

ANGUS COUNCIL

**PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE
ROADS COMMITTEE**

**28 JANUARY 1999
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SUBJECT: SCOTTISH PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUND - BID FOR FUNDING

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT AND DIRECTOR OF ROADS

Abstract: This report informs Committee of a bid submitted to the Scottish Office in respect of the Scottish Public Transport Fund.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

1. Note the submission on 14 January 1999 of a Partnership bid to the Scottish Office for Scottish Public Transport Funding on behalf of Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Travel Dundee, Strathtay Scottish, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Ninewells Hospital Trust.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Government announced in the Transport White Paper "Travel Choices for Scotland" their intention to create a Scottish Public Transport Fund to assist local authorities to provide key value for money developments to their public transport network.
- 2.2 This report details a bid application which has been submitted to the Scottish Office for funding for public transport initiatives on the Carnoustie to Dundee corridor. A copy of the bid submitted is available in the Members Room for inspection.

3 SCOTTISH PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUND

- 3.1 Procedures for local authorities to bid for funding from the Public Transport Fund as part of the capital allocation arrangements were issued on 18 November 1998 in the form of Circular No 22/1998.
- 3.2 While the White Paper stated that Local Transport Strategy Documents would have to be prepared by local authorities and used to bid for public transport resources from the Public Transport Fund, guidance on the preparation of these documents has still to be issued. In the first year therefore bids are to be accepted set in the context of any existing transport documents.
- 3.3 Each authority is only permitted to make one application per year to the Public Transport Fund and a minimum de-minimis limit of £200,000 total cost per project has been set for applications. Eligible projects will be limited to those which have the primary aim of encouraging the use of public transport, reducing traffic volumes, improving local environments and working towards the statutory targets for air

quality. Local authorities will also be expected to have explored options for taking forward the project on a partnership basis i.e. private/public partnership and/or working in co-operation with neighbouring authorities, where appropriate.

- 3.4 The bidding document for any project should cover the authorities transport objectives; an economic appraisal; a financial appraisal; an assessment of environmental and other impacts; a social assessment and details of how the project will be evaluated and reported. Bids for 1999 - 2000 had to be submitted to the Scottish Office by 14 January 1999.
- 3.5 The Public Transport Fund is being phased in, however given the Public Transport Challenge Fund awards are already being implemented, only a **limited number** of new projects will be awarded additional capital consent for 1999 - 2000 from the Fund.
- 3.6 The applications submitted will be assessed by the Scottish Office, taking into account the views of CoSLA, with the aim of Ministers announcing successful projects by the end of February 1999.

4 THE SCOTTISH PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUND BID SUBMITTED

- 4.1 A partnership bid was submitted to the Scottish Office by Angus Council, Dundee City Council, , Travel Dundee, Strathtay Scottish, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Ninewells Hospital Trust.
- 4.2 The main principle of the proposals is to encourage the use of public transport and restrain the use of the private car. The aim being to provide for the transport of people while simultaneously protecting and enhancing the environment.
- 4.3 In addition, the proposals aim to reduce social exclusion by providing for travel by means other than the private car, thereby improving accessibility for all sections of society.
- 4.4 Angus Council is currently working in partnership with Dundee City Council on the dualling of the A92 Arbroath to Claypotts. One of the predicted outcomes of the dualling is that private car commuters who currently use the A930 route to/from Carnoustie and Monifieth will switch to the A92, thus leaving the A930 less congested and more favourable to public transport services.
- 4.5 The bid submitted therefore comprises of a cache of measures that can be called upon to provide benefits to buses, without the need for physical changes to the carriageway. These measures are aimed at improving the reliability, journey speed and accessibility of buses and improving the information on the services available to the public.
- 4.6 Measures which may be used to increase the reliability and speed of buses include bus lanes and bus priority at signalised junctions. Bus lanes have however had to be excluded from the current bid as traffic orders would be required to implement these and it could take 12 to 18 months to implement these. Bus lanes would be of greatest benefit within Dundee and Dundee City Council have intimated that they may include these in next years bid. Priority at signalised junctions is however achievable in the short term by using Select Vehicle Detection (SVD). SVD uses a transponder on each bus which interacts with a buried loop in the road surface. The

loop detects the presence of the bus and identifies it as a vehicle to which priority should be given. When the bus approaches the junction either the green time is extended to accommodate the bus or, if the signal is at red, the green is recalled as quickly as possible. In order to use SVD then Dundee City Council will need to upgrade its Urban Traffic Control SCOOT system as part of the bid. There are 9 signalised junctions on the Ninewells to Carnoustie route, although once SCOOT is upgraded then any junction in Dundee could be modified to incorporate SVD. Obviously therefore in the longer term other signalised junctions could be added to SVD with benefits to buses both within Dundee and on other corridors between Dundee and Angus.

- 4.7 The scheme proposed aims to improve the accessibility of buses by complementing the substantial investment made by local bus companies on low floor buses. It is therefore intended that high "Kassel" type kerbing be provided at selected bus stops, possibly in conjunction with bus boarders (footway build-outs), to ensure no height discrepancy between the footway and the bus floor. This will not only provide access for people with disabilities but will also encourage mothers with young children and the elderly to use the bus.
- 4.8 The lack of good accurate information can be a significant barrier to the use of public transport. It is therefore proposed to provide a dynamic system which will give up to the minute information at selected bus stops along the Ninewells Hospital to Carnoustie route. This system is known as Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI). At selected bus stops Light Emitting Diode (LED) displays would give real time information to waiting passengers. This information would be updated regularly so the intending passenger would know exactly how long it would be before the bus arrives.
- 4.9 At the centre of the RTPI is a tracking system known as automatic vehicle location (AVL) which can determine the position of any bus on the road network and therefore determine its arrival time at future stops. The type of AVL proposed as part of the scheme is the Terrestrial Beacon, which uses beacons mounted on bus stop signs and passenger shelters which communicate with transponders on board the bus to locate its position.
- 4.10 The benefits of the scheme are that its primary aim is clearly to encourage the use of public transport; there is little lead time required so it will be in a state of readiness to get under way promptly and be completed within one year; it can be taken forward on a partnership basis with Dundee City Council, the bus companies, Ninewells Hospital and Scottish Enterprise Tayside. In addition, the project is also an essential first element towards providing an integrated transport system.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total package is estimated to cost £660,000 (inclusive of 10% consultancy fees). While projects which require 100% funding would not necessarily be ruled out, local authorities will be expected to have explored options for taking forward the project on a partnership basis. The partners in the bid submitted were Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Travel Dundee, Strathtay Scottish, Ninewells Hospital Trust and Scottish Enterprise Tayside. Input from the various partners varies from payment "in kind" to millions of pounds in new vehicles. Any contribution from this Council will have to be contained in the Planning and Transport Department's capital allocation for 1999 - 2000.

- 5.2 Should the bid be unsuccessful in the present round then consideration will given to incorporating this into the 2000 - 2001 bid.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration and Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This bid is clearly aimed to encourage the use of public transport and meets Angus Council's objectives outlined in the Public Transport Policy Statement endorsed by the Planning and Transport Committee on 25 April 1996 (Report 261/96 refers). In particular it contributes towards the objectives "To develop the role of public transport within the community, providing mobility for those without access to cars, as an attractive alternative to those with access to cars and contributing to addressing issues of sustainability" and "To have particular regard to the needs of the elderly and disabled in the provision of transport services".
- 7.2 Members will be informed of the result of this bid application following the announcement of successful projects by the Scottish Office by the end of February 1999.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/LEM/SP
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