

REPORT TO: THE MORAY COUNCIL ON 09 NOVEMBER 2005

SUBJECT: TRANSPORT MODEL AND STAG REPORT PROCUREMENT

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. Reason for Report

- 1.1 To update Elected Members regarding the procurement of the Moray Transport Model and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) Report.
- 1.2 To seek direction from Committee on the scope of the STAG work to be carried out in tandem with the development of the Transport Model.
- 1.3 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (13) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the functions of the Council as Roads Authority.

2. Background

- 2.1 It was approved at the Environmental Services Committee on 15 June 2005 (para 7 of the Minute refers) that a report on the procurement of the Moray Transport Model and Term Consultancy should be submitted to this Committee in due course.
- 2.2 In accordance with EU Procurement Regulations a Contract Notice was submitted to the Official Journal of the European Commission on 30 September 2005. By the time of this report, advertisements in the local, national and technical press will have been published. Pre-qualification questionnaires will be issued via the free e-tendering web site (www.publictender.co.uk) and a report concerning the selection of a short list of Consultants will be presented to the Environmental Services Committee on 16 November 2005.
- 2.3 The robustness of the Transport Model will depend on the age and scope of the data that is used to build, calibrate and validate it. The SATURN Model (1998) and Census (2001) data will be used but there will be a need for extensive network and traffic data collection. The new permanent traffic count sites installed in Elgin and elsewhere on the local road network are now providing daily traffic flow data and the Scottish Executive has provided data for Trunk Road count sites in Moray.

- 2.4 Since the Moray Local Plan (2000) was approved, a number of significant developments have been approved and many are now adding traffic to the transport network. There are development proposals currently in the planning process and others may yet be identified through the Moray Development Plan Review.
- 2.5 This is a critical time for decisions regarding the transport network of Elgin. The Moray Development Plan and the Moray Local Transport Strategy are being reviewed and the selection of preferred transport network improvement options could have disastrous consequences on the problems of traffic circulation, the opportunity for the release of land for development on the periphery of the town and the possible programming and implementation of a future bypass for Elgin.
- 2.6 The Environmental Services Committee has previously considered two reports on the proposed road link from Edgar Road to the A96 trunk road (TSP12-14). On the 01 September 2004 the Committee approved that a traffic model for Elgin should be commissioned and following on from that to commission a STAG report from Consultants. However, a motion was approved to evaluate options, other than those which had been proposed for Wittet drive insofar as they relate to the use of compulsory purchase powers and demolition of property.
- 2.7 The Transport Model and STAG Report will enable a consistent appraisal of different transport network options and may well be used for any future Local Public Inquiry in connection with the Moray Development Plan. It is therefore essential that a full and proper STAG Report is carried out at this stage.
- 2.8 The Consultants preparing the proposed STAG Report must be capable of defending the conclusions and recommendations in the final report. This will not be wholly possible if options are restricted or ruled out prior to the production of the STAG Report Brief. The STAG Report Brief must be in place when Tender Documents are issued otherwise there could be delays and possible financial implications.

3. The Proposals

- 3.1 The Contract Notice and advertisements for a Transportation Services Call-off Term Contract, have now been published. The contract will include the production of a calibrated and validated Transport Model and a STAG Report covering the transport network options that are aimed at addressing the particular problem of crossing the railway to the west of the very busy New Elgin Railway Bridge identified in the Moray Local Plan.
- 3.2 Elected Members are requested to consider approving delegation to the Director of Environmental Services to prepare and issue, as part of the Tender documents to be issued to selected companies, a suitable Brief to carry out a full and proper STAG Report without any pre-condition.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Budget is contained within the capital plan under the heading **Elgin Traffic Management and Car Parking**.

5. Staffing Implications

- 5.1 Transportation staff will manage the commission for the Transport Model and STAG Report. The Call-off Term Contract will allow the procurement of future Transportation Services, as and when required, that will extend the range and scope of services capable of being provided by in-house staff.

6. Environmental Implications

- 6.1 The proposed network improvement scheme(s) will improve road safety and traffic flows over a wide area of Elgin. There will be a requirement for an Environmental Statement and Environmental Action Plan for any approved scheme.

7. Sustainable Development Implications

- 7.1 The overall aim of the proposed network improvement schemes is to ensure the economic viability and sustainability of Elgin. There may be some environmental and social mitigation measures to be considered and implemented where required.

8. Consultations

- 8.1 CMT have been consulted and support the proposals contained within this report.

9. Corporate Plan

- 9.1 The report encompasses the main aims of the Economic Development programme by maintaining and enhancing suitable transport facilities and infrastructure for residents, visitors, businesses and workers.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the update on the procurement of the Transport Model and STAG Report and notes the proposal to submit a report on the selection of a short list of Consultants to the Environmental Services Committee on 16 November 2005.**

- 10.2 It is recommended that Committee approves delegation to the Director of Environmental Services to prepare a 'Brief' to carry out a full and proper STAG report without any pre-conditions for the transport network options in Elgin West. The Brief is to be included in the Tender documents issued to selected companies.**

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Background Papers: Reports to Environmental Services Committee
28 April 2004, 01 September 2004, 15 June 2005

Ref: RG/PA