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The Moray Council would like to thank those organisations, agencies, businesses, interest groups, and members of the public who have contributed towards the development of the Local Transport Strategy.

The response to the draft Strategy reflects the vital role of transport in the economic and social well-being of the Moray area. The Strategy is a realistic response to the issues and needs facing Moray taking account of the likely financial resources available.

A safe and efficient road network is fundamental to Moray so that goods and people can move effectively both within the area and to the rest of the UK and Europe. This is supported in the Strategy by the promotion of rail for freight and passengers, public and community transport and cycling and walking.

The success of the Strategy will not depend upon the Council alone. It will need to be supported by the UK and Scottish Parliaments, by Government Agencies, transport companies, business and the general public. Only concerted support and action will be able to achieve the type of transport system that Moray needs.



Councillor Eddie Aldridge
Convener

- 2.1 The Scottish Integrated Transport White Paper 'Travel Choices for Scotland' was introduced in July 1998. The Transport Bill was published by the Scottish Executive in February 2000. Again, in February 2000 the Scottish Executive provided guidance on the preparation of Local Transport Strategies by Local Authorities. Local Authorities are encouraged to produce a Strategy which sets out its plans and priorities for the development of an integrated transport strategy for its area over the period 2001/02 to 2003/04.
- 2.2 The Moray Council has sought to develop a sustainable Local Transport Strategy in response to the Scottish Executive's initiative. The Strategy is action-orientated and will be subject to a continuous process of review so that it can take on board new information and issues. Targets have been set for action so that progress can be monitored. This will enable the Strategy to be reviewed in relation to its level of achievement.
- 2.3 The Council acknowledges that the approach to transport must be met by a commitment to its implementation over the long term by all concerned. This will require a positive approach by the Scottish Executive, Government Agencies, businesses and organisations, as well as the general public. The Council is committed to taking a lead role in the promotion of the Strategy and will, wherever possible, demonstrate by its own actions what can be achieved.



- 3.1 The Moray Council is committed to promoting the concept of sustainable development. The increased focus on transport policy has developed in parallel with the move towards sustainability that emerged from the Rio Conference on the Environment in 1992. The development of Local Agenda 21 strategies within Moray and within Local Government in general has added further impetus to look carefully at the way we travel and to encourage those forms of transport which reduce pollution and environmental impact.
- 3.2 The Local Transport Strategy has therefore been developed within the context of sustainable development and this encompasses economic, social and environmental considerations. It is clear that successful economic development depends upon efficient transport networks both within the Moray boundaries and linking it to the rest of the UK and Europe. In particular, business needs to be able to minimise any adverse impact rising from Moray's peripherality.
- 3.3 Equally, effective community development requires good accessibility to those services and facilities used by the people of Moray so that their quality of life is maintained and improved. In addition, there is a need to ensure a safe transport environment.
- 3.4 Environment is the third component of sustainable development and requires actions which minimise or mitigate any physical impacts on the natural and built environment which may arise from new road building. Furthermore, there is a need to develop those measures which help to reduce problems associated with air quality and noise.
- 3.5 The Local Transport Strategy has been developed within the Scottish and Moray context. Key national trends are as follows :
- Licensed motor vehicles in Scotland continue to increase. In 1999 there were 2.1 million. This is 26 per cent more than was the case in 1989, and 3 per cent more than 1998.
 - Passenger journeys on local bus services in Scotland continue to decline. There were 413 million in 1998/99. This is 36 per cent less than was the case in 1998/99, and 6 per cent less than in 1997/98.
 - Rail journeys in Scotland increased by some 4 per cent from 1996/97 to 1998/99, increasing from 55 million to 60 million.
 - Traffic volumes on motorways and 'A' class roads in Scotland have remained broadly static over the last 4 years at 25 billion vehicle kilometres. However, this still represents an increase of 16 per cent since 1989.
 - Freight by road in Scotland has been at a consistent level of some 157 million tonnes over the past ten years.
 - Trunk roads constructed or opened by the Scottish Executive was at its lowest for 10 years in 1998/99. It amounted to only 30 per cent of the 10 year average since 1989/90.
- 3.6 It is essential that the Local Transport Strategy takes local conditions into account. The main characteristics of Moray are as follows :

Moray is Rural

- Population density is low, averaging only 38 persons per square kilometre. The Scottish average is 65.6.
- Distances to public services are long. Most of Moray is over 1 hours drive from a major service centre (Scottish Office, 1992).
- Car dependency is high. In 1991 there was an average of 0.91 cars per household within Moray. This compared with 0.76 within Scotland.
- The length of road carriageways required to serve Moray is high. There is some 1600 kilometres of A, B, C and Unclassified roads within Moray. This equates to 50.7 kilometres of road per thousand cars. In Scotland as a whole the figure is 30.3.
- Moray has a high level of rural primary industries. There is therefore additional pressure on the road and bridge infrastructure from heavy goods and farm vehicles.
- Public transport except within the main towns is generally not viable, unless subsidised by the public sector.
- High fuel prices have a disproportionate and unfair impact upon the population within rural areas such as Moray where fuel prices, especially in the more remote areas, are already higher than those in the south. This, in turn, adversely affects the viability of rural petrol stations, and is beginning to have an adverse impact on the commercially operated local bus network.
- In contrast, only Elgin and Fochabers display local congestion issues. Other areas have few congestion problems, most of which can be dealt with by management and enforcement.

Moray is Peripheral

- Moray is peripheral within Europe. All of Moray is currently covered by European Community Structural Fund designations - Objectives 1 and 2. These designations are designed to reduce the economic imbalance between areas such as Moray and the rest of Europe.
- Moray is peripheral within Scotland. Time isochrones demonstrate that the Central Belt of Scotland is further from Moray than either Inverness or Dingwall by both road and rail. Therefore, business in particular is at a considerable disadvantage in competing with the rest of UK and Europe.
- High fuel prices have a significant impact upon the operation of businesses within Moray, particularly those that import and export goods from beyond the Moray boundary into the rest of the UK and Europe.



Moray has a Declining Transport Budget

- Transport finance has been severely reduced over the last decade, particularly due to reduced funding of Local Government by Central Government. Capital expenditure on roads and transportation in Moray in 1999/2000 was some £2 million. Revenue expenditure has declined by £0.6 million over the last 3 years. Revenue support for public transport has remained static with the consequence of further service cuts. A position is being reached where funding is only available to meet statutory functions.
- At the same time there has been a clear policy move towards reducing the number of major capital roads projects by Scottish Executive as part of the Trunk Roads Programme, and this was reinforced through the current Trunk Road Review. Therefore there has been an increasing emphasis on developer contributions related to roads infrastructure from new development.
- The Government accepts that transport provision requires additional finance. However, its policy focus on the urban conurbations has meant that proposed finance raising instruments are likely to be appropriate only to those areas. Proposed measures include road pricing and work place charging which are intended to finance the provision of facilities for public transport, cycling and walking. In peripheral rural areas such charging regimes are unlikely to be applicable. Therefore, it is essential that there is provision within legislation for a central transport fund for the finance raising measures so that they can be distributed across all of Scotland. If such an approach is not taken then there will be likely to be a further reduction in the finance available to non-urban authorities such as Moray.
- Local Authority Transport budgets are not ring fenced. This can lead to uncertainty, particularly in the delivery of long term strategies. Consequently, there is a clear requirement for the Council to commit transport funding over the long term to meet its desired objectives.



- 4.1 The Transport Strategy requires to take into account National Government and Scottish Executive Guidance, its inter-relationship with other strategies being promoted by the Council, and those plans prepared by other transport bodies and businesses.

Transport Policy Guidance

- 4.2 In recent years key policy documents have included the Green Paper ‘ Keeping Scotland Moving’, the 1997 Road Traffic Reduction Act, the Rural Transport Fund, the National Planning Policy Guideline and Planning Advice Note on Transport and Planning, and the National Cycling Strategy.
- 4.3 Furthermore, the Scottish Executive White Paper ‘Travel Choices for Scotland’ set the context for a wide range of papers which have been or will be published in the coming period. They include :
- Consultation on the Appraisal of Trunk Road Investment
 - Consultation on Regional Transport Partnerships
 - Draft Guidance on Local Transport Strategies
 - UK Sustainable Distribution
 - GB Bus Policy Consultation Document
 - UK Walking Strategy
 - New Road Safety Targets for Great Britain for 2010
 - Consultation on Road User and Workplace Parking Charges in Scotland
 - Strategic Review of the Trunk Road Programme in Scotland
 - Review of Trust Ports
 - UK Air Transport Policy
- 4.4 The White Paper and subsequent bill and the further guidance thus far published have tended to focus upon urban congestion issues and the need to promote modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking. Unfortunately there has been relatively little attention paid to the issue of rural accessibility. Therefore, the Strategy will take forward both issues by seeking to promote and support modal shift within the overall context of improving accessibility both within and linking to Moray.
- 4.5 In addition to developing an appropriate response to the White Paper and its follow-up documents, and in carrying out its responsibilities under the Road Traffic Reduction Act, the strategy also needs to recognise other linkages as follows -

Council Strategies

- 4.6 The Local Transport Strategy needs to recognise and support linkages to other strategic initiatives. The main Council strategies with links to the Transport Strategy are as follows :

Moray Development Plan :

The focus within the development plan is to provide sustainable development particularly focused upon settlements. This, therefore, provides the opportunity to relate development to the existing and proposed transport infrastructure and to reinforce public transport provision.

Moray Community Plan :	The Council, in partnership with Grampian Health Board, Grampian Police, Scottish Homes, Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise, Moray Voluntary Service Organisation and Moray Joint Community Councils has developed the Moray Community Plan. The Plan seeks to develop public involvement and better co-ordinated service provision, including transport.
Moray Sustainability Initiatives :	The Council is at the forefront in promoting sustainability in line with Local Agenda 21, and has produced an Environmental Charter and established the Moray Sustainability Forum which brings together all of the main organisations operating within Moray.
Moray Joint Economic Strategy :	The Economic Strategy developed in partnership with Moray Badenoch & Strathspey Enterprise seeks to promote effective economic development in a sustainable manner which maximises the benefits from Moray's high quality living and working environment.
Moray Access Strategy :	The Council is developing an integrated approach to access through formal and informal path networks in towns and the countryside. It is closely tied to Government Guidance which seeks to promote cycling as an alternative to the car. It will therefore have community, health and fitness, educational and tourism benefits.
Community Safety Strategy :	The Council has developed a strategy which seeks to promote community safety through a wide range of measures.
Moray Road Safety Plan 2000-2002 :	The Council has prepared a Road Safety Plan which sets out a series of actions which are intended to help Moray meet Government targets for road safety.
Moray Indicative Forestry Strategy :	The Council has developed a forestry strategy in partnership with SNH, Forest Enterprise, and the Forestry Commission. It is focused on identifying the potential for new forestry and includes priorities for the transport of timber.
Moray Council Air Quality Strategy:	An Air Quality Strategy first stage review and assessment has been carried out in terms of the 1995 Environment Act. The Scottish Executive are satisfied that the air quality values will not be exceeded as a result of traffic emissions.
Public Transport Policy Statement :	The Council has prepared a Public Transport Policy Statement under the terms of the Transport Act 1985 on the provision of passenger transport services which would not be met without action on its part.

Other Related Plans

- 4.7 Related strategies or Plans are also prepared by other organisations and companies. The transport strategy should help to secure common objectives and goals. The main organisations active in Moray include -

Scottish Executive; Railtrack; Scotrail; GNER, Virgin Rail; English, Welsh and Scottish Railways (Freight); Bluebird (Stagecoach); Road Hauliers Association; Scottish Enterprise; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise; Scottish Natural Heritage.

- 4.8 There is also a requirement for continued co-ordination of policies with the Highland Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council to achieve the necessary strategic links and services to benefit Moray.



- 5.1 The Council published its draft Transport Strategy in July 1999. It was made available to the public via the Council's website and through its Access Points and Public Libraries.
- 5.2 The Council has sought to further develop the Strategy by undertaking two questionnaire surveys, one aimed at businesses and one at the general public. In addition, the Council ran a series of consultation workshops in June 2000.

The Business Questionnaire Survey

- 5.3 The format of the questionnaire and the full survey results are presented in Appendix I. The key elements of the survey are :
- 128 businesses with employees were surveyed. Responses were received from 64 (50%). More than half of those who replied were businesses with over 25 employees.
 - Just under half (48%) of the respondents provided transport incentives to their workforce. Most incentives were car orientated (64%), although some were cycling / walking orientated (26%).
 - 28% of the companies import raw materials and 20% of the companies export raw materials. Roads are the predominant means of transport (75%). Air is the next most important. Only 1 company uses rail transport despite the fact that 87% have their main markets within the UK.
 - Most companies (82%) were satisfied or better with the quality of transport provision although the remainder felt it to be poor or very poor.
 - The three most important issues identified by the businesses were road maintenance (21%), new road construction (19%) and winter road maintenance (18%).
 - The vast majority of the businesses oppose or think unnecessary the Government's transport revenue proposals. The figures being 88% against road user charges, 95% against workplace parking charges and 100% against above inflation fuel tax rises.



The Public Questionnaire Survey

5.4 The questionnaire format and survey results are shown in Appendix 2. The summary of the main results is as follows :

- a random sample of 1057 households were sent survey forms. Responses were received from 407, a response rate of 39%.
- 86% of the households had at least one car available for their use. 79% of the responses consider that a car is indispensable.
- 70% of the households had at least one paid job, with 44% of the total having two or more. Most jobs (74%) were weekday.
- Of those adults who travel to work, 74% use the car, 13% go on foot. Buses and cycles only account for 6% in total.
- 67% of return journeys to work are in excess of two miles, whilst 42% are in excess of 10 miles. Most car users use a company car park (55%) with a further 21% using public car parks.
- 53% of households travel more than two miles to do the main weekly shopping, with the car being the predominant mode of travel (84%).
- Travel to school by children is substantially on foot (49%), with 30% using a bus and 18% using a car. Only 3% of children cycle to school.
- The availability of public transport to work, shops and leisure was only considered to be 'good' or 'adequate' by 26%, 44% and 37% respectively.
- Public transport or cycles are only currently used 'daily' or 'frequently' by 12% and 17% of households respectively.
- Measures that would encourage more regular use of public transport are considered to be cheaper fares (40%), more frequent services (20%) and more bus routes (13%).
- Measures that would encourage more regular use of cycles are off road cycle routes (36%), safer roads (26%) and better facilities (12%).
- Measures to encourage people to walk are seen to be more traffic free routes (32%) and safer roads (29%).
- Parking provision in Moray's town centres are considered to be 'good' or 'adequate' by 79% of respondents.
- The transport improvements considered most important are road maintenance (22%), winter road maintenance (17%), safety (16%), improved bus services (14%) and new road construction (10%).
- The vast majority of respondents oppose or think unnecessary the Government's transport revenue proposals. The figures being 90% against road user charges, 86% against workplace parking charges and 96% against above inflation fuel tax rises.

The Consultation Workshops

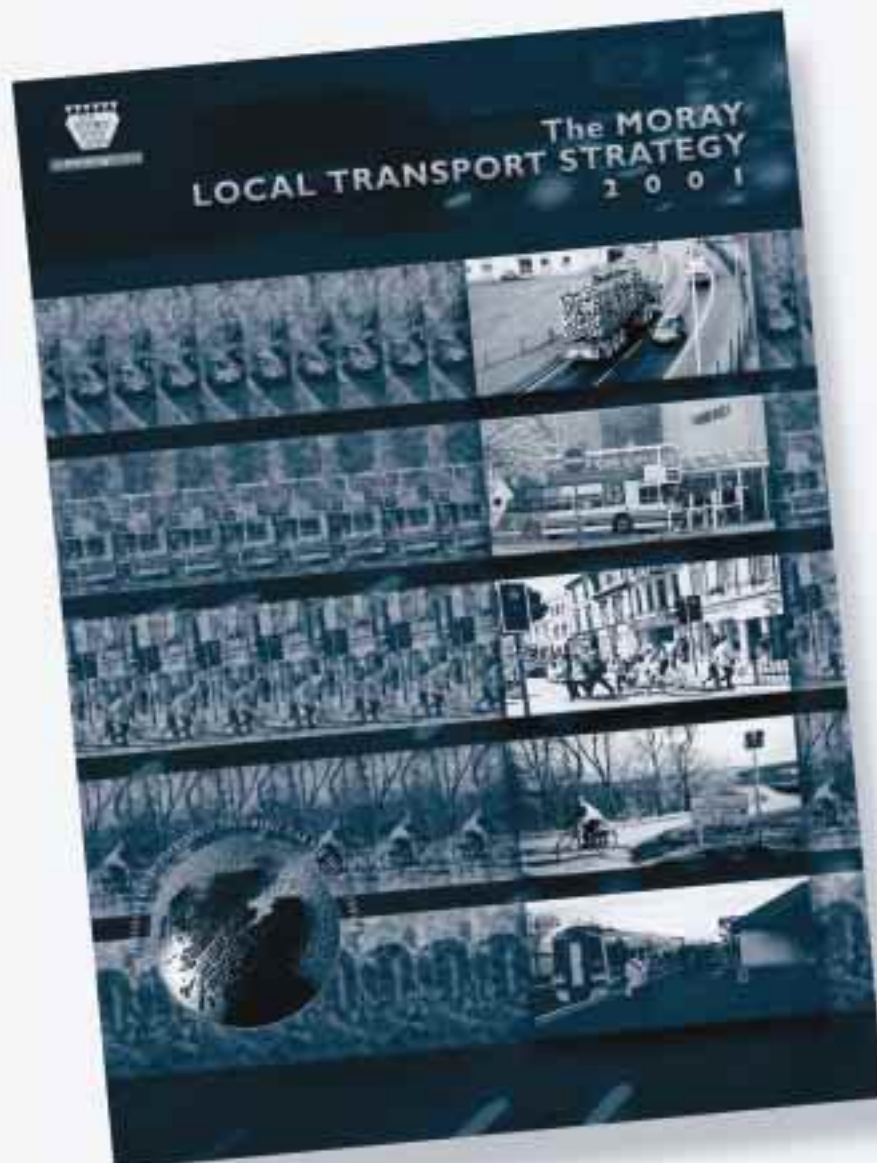
5.5 Consultation workshops took place in Elgin Town Hall on 26 June 2000 (public meeting), 27 June 2000 (transport operators) and 29 June 2000 (transport interest groups). The output from the workshops is set out in Appendix 3. The comments from the workshops include a wide range of issues. However, there was general agreement with the proposed direction of the Moray Transport Strategy with additional emphasis on a number of the following matters :

- Road improvements - the A95 and A96 are seen as priorities although a general increase in the level of the budget on roads is seen as a necessity which could be achieved by increasing the proportion of the fuel tax revenue made available to roads.
- Rail improvements - the need to improve the capacity of the Aberdeen - Inverness rail line was seen as a prerequisite to improving services, timetables and connections on that route. The main requirement is seen as the construction of passing loops to allow an increase in the number of services on the route.
- Public transport - improved integration between the area's bus, rail and air services is seen to be important. The measures identified for better integration include improved timetables and connections; better information and feedback opportunities; and improved facilities. It is recognised that rural bus services are unlikely to be a commercial proposition and consequently there is a recognised need for increased funding of those services and the investigation and piloting of other community transport schemes such as voluntary services, car sharing, and dial-a-bus services. Fuel duty rebate and alternative fuels were also seen as potential areas for taking forward.
- Freight - it was recognised that freight by road was likely to be the major mode in the foreseeable future. There was, however, considered to be substantial scope to improve the rail freight product by improving services, removing restrictions on the main rail freight routes and promoting the potential for combined loads.
- Cycling and Walking - the main opportunities identified for future growth in the level of cycling and walking were the main towns of the area and by promoting safe routes to school.



- 6.1 The vision for the strategy provides the essential starting point. In the light of the issues facing the area described above the main focus requires to be the maintenance and improvement of accessibility within and external to Moray. Equally, the focus upon accessibility should be allied with an informed approach towards sustainable transport which promotes, where practice, modal shift over time from the car to other environmentally friendly forms of transport or by reducing the need to travel. In summary, therefore, the vision is -

To improve accessibility and provide a sustainable approach to transport which meets the economic and community requirements of Moray.



- 7.1 The transport infrastructure should be capable of meeting the requirements of the people and businesses within Moray, in keeping with the Council's commitment to sustainability. The following key objectives have been identified to assist in realising the transport strategy's vision -

Key Objective 1: to improve accessibility to jobs, services and facilities within Moray by :

- a. maintaining and improving the existing road network.
- b. improving road, rail, air and sea links to the rest of Scotland, the UK and Europe.
- c. realising the potential for public transport, cycling and walking.
- d. improving the linkages between different modes of transport.
- e. improving the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism.

Key Objective 2: to promote sustainability and safety by :

- a. reducing the need to travel generally.
- b. using land use planning to reduce travel needs.
- c. reducing pollution where necessary to meet Government requirements.
- d. seeking to continually improve safety.
- e. counteracting the additional costs and disbenefits of rurality.

- 7.2 The following sections deal with all of the main modes of transport which apply to the Moray situation. They set down the current position and the proposals required to deliver the strategy in the form of a series of Actions. The Actions themselves are subject to targets which will assist the continuous assessment required to monitor and review the strategy performance.



Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *maintain and improve the existing road network*
- *improve road, rail, air and sea links to the rest of Europe*
- *ensure that safety is continually improved*
- *improve the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism*

Roads

- 8.1 Trunk roads, the strategic road network linking the main towns and cities in Scotland, are the responsibility of the Scottish Executive. In Moray the present trunk road network consists of the A96 to Inverness and Aberdeen (linking to the A9 and A90 respectively) and the A95 from Keith to Aviemore. The A96 (along with the A9 and A90) forms part of the Trans European Road Network in the North East. The A96 currently suffers from slow speeds due to slow moving agricultural, tourist, and HGV traffic in combination with local commuter congestion. Therefore, there is a clear need for its improvement to dual carriageway, although in the short term route action and the provision of additional overtaking opportunities should be taken forward. It is essential that key bottlenecks are removed by providing by-passes at Elgin, Fochabers and Keith to increase journey reliability, as well as safety and other environmental benefits to the communities involved.
- 8.2 In addition to the trunk roads provided by Government, the main routes for action are the A941 from Lossiemouth to Craigellachie and A98 from Fochabers to Cullen/Fraserburgh. The A98 which links Moray with Banff and Buchan, and the A941 which links Moray to the A95/A9 trunk route are key links and would benefit from improvement to an appropriate standard.
- 8.3 Improved accessibility for the majority of people in Moray equates to a better road network. Business, individuals and bus operators depend upon a suitable road system particularly between towns. Therefore, particular emphasis requires to be put on those key routes which link Moray's towns and villages. These routes include :

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|---------|--|
| ● A990 | Buckie/Portgordon | ● B9102 | Craigellachie/Archiestown/
Upper Knockando/Grantown |
| ● A942 | Buckie/Findochty/Portknockie | ● B9008 | Tomintoul/Knockando/Tomnavoulin |
| ● A920 | Dufftown/Huntly | ● B9089 | Burghead/Kinloss |
| ● A939 | Grantown/Tomintoul/The Lecht | ● B9011 | Forres/Kinloss/Findhorn |
| ● A940 | Forres/Logie/Dava | ● B9018 | Cullen/Keith |
| ● B9040 | Lossiemouth/Hopeman/Burghead | ● B9016 | Broadley/Aultmore/Keith |
| ● B9015 | Kingston/Garmouth/Mosstodloch/Rothes | ● B9104 | Fochabers/Spey Bay |
| ● B9010 | Elgin/Dallas/Rafford/Forres | ● B9013 | Newton/Burghead |
| ● B9014 | Keith/Drummuir/Dufftown | | |

- 8.4 In the context of increasingly limited resources there is a clear need for the Council to prioritise 'route action' schemes which provide good value for money, reduce accident rates and improve access to the main towns in the area. Road infrastructure improvements will therefore concentrate on low cost measures aimed at improving existing networks. In addition to route action, other improvements such as traffic calming, traffic management, minor junction improvements, bridge repair (strengthening and widening) will be undertaken where appropriate, based on a planned and phased implementation process.
- 8.5 The Council is required to meet the terms of the Road Traffic Reduction Act. Because limited congestion only occurs on trunk routes the Council does not consider it appropriate to set targets to reduce traffic on non-trunk routes. The Road Traffic Reduction Report submitted to the Scottish Executive is set out within Appendix 4.

Road Maintenance

- 8.6 The Moray Council is responsible for over 1000 miles of adopted roads, over 450 bridges and 15,000 lighting columns. The total asset value is in excess of £330 million. The indicative revenue and capital budgets are £2.4 million and £1.4 million respectively.
- 8.7 In common with many Councils across Scotland the roads maintenance cycle currently adopted within Moray falls short of the national Code of Practice. A survey by the Institute of Civic Engineers in 1998 found that on average Councils would need to spend 86 per cent more to prevent the deterioration of the roads network. In Moray the ideal maintenance budget would be in excess of £9m.
- 8.8 The Council therefore has set maintenance priorities. First priority is for resurfacing, surface dressing, potholes, drainage and street lighting. Second priority is for bridge maintenance, footways, traffic works, hedges and fences.
- 8.9 In general, planned maintenance is declining, whilst response and emergency maintenance is increasing and therefore the overall quality of the network infrastructure, including roads and lighting, is declining. This makes it imperative to have a clear programme of action to best use limited measures.
- 8.10 Annual winter maintenance costs have varied from £0.75 m to £1.75 m over the recent past. On average the revenue requirement for winter maintenance has been £1.25 million. Winter maintenance has by its very nature to be prioritised to deal with the trunk and principal routes and other main classified routes between the large communities within Moray. Second priority is for routes between small communities and lower priorities to enable access to isolated rural communities.
- 8.11 Because Moray is a substantially rural area there is a large element of heavy goods traffic which damage roads disproportionately. These are substantial numbers of whisky and timber lorries. A 10 tonne lorry inflicts several thousand times more damage upon the road surface than a car. Consequently, the increasing size of goods traffic means that there are costly implications for the satisfactory upkeep of the road network.

- 8.12 Forestry extraction is a particular issue in Moray with felling expected to continue at a high level into the long term. For many years the forestry industry has worked with the Council to establish infrastructure requirements through timber traffic surveys and woodland development initiatives. Much of the woodland in Moray is relatively remote with route access inadequate to the heavy traffic. If routes are not strengthened they are likely to deteriorate and have an adverse effect on all of the route's users and incur substantial reconstruction costs.
- 8.13 The Council has responded to the issue and identified 'agreed' routes and 'non-strengthened' routes. However, the Council spends approximately £100,000 per annum strengthening forestry extraction routes which equates to only 1.5 kilometres of road. Therefore, additional finance will continue to be needed from the Scottish Executive, the European Commission and from the forestry companies themselves.
- 8.14 European legislation requires the assessment and strengthening of bridges to cope with 40 tonne lorries. Of those bridges requiring assessment 130 were successful, 16 failed and 68 remain to be done. It is estimated that the revenue requirements for bridge improvements is £1.25m, whilst the 2000/2001 budget was £50,000. It is therefore likely that weight limits will have to be imposed at a number of locations.



Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Upgrading the A96 to dual carriageway.	Moray Council and MBSE to pressure the EC and the Scottish Executive.	Scottish Executive	Ongoing
Upgrading the A95 to trunk road standards.	Moray Council and MBSE to pressure the EC and the Scottish Executive.	Scottish Executive	Ongoing
Provision of by-passes for Fochabers, Keith and Elgin.	Moray Council and MBSE to pressure the EC and the Scottish Executive.	Scottish Executive	Ongoing
Upgrading the A98 and A941 to trunk road quality.	Moray Council to prioritise these key routes.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Prioritising route improvements.	Prepare a rolling 'route action' programme.	Moray Council	Annual
Maintaining roads and roads infrastructure.	Prepare an annual report on roads infrastructure.	Moray Council	Annual



Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *improve road, rail, air and sea links to the rest of Europe*
- *realise the potential for public transport, cycling and walking*
- *improve the linkages between different modes of transport*
- *improve the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism*

- 9.1 The Aberdeen to Inverness rail line, along with connecting routes south, is identified within the Trans European Rail Network, although the high speed network does not currently go any further north than Edinburgh/Glasgow. The upgrading of rail connections between the North East and the Channel Tunnel for both freight and passengers is therefore an important priority related to future business development.
- 9.2 The Council along with Railtrack and Scotrail have undertaken a preliminary study into the potential for improvement of the Aberdeen to Inverness line. The provision of a sub-2 hour trip and hourly frequency is seen to be an important goal. However, the improvement of levels of train frequency with better connections is seen as the key objective. Currently, Railtrack are providing improvements amounting to £2 million to the existing line which is expected to reduce overall journey time by 4 minutes. In the future the potential to provide additional 'dynamic loops' on the route should be progressed. In particular, the feasibility of the Orton Loop should be investigated including the possibility for European Objective 1 (transitional) finance.
- 9.3 The Council will continue to press for enhancement to the rail service between Aberdeen and Inverness. In addition, the staffing and facilities provided at existing stations should be the subject of improvement by Railtrack and the train operator, currently Scotrail (National Express).
- 9.4 An improved network to the north of the Central Belt would assist passenger and freight links. In addition, the improvement of the capacity of the rail network to carry modern freight loadings such as piggy back trailers will be essential to improve the business and industry links to the major UK and European markets. The potential for modal shift from road to rail has been demonstrated by the recent decision of Safeway to deliver goods to its Highland stores via Inverness. This has been enabled by the use of the Freight Facilities Grant and the positive view of English, Welsh and Scottish Railways to meeting market demands. The three North East Councils (Aberdeenshire, Moray and Aberdeen) have employed a consultant to promote railfreight. Surveys of haulage companies and businesses in the North East have been carried out. The surveys show that there is considerable goodwill towards the railways in the North East. Over half the haulage companies responding are willing to consider using the railways as part of their transport operations in the future. Many of the other businesses are also keen to have an effective rail freight system serving the area. Work is continuing to build on the results of the surveys. In particular the Rail Freight Development Group is making the case for improvements to the loading gauge of the rail system to allow a greater range of freight to be carried to and from the North East. Reliability of freight services is an important factor in modal shift from road to rail.
- 9.5 The Aberdeen to Inverness line is an important tourist route both to the south and to the Highland lines in the north. The provision for tourism may also be enhanced by the promotion of the Keith to Dufftown line, which may, in turn, provide freight benefits to the major whisky associated businesses in the corridor.

Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Improving the speed, quality and frequency of the rail services within and connecting to Moray.	Railtrack, Scotrail, GNER and Virgin to implement rail service improvements in consultation with the Moray Council and neighbouring authorities.	Railtrack, Scotrail, GNER, Virgin.	Ongoing
Upgrading station staffing and facilities.	Scotrail and Railtrack to provide a better service at Moray's stations in consultation with Moray Council.	Scotrail, Railtrack.	Ongoing
Improving the integration between rail and rail, and rail and bus services at Elgin, Forres, Keith, Inverness and Aberdeen.	Scotrail, GNER, Virgin, Stagecoach (Bluebird) to promote better service integration in consultation with the Moray Council and neighbouring authorities.	Scotrail, GNER, Virgin and Stagecoach (Bluebird).	Ongoing
Promoting the increased use and reliability of rail freight.	Moray Council to promote railfreight in partnership with EWS, Railtrack, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen Councils.	Moray Council, EWS, Railtrack and Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen Councils.	Ongoing



Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *realise the potential for public transport, cycling and walking*
- *improve the linkages between different modes of transport*
- *reduce pollution where necessary to meet Government targets*
- *ensure that safety is continually improved*
- *improve the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism*

10.1 In Moray almost one third of households do not have access to a car. These households which include the elderly and disabled therefore depend upon public transport for access to services and facilities. However, public transport trips have been declining significantly over the last 20 years, and this, combined with the difficulties inherent in providing bus services in low density rural areas such as Moray emphasise the scale of the problem. The Government recognised the issue when it announced the Rural Transport Fund which provides up to £103,000 per annum to pump prime essential rural services. The additional money runs out at the end of the financial year. Therefore, there is a requirement for these new services to be self financing or for long term Government funding.

10.2 Bus services are important in offering opportunities for movement, protecting the environment through reduced road congestion and supporting the economy by using resources more efficiently. Therefore, the Council will continue to support and promote measures and services that increase the role and usage of public transport. These will include public transport support and partnership with operators.

10.3 In areas where declining public transport usage has meant that operators require subsidies to continue services, the Council will continue to assess priorities in relation to travel needs and seek to ensure that an acceptable level of service is maintained. The Council has a Public Transport Strategy which sets down policy detail.

10.4 In summary, the Council will seek to maintain the existing route network, subject to the availability of resources, by providing minimum levels of service as follows -

Population	Minimum Service Level
< 100	1-3 days per week
100 - 400	daily
400 - 750	2-3 buses per day
750 - 2500	2 hourly
2500 - 4000	hourly
4000 +	hourly/town service



- 10.5 The maximum walking distance standards are 400 metres in urban areas and 1000 metres in rural areas. In assessing cost/demand relationships subsidies will be allocated on the basis of needs met in order of priority as follows -
1. Work, higher education and vocational training
 2. Shopping
 3. Health
 4. Leisure and Social
 5. Non-statutory education
 6. Seasonal tourism
- 10.6 The Council runs a concessionary fare scheme for its elderly and disabled residents. The scheme entitles card holders to half fare travel on all participating bus services within Moray and into Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen, Angus and Highland.
- 10.7 In addition, it will be necessary for traffic management measures to be formulated so that public transport movement is assisted.
- 10.8 The Council will consider a quality partnership with Stagecoach (Bluebird) and any other operator to promote the use of public transport. This may include improving the quality of public transport vehicles, infrastructure (including facilities) and the provision of information, including timetables to assist its marketing. The Council and Stagecoach (Bluebird) are seeking to promote innovative measures to encourage the use of buses. One such initiative is to provide reduced off-peak fares for young people to travel to Elgin for leisure purposes. This scheme's innovation has been recognised by the Bus Industry Awards 2000 and the Local Government Excellence Awards 2001.
- 10.9 In rural areas such as Moray traditional bus services are often unviable. Therefore, there is a need to promote cost effective community initiatives which meet the transport needs of the population. Examples of such initiatives are postbuses, taxicards and community minibuses. However, notwithstanding such initiatives a serious problem remains. Rural isolation coupled with a low wage economy is a major factor in exacerbating social exclusion.
- 10.10 A number of actions require to be considered further to help improve the situation. These could include more flexible use of school buses, relaxation of regulations regarding fare paying passengers on community buses and the potential for a community bus network.

Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Maintaining and improving the existing bus service network.	Provide an annual report to Council on the status of the bus service network.	Moray Council, Stagecoach (Bluebird), Bus Operators	Annual
Upgrading public transport facilities.	Develop the Quality Partnership arrangement with Stagecoach (Bluebird) Buses.	Moray Council, Stagecoach (Bluebird)	Ongoing
Tackling rural accessibility.	Investigate the potential for innovative transport provision.	Moray Council, Community Councils	Ongoing

Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *realise the potential for public transport, cycling and walking*
- *reduce pollution where necessary to meet Government targets*
- *improve the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism*

- 11.1 Cycling and walking are environmentally-friendly, non-polluting, fuel efficient forms of transport which also have health benefits for the people who use them. They can help to reduce congestion and pollution. The Government have set national targets for increasing the level of cycle trips – to double them by 2002, and double them again by 2012.
- 11.2 Moray already has a relatively high level of travel to work trips by cyclists and pedestrians. In 1991 5.9% of trips were by cycle and 18.8% of trips were on foot. Because only 34.2% of travel to work trips were under 2 kilometres, with a further 7.3% of trips of between 2 and 4 kilometres, Moray faces a real challenge in seeking to meet the national targets. Whilst more than half of travel to work trips up to 4 kilometres are already undertaken by cycle or on foot, there remains scope to address the following main issues -
- over-reliance on car transport particularly for short journeys in and around towns with resultant environmental problems.
 - the current fragmented approach to formal cycle and footpath route development and maintenance.
 - the lack of safe provision especially for cycle usage, with roads perceived to be too dangerous.
- 11.3 The Council is currently developing an Access Strategy which has identified the following hierarchy of provision -
- Strategic or Long Distance Routes: major routes linking Moray in a national context e.g. National Cycle Routes; formal routes focusing on walking and cycling.
 - Intermediate Routes: Principal routes between and within towns; recreational tourist routes e.g. coastal route.
 - Local Access Networks: Routes within settlements linking communities with main modal points e.g. town centres, schools, sports facilities; less formal paths in countryside around towns.
- 11.4 The Council will undertake a detailed needs analysis to develop a mapped access network for implementation. The potential for developer contributions related to developments will be used to help develop the integrated network. 'On road' routes will seek to incorporate cycle lanes, traffic calming, environmental improvements, improved lighting, improved pavements, pedestrianisation and pedestrian-friendly road crossings. Safety issues will be promoted through education (for cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers), safe-school routes, CCTV (already introduced in Buckie, Forres and Elgin). Improved facilities for cyclists such as cycle storage and changing facilities should be promoted related to work places, town centres, rail stations and the area's main public buildings.
- 11.5 The local path networks around settlements for informal leisure use should, where possible, be integrated with the formal network. The local path networks will address access agreements with landowners, rights of way, access for all and route maintenance and funding in bringing together a network.

The MORAY LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

CYCLING AND WALKING

- 11.6 The Scottish Executive is promoting the concept of 'safe routes to schools'. To assist Councils ringfenced funding was provided for 2000/2001. The funding for Moray is £85,000 which will be fully spent in the financial year 2000/2001. Detailed consultation has taken place with a significant number of schools following a successful workshop to which all schools were invited. Schemes are being brought forward in a number of communities including Rothes, Dallas and Forres.
- 11.7 It is hoped that further schemes to improve safety for children on the journey to and from school will be identified as a result of close co-operation between school staff and pupils, Grampian Police Road Safety Officers and the Council's Traffic Engineers. Typical examples of improvement would include new footways at rural locations, traffic calming outside school premises and various types of pedestrian crossing facilities, both in close proximity to schools and further away on well-used pedestrian routes.

Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Increasing cycling and pedestrian travel within Moray.	Develop a comprehensive cycle/pedestrian network incorporating national, area wide and local routes and improved facilities.	Moray Council, SNH, MBSE	2001/2005
Reduce the number of cycle/pedestrian injuries.	Develop a range of pilot initiatives focusing on pedestrian and cyclist safety.	Moray Council, Grampian Police	Ongoing
Increasing the number of pupils/students who walk or cycle to school/college.	Develop safe routes to education establishments.	Moray Council, Moray College	Ongoing
Improving the skills levels of young cyclists.	Continue to develop cycle training schemes.	Moray Council, Grampian Police	Ongoing
Improving driver awareness of pedestrians and cyclists.	Develop an education campaign on driver awareness.	Moray Council, Grampian Police	2001/2002



Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *develop a clear relationship with land use planning so that accessibility is optimised*
- *reduce the need to travel generally*
- *reduce pollution where necessary to meet Government targets*
- *ensure that safety is continually improved*

12.1 Traffic management relates to the use of mechanisms to manage traffic patterns. There are a number of mechanisms which come under the general heading. These are parking standards and provision, safety initiatives, physical and regulating measures, transport demand management, teleworking, and development planning. All have an important role to play in reducing and improving the traffic issues within Moray.

Parking

12.2 The continued viability of Moray's commercial and shopping areas for both residents and visitors is central to the Council's remit. In consequence, there is a need to ensure the provision of good parking facilities. Current provision in Moray's main centres is considered to broadly meet demand but with little or no spare capacity.

12.3 There are issues related to on-street parking in residential areas related to surrounding employers. At the same time, the transport strategy is seeking to reduce car borne traffic, especially that related to travel to work. Therefore, the Council will review its car parking policies to consider the most appropriate way to restrain commuter parking and ensure the availability of shopping and tourist provision to best meet its objectives.

12.4 In the same context the Council's car parking standards related to development will be reviewed. The review will also include consideration of commuted payments whereby developers can be encouraged to pay into a fund aimed at improving public parking and public transport measures in lieu of providing the full requirement of parking spaces. This latter approach is advocated by recent Government guidance. This mechanism has a particular relevance where a development cannot physically provide the required parking onsite, but the development itself is acceptable and beneficial to the community (e.g. in conservation areas).



Safety

- 12.5 The Moray Council has recently published its Road Safety Plan for 2000-2002. In March 2000 the Scottish Executive set its new casualty reduction targets. These are to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured casualties by 40 per cent by 2000 compared to the average for 1994-1998 (50% reduction for children).
- 12.6 The Road Safety Plan is produced as the result of close co-operation between the Councils Road Engineers, Planning Officers, Education Officers, Social Work Officers, Grampian Police and Health Promotions, a division of Grampian Health Board. It sets out a detailed action plan aimed at improving education, engineering and enforcement which encourage people to adopt safer practices on their daily journeys. The Plan examines the difficulties and hazards associated with individual groups of vulnerable road users such as children, the elderly, cyclists etc. Specific actions are targeted at reducing accidents involving these groups.
- 12.7 Over the previous 3 years (1997-99) there were a total of 560 accidents involving injury in Moray with 28 fatalities, 144 serious injuries and 643 slight injuries. However, there has been a continued downward trend in the number of casualties within Moray since the early 1980's.
- 12.8 Traffic calming, pedestrian priorities, cycling measures and road improvements all contribute to safety, as well as road safety campaigns and enforcement tools such as speed cameras. Such measures will be taken forward wherever possible subject to the availability of funding.
- 12.9 In recent years capital funding for road safety schemes has remained constant at £100,000 pa. This has enabled a wide variety of relatively minor improvement schemes to proceed, both at specific accident sites and in the form of route action plans. Recent improvements have been carried out on the A940 south of Forres and on the A941 Elgin - Lossiemouth route. In 2001/2002 signs and road markings will be improved on the A941 south of Elgin and thereafter on the remaining A class and B class roads in future years.
- 12.10 In addition, a major junction improvement scheme is being carried out on the A98 Fochabers - Fraserburgh route at the A942 junction near Buckie, which is currently the location with the largest cluster of recorded road accidents in Moray.



Traffic Measures

- 12.11 Traffic management can be effective in improving safety and provides environmental benefits as well as improved flows for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. Traffic calming in residential areas will be used to ensure suitable vehicle speeds and driver behaviour. In association with environmental and safety benefits, various traffic calming techniques will be employed to minimise conflicts between transport modes especially pedestrians and cyclists. In implementing traffic management and calming the requirements of emergency vehicles, service vehicles, public transport, cyclist and pedestrians will require careful consideration.
- 12.12 The speed-reducing measures are implemented either as planned works, for example in the Pilmuir area of Forres to prevent rat running traffic from proposed residential developments using unsuitable residential streets nearby, or as reactive schemes. These are generally in response to complaints from residents and can include new or extended speed limits village gateway treatments, or physical speed-reducing features.
- 12.13 The Council has participated in a national trial of voluntary 20 mph speed limits in residential areas. Two sites, one in Forres and one in Keith, have been continually monitored as part of the “20’s Plenty” initiative and the Scottish Executive will report on the feasibility of these measures nationally in due course.

Transport Demand Management

- 12.14 Transport demand management (including green transport plans) is about changing peoples attitudes to the way in which they travel. It is particularly relevant to dealing with the ‘commuter’ issue, and requires the collaboration of an area’s major employers towards its successful implementation. The Council has an important role in the process through the demonstration of what can be achieved through initiatives such as car sharing, car pooling, homeworking, flexitime and providing proper facilities for cyclists.
- 12.15 It will be important for the Council to take any learned experience to other major employers within Moray to spread the benefits of such initiatives as widely possible.



Teleworking

- 12.16 The Council is committed to the expansion of teleworking within Moray. It has considerable potential to the improved economic viability of the area and also has benefits in terms of the reduction of car usage, especially journeys to work, and to the environment as a whole.
- 12.17 It has a relationship to the promotion of homeworking but also encourages the increased economic efficiency of business because it is not tied to any particular location and helps to reduce the disadvantage of Moray's peripheral location.

Development Planning

- 12.18 The Development Plan will play a key role in encouraging the location of houses, businesses and other activities in locations that are accessible, and environmentally sustainable especially to public transport. Non-accessible locations, especially outwith settlements are therefore not appropriate in the promotion of this policy. The impact will be felt over the long term and this reinforces the need to implement the transport strategy and the development plan in a consistent manner into the future.
- 12.19 The Development Plan policies on developer contributions will assist in bringing forward the necessary infrastructure to promote cycling, walking and public transport. In town centre locations they may also be used to ensure the appropriate level of public car parking provision.



Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Ensuring that parking provision is appropriate to requirements.	Undertake a review of car parking and car charging policy.	Moray Council	2001/2002
Provide car parking standards related to development appropriate to Moray.	Undertake a review of car parking standards related to development and the approach to commuted payments.	Moray Council	2001/2002
Continue to monitor and review the Road Safety Plan.	Monitor progress of the Road Safety Plan.	Moray Council, Grampian Police	Annual
Improvement of traffic, cyclist and pedestrian environments.	Identify a rolling programme of traffic management measures.	Moray Council	Annual
Promoting a reduction in car use.	Develop a series of transport demand management measures targeted initially at the work place.	Moray Council, Business Organisations	Ongoing
Promoting modern communications infrastructure.	Lobby BT and other telecommunications providers to provide state of the art infrastructure.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Ensuring the availability of high technology training.	Encourage education providers to develop focused programmes related to high technology skills.	Moray Council, Moray College	Ongoing
Focusing development in accessible locations.	Implement the Moray Development Plan.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Using developer contributions to assist in the provision of facilities for cycling, walking and public transport.	Implement developer contribution policies of the Moray Development Plan.	Moray Council	Ongoing

Relevant Strategy Objectives:

- *improve road, rail, air and sea links to the rest of Europe*
- *improve the linkages between different modes of transport*
- *improve the transport infrastructure related to recreation and tourism*

13.1 Currently Aberdeen and Inverness airports are identified as community connecting, and regional and accessibility points respectively. The Council will seek to improve access to, and campaign for enhanced services from Aberdeen and Inverness airports. In particular, it will seek the reinstatement of the Inverness to Heathrow flight slots and better connecting services to both airports especially by public transport.

13.2 The potential for increasing the use of sea links, particularly for bulk goods, should be further promoted. The Council are currently providing enhanced cargo storage facilities at Buckie, and this initiative should be further pursued. The Council also operates a cargo port at Burghead which may be subject to a reduced life expectancy on account of its silting. Consultants have been appointed to advise on the future potential of Burghead.

13.3 A number of harbours also provide leisure orientated facilities for yachts and other leisure craft. The further potential for their upgrading and development will be pursued.

Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Improve the level of air service to London (including Heathrow) and Europe.	Encourage airport authorities and airline operators to provide improved levels of service.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Upgrading port facilities including re-development.	Provide an upgraded harbour at Buckie and investigate the future potential at Burghead and Lossiemouth.	Moray Council, Harbour Boards	2001/2003
Providing better tourist and leisure related facilities at the harbours within Moray.	Develop a rolling programme of improvement measures.	Moray Council, Grampian Highland Tourist Board	Ongoing



- 14.1 The under-resourcing of local authorities by the Scottish Executive presents considerable difficulties in meeting even essential transport matters. There is therefore limited scope to shift budget priorities to fully reflect those set down within the Strategy.
- 14.2 This position will not be assisted in Moray by the Scottish Executive's proposals for raising transport revenues through road user charges, workplace parking charges or additional fuel taxes. None of these are considered viable options within Moray. There is considerable concern therefore that within Scotland accessibility will depend upon whether people live in an urban or rural area to an even greater degree than already exists.
- 14.3 There are a number of key funding opportunities which the Council is able to pursue. These are the Public Transport Fund, the Rural Transport Fund, the transitional Objective 1 European Fund and the Freight Facilities Grant.
- 14.4 The Public Transport Fund is generated by the Scottish Executive on a 'challenge' basis with the aim of providing funding for projects which authorities could otherwise be unable to afford. In view of the budgetary position within Moray this scheme provides the opportunity for the Council to put forward a bid which seeks to improve rural accessibility in a holistic manner. The bid could include a range of priority actions related to public transport within this document, specifically
- bus priority measures - including improvements to Elgin bus station, the provision of improved passenger facilities in Buckie and Forres, and junction priority measures.
 - integrated transport measures - including the provision or improvement of connections between the rail and bus services at Elgin, Keith and Forres. The potential to improve the links to Inverness (Dalcross) Airport should also be investigated.
 - rural community transport measures - including the provision of vehicles, training and organisation to develop local community transport projects.
 - cycling and walking measures - including the development of the Moray Cycle Network and the development of town networks for improved cyclist and pedestrian use.
- 14.5 The Rural Transport Fund was established by the Scottish Executive in August 1998, initially for a three year period. Moray Council currently receives £103,000 to assist in providing improvements to rural transport passenger services. As discussed in the section on public transport there will be a need for continued Scottish Executive Funding for these services given their non-commercial nature.



14.6 The transitional Objective 1 European Regional Development Fund provides an opportunity to bid for transport infrastructure which helps to reduce the peripherality of the area of west Moray. The Council will seek to develop bids with partners in the public and private sector which improve the area's transport infrastructure. Opportunities include -

- strategic road improvements - including the A95 and A96 within West Moray.
- strategic rail improvements - including the improvement of the Aberdeen to Inverness Railway line through the provision of dynamic loops such as at Orton.
- bridge improvements - mainly aimed at improving all efficiency of areas industrial base.
- forestry road provision and improvement - aimed at improving the forestry industry infrastructure and relieving the impact upon rural communities.

14.7 The Freight Facilities Grant Scheme is operated by the Scottish Executive to provide money towards the capital costs of rail and inland waterway freight facilities and equipment where the traffic would otherwise move by road. The Council is committed to the promotion of freight and will promote measures in association with the public and private sector.

14.8 Whilst recognising that the Council is required to carry out essential duties and to provide a safe and effective road network the transport strategy is required to set the priorities that can be taken forward into the budget setting process. It is helpful that as from 2002 the Scottish Executive and local authorities will move onto a rolling 3 year budget horizon which provides for an initial budget in year one with indicative budgets for years 2 and 3. However, this document is restricted to setting down the budget as it applies in 2000/2001 (see Appendix 5).

14.9 The budget priorities which emanate from the strategy are as follows :

1. Maintenance of the road network and associated structures
2. Safety measures
3. Road Improvement Schemes
4. Public Transport Support
5. Cycling and Walking
6. Air quality and traffic reduction



Actions

Issue	Action	By Whom	Timescale
Improve the level of transport funding for rural areas from the Scottish Executive.	Press the Scottish Executive to respond to the transport funding difficulties of rural areas.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Improve the level of public transport funding within Moray.	Submit a bid to the Scottish Executive Public Transport Fund aimed at tackling rural transport in Moray in a holistic manner.	Moray Council	2001
The continuation of the Rural Transport Fund support within Moray.	Press the Scottish Executive to continue the Rural Transport Fund.	Moray Council	Ongoing
Combating rural peripherality within Moray.	Submit bids to the ERDF Objective 1 programme on road, rail, bridges and forestry roads.	Moray Council	2001-2006
Improving freight facilities to reduce pressure on roads.	Investigate the potential for bids under the Freight Facilities Grant Scheme.	Freight-rail companies	Ongoing
Implementation of the Strategy priorities within the budget setting process.	Implement the Transport Strategy priorities in the budget setting process.	Moray Council	Annual

