



Proposed transfer of responsibility for the Gourock – Kilcreggan ferry service

Date of meeting 13 December 2019

Date of report 4 December 2019

Report by Assistant Chief Executive

1. Object of report

To recommend the Partnership agrees to the transfer of responsibility for the Gourock - Kilcreggan ferry service from SPT to Transport Scotland, subject to the final terms being negotiated by the Assistant Chief Executive and subsequently reported to a future Committee.

2. Background

SPT has for many years subsidised the ferry service between Gourock and Kilcreggan. The principal users of the service are those travelling to and from HMNB Faslane and RNAD Coulport, along with commuters from the Rosneath peninsula who travel to Gourock to connect with the train and bus services to Glasgow.

A community campaign, conducted over several years and supported by a number of elected representatives, lobbied for a transfer of responsibility for the service to the Scottish Government. This led in 2016 to the then Minister for Transport and the Islands agreeing in principle that Transport Scotland would assume the responsibility. This is the only ferry service supported by SPT and there is an argument that it is more closely aligned to Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services (CHFS), managed by Transport Scotland.

Since then, there has been close and constructive engagement between SPT and Transport Scotland in an information-sharing / gathering exercise on matters such as operating costs, fares revenue and passenger travel patterns. That process is now complete and Transport Scotland has been provided with all of the data requested. Discussions are now well advanced on the potential transfer agreement itself.

3. Proposals

The SPT Operations Committee has previously discussed the ongoing operation, management and costs associated with this ferry service, and the potential for a better alignment with CHFS. In line with those discussions, it is proposed that, subject to an acceptable legal and financial agreement being concluded between SPT and Transport Scotland on the details of the transfer, including in respect of SPT's future financial commitment, full responsibility for the service would transfer on 1 April 2020. The current cost of this service to SPT is £334,000 per annum (increasing with annual inflation).

4. Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to agree that the final terms for the agreement between SPT and Transport Scotland for the transfer of responsibility for the Gourock – Kilcreggan

ferry service to Transport Scotland on 1 April 2020 is negotiated by the Assistant Chief Executive and that the final terms will be considered by a future Committee in due course.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>Dependent on final agreement.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None directly.</i>

Name	Valerie Davidson	Name	Gordon MacLennan
Title	Assistant Chief Executive	Title	Chief Executive

For further information, please contact Alex Scott on 0141 333 3388.