

**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
22 JUNE 2001**

15-Year Transport Framework for Scotland: The Weakest Links

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise the Committee of the response by Ayrshire authorities to the COSLA exercise to identify the weakest links in the transport network.

BACKGROUND

- 2 As part of the input by local government to the Scottish Executive's forthcoming 15-Year Transport Framework for Scotland, COSLA recently invited Councils to identify the 'weakest links' in their transport networks and also the deficiencies in their capacity to deliver integrated transport. Rather than a 'shopping list' of local roads schemes, Councils were requested to focus on the resources necessary for the provision of integrated transport measures and initiatives to meet local transport needs. This paper outlines the responses from the Ayrshire authorities to this consultation.

WEAKEST LINKS

- 3 East Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Council sent responses to COSLA and these were supported by comments from the Structure Plan Manager. Improvements to the strategic road network were seen to be important, including the M77 extension and upgrading of the A737, as was the construction of a number of bypasses to improve the detrimental effects of traffic on local communities. Lack of resources for road maintenance was identified as a major problem for the area. Enhanced rail links and improved rail service capacity were seen to be fundamental towards the provision of integrated transport. Upgrading of the Kilmarnock to Barrhead line along with a number of new stations were identified as being important in meeting local transport needs. Opportunities were identified for the transfer of coal and timber movement from road to rail in Ayrshire to provide additional capacity to accommodate future increases in output. Resources were also seen to be necessary for a rail link from Ayrshire to Glasgow airport, greater bus service frequency to rural and Social Inclusion Partnership areas and for the collection of transport data and additional modelling capability.

CONCLUSION

- 4 A number of major consultation exercises and studies are currently underway for the provision of an integrated transport network within Scotland. Local government has recently been involved in the Scottish Executive consultation process for delivery of the 15-Year Transport Framework, expected in the Autumn. Responses to this weakest links exercise were sent to COSLA by the Ayrshire authorities and will form a foundation for the case for investment in integrated transport provision. Ayrshire's response is consistent with existing Structure Plan objectives and should, if met with appropriate resources, contribute towards the provision of a balanced and integrated transport policy.

RECOMMENDATION

- 5 It is recommended the Committee note the contents of this report.

Ian Johnson
Manager
Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee

Person to Contact: Claire Walsh - 01292 673765