

**RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE  
SUBMISSION FROM THE SOCIETY OF CHIEF OFFICERS OF  
TRANSPORTATION IN SCOTLAND (SCOTS)  
THE DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN (RPP3)**

The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) was founded in 1996 and preceded by the County Surveyors Society in Scotland since the 1930s. SCOTS is a strategic body comprising of transportation professionals from all the 32 councils and the seven regional transport partnerships. The society's work involves improving performance and innovation in the design, delivery and maintenance of transportation systems. Our vision is for:

*“A connected, inclusive and sustainable Scotland, delivered and supported by excellent transport infrastructure and dedicated, motivated and innovative transportation professionals”.*

We have recognised as a society that Scotland faces significant short, medium and long-term challenges currently and one if not the most pressing is the impact of continued unabated climate change on the economy and society of Scotland. We recognise that the economy is just recovering following a period of recession however we still face significant constraints on public spending.

We welcome that the core objective of Scottish Government is to grow the economy and this is reflected across the corporate plans of most Scottish Councils. Economic growth will come from both traditional and innovative industry across Scotland but significantly also through tourism. Our transport networks play a crucial but often unheralded role in enabling and supporting all of our industries. The decision nationally to break from Europe will have a significant bearing on how economic growth is approached and I anticipate significant discussion on this issue in the short-term and the potential impact it could have on the resourcing and influencing of Scotland's climate change ambitions.

However, fundamental to the success of Scotland in the future and reflective of its peripheral location to Europe will be connectivity. Transportation links by air, rail and

road will be fundamental with regard to supporting continued economic growth and economic prosperity. Studies are increasingly linking connectivity with economic success but also transport to climate change and the need for sustainable mobility and accessibility to drive inclusive growth. Balancing the resourcing priorities to achieve each of those outcomes is at the heart of the role of local and national government in the period ahead.

We welcome the ambition for Scotland to have reduced transport emissions by over a third by 2032 and with almost complete decarbonisation of the Scottish economy by 2050. This will be a challenge for all sectors but especially in our view transportation given long-standing behaviour traits and a significant amount of our networks being so reliant on carbon-intensive fuel and infrastructure and only 35 years of cumulative emissions left to achieve our 2050 targets. It is perhaps significant that 3 of the 10 key behaviour areas outlined in RPP3 relate to transport behaviours and that 30% of consumption emissions associated with individuals and households relate to transport. Therefore, whilst current progress is welcome on active travel and low carbon transport, we need to continue to make significant progress within the transport sector.

We welcome the Scottish Government's proposals and policies to stimulate the uptake of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles and transition away from fossil fuels. We would highlight that whatever the method of fuelling the vehicle we will still need to ensure that our existing transport networks and infrastructure are resilient and responsive to new innovations and maintained in a sustainable manner adapting to new fuels and existing climate change. As major fleet operators, Councils have a key role to play but this will require continued and accelerated funding to pump prime the replacement of our fleets. Of course, since the Romans we have needed good quality road surfaces for efficient and effective transportation and connectivity and therefore whilst we need to resource these policies we also need to ensure maintenance of the existing assets that will over time be used by differently fuelled vehicles, greater active travel modes and more collective modes of transport as well as potentially being constructed and maintained with new non-hydrocarbon based materials.

We also welcome the recognition by Government of the need to co-design policies and proposals with other stakeholders to maximise impact and will offer our services to Government in that regard. We also hope that co-design and innovative can alongside other sectors give opportunities for innovation in transport delivery which can be of economic benefit in terms of valued added, export-ready products.

In terms of delivering the plan, it is welcome that the Scottish Government's current plan for education and training on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) will provide Scotland with a resilient and enhanced workforce to drive forward the research, development and implementation of these policies and proposals over the next 3 decades. It is crucial in SCOTS view that whatever path we take towards the 2050 targets it needs to be well-resourced, not only in terms of financial resources but Scotland also need to develop and retain STEM based expertise to deliver the innovative and forward-thinking policies and proposals contained within the draft RPP3.

We would welcome further ambition to discuss in co-design terms policies that look at hypothecation of revenues back to further transport projects to deliver improvements to collective modes of transport and also resource the maintenance and adaptation of our existing networks to climate change and increased demand. At present it would appear that the RPP3 strategic approach is very much focussed on a supply-side revolution of fuelling of vehicles but if the incentives outlined in the document are not sufficient to change certain long-standing behaviour patterns, it may also be prudent to ensure that RPP3 also have policies and proposals to restraint demand in terms of equitable and re-distributive schemes. At the most basic level the core aim to reduce the need to travel must be reflected in the RPP3, new planning bill, National Transport Strategy, City Region Deals and all the wider strategic reviews currently in process. And as statutory requirements that cannot be ignored.

That comment notwithstanding SCOTS welcome proposals for access limitation policies for certain vehicles e.g. Low Emission Zones and would welcome further discussions Scottish Government over how these can be resourced and rolled out over the period of 2017-2032. There will clearly be synergies to be achieved with the emerging proposals for preferential local and potentially regional incentives across

access management and parking policies. We also welcome the proposal for interest-free loans for consumers, which if continued long-term, could enable access to individual modes of transport for all sectors of society and proactively seek to mitigate/avoid any discriminatory impact on socio-economic grounds of access to low emission zones, given the potential upfront cost barrier for ULEVs. Albeit, also recognising the potential for lift-sharing to combat transport poverty by increasing accessibility. It would be hoped that car clubs could be promoted with local incentives, this policy would appear to be a recognition of the theme to view mobility as a service “purchased” at point of delivery rather than an underused carbon intensive asset as at present with our purchasing and use behaviours towards present day vehicles. Therefore, it would be appropriate in our view for a modified RPP2 proposal around car clubs to appear in RPP3 to reflect a desire to modal shift current demand to Inclusive Mobility as a Service, reflecting the potentially changes attitudes of young people and other groups towards the purchase of transportation services.

We also recognise the co-benefits such policies could have for air quality and healthier outcomes for Scotland, as well as their demand management impact on transport choices towards potentially greener and more sustainable modes of transport and distribution. However, in regard to the health benefits it may also require a co-design and co-resourcing outcome to be agreed between transport and health sectors to ensure a sustainably resourced system is in place from policy and proposal initiation.

On the issue of active travel, we would hope that there could be a commitment past 2021 from the health and transport budgets to take a preventative and sustained early intervention approach to all generations over the next 3 decades to embed and sustain active travel behaviours.

In terms of the companion draft Scottish Energy Strategy it's recognised that there is a clear increase in demand in terms of ULEVs registered in Scotland but there is still a significant gap between that figure and other conveniently fuelled vehicles. It will require clear public leadership on this matter to drive behavioural change and instil in all consumers the efficiency that they can confidently buy and drive ULEVs over the next 10-15 years. This will be critical if transport is to meet its share of the 2030 “all-

Energy” target outlined in the draft Strategy. We welcome the balance outlined in the Strategy between Hydrogen, Electricity and Fuel Cells as across the SEStran region, transport in the future may be fuelled in different manners dependent upon the urban or rural geography in question for communities and consumers of transport.

However, the Strategy and RPP3 focus on reducing the emissions impact of individualised modes of transport, must not implicitly or inadvertently be allowed to strategically promote greater use of individual motorised modes over collective or active modes and so potentially contribute to the further decline of bus or rail modes of transport with the potential equity impact on those who in the future, despite interest-free loans, can't afford or access for other reasons individualised ULEVs. As alongside any equality impact, these ULEVs could still have externalities around economic and social impact of externalities e.g. congestion, albeit the environmental externalities of their carbon emissions would have been greatly reduced.

The Draft Energy Strategy also ends with a commitment to work with Local Authorities moving forward which is welcomed in terms of co-design principles. However, in terms of transport we would suggest that RTPs would offer a clear route for delivery of regional low-carbon outcomes and would be grateful if the final strategy made a similar commitment to work with RTPs on the issues of transport energy moving forward.

SCOTS would be happy to provide further evidence to the Committee if required.

**The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland**

**15 February 2017**