of the traffic is distillery related and RR agreed that further work could be done on this to update it.</p> <p>GL noted that he had asked for the importance of the whisky industry and the need for A95 improvements to be included as part of the National Planning Framework consultation response and GH had inputted into a submission that was returned by the Council to highlight these factors.</p>	
3.7	<p>7. Developments at Buckie harbour – O&amp;M license will not be issued until later this year. Difficult to predict exactly what would be required for a company like this to operate out of Buckie harbour. A balance between opening up land and space for existing companies to work from as well as trying to predict what may be required for O&amp;M has to be considered.</p> <p>LD to arrange a meeting with SC, GH and DW.</p>	<b>LD</b>
3.8	8. Relocation of lorry park for Elgin – it was discussed that an alternative site may be required but different factors would have to be considered. These include any proposal for dualling the A96 at Elgin as HGV drivers may have different requirements if their journey time was shortened or stopping place was to change as a result of this. It was also noted that a main issues report for Elgin City for the Future Project would be submitted to Committee at the end of this year and that options for a new lorry park would have to be assessed to include a new site in the existing development plan.	

	<p>GH said that a survey of lorry drivers had taken place some time ago to gauge their needs for a lorry park and where it should be. At that time there was a preference for a town centre location. It was agreed that a further survey should be arranged for later this year.</p>	<p><b>GH</b></p>
<p>3.9</p>	<p>9. Improvements to Aberdeen – Inverness rail service – RR to confirm if 2019 is still the programmed date for improvements to take place at Forres.</p>	<p><b>RR</b></p>
	<p>A discussion was held about the anomalies with the pricing structure, i.e. cheaper to book at ticket from further away rather than nearer. It was agreed that RR would arrange for a letter to be sent from Hitrans to Scottish Rail to ask about pricing. It was thought that passenger numbers would be higher if the fares were cheaper and more carriages were available.</p>	<p><b>RR</b></p>
<p>3.10</p>	<p>10. A96 dualling – GH to attend the next meeting 17.04.13.</p>	<p><b>GH</b></p>
<p>3.11</p>	<p>11. A96 Alexandra Road redesign of junctions – GH explained that a meeting had taken place with Stewart Stevenson a number of years ago and Transport Scotland staff and GH staff had jointly undertaken some design work on improving a number of junctions. Included in the Elgin City for the Future Project was a plan to expand the town centre out towards the Lossie Green car park (town hall) and this would require making it easier for pedestrians to move across the Alexandra Road part of the A96. The junction improvements included removing the roundabouts and replacing them with traffic signal controlled junctions with pedestrian crossing facilities. GH said that Council Officer's had approached Transport Scotland staff for early implementation without success. It was thought that a more 'political route' was required.</p>	
<p>3.12</p>	<p>12. Bus station relocation to Lossie Green area – this would be considered if item 11 was going to happen. GH said that a planning application had been submitted to extend St Giles multi storey car park on top of the existing bus station. If this was given the go ahead then the existing bus station would need to be temporarily relocated for some 18 months or so and this might lead to a permanent relocation.</p>	
<p>3.13</p>	<p>13. Multi-storey car park in Lossie Green area – dependent on item 11 going ahead.</p>	
<p>3.14</p>	<p>14. Replacement dredging facility for Moray harbours – GH explained that the Council were in the process of procuring a new build dredger but that this was some 18 months or so away from completion. The Council does not currently own a dredger and this is proving difficult, especially for recreational harbours.</p>	

3.15	It was agreed that the next stage would be for GH to outline a business case for each item above. It is expected that these will be completed by mid-May 2013.	<b>GH</b>
3.16	SC asked all to review the list and send any further projects to LD for them to be considered by the group. It may be that there are some smaller, more 'shovel ready' projects that could be carried out before some of the longer term aims.	<b>ALL</b>
3.17	An action plan would follow consideration of the business cases for each item.	
4.0	<b>Lifting the Spirit Project</b>	
4.1	<p>RR gave an introduction to the pilot project. It is proposed to transport goods from the whisky industry via rail, thus removing traffic from the roads. The pilot proposes to operate 2-3 days per week to gain an indication of the benefits, including cost, environmental, safety etc.</p> <p>A freight operator has been identified (following advertisement) and funding secured: £70k from Hitrans, £30k HIE, £20k Moray Council. This figure will be matched by European funding.</p> <p>GS raised concerns about there being enough 'traffic' to support the pilot project. He explained that Diageo only had one site that could participate as there were incompatibility issues with the others.</p> <p>It was agreed that RR would arrange a meeting with GS, GH, SC and F Roach to discuss. RR would also circulate up-to-date information about the project to the group.</p>	<b>RR RR</b>
5.0	<b>Next Meeting</b>	
5.1	It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in the middle of June 2013. LD to circulate dates to all for agreement.	<b>LD</b>