

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Operations Committee meeting

14 March 2008

held at: Consort House, Glasgow

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Minute of the meeting of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Operations Committee held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 14 March 2008

- Present** Councillors Davie McLachlan (Chair), Charlie Gilbert (Deputy), Douglas Hay, Chris Thompson and David Wilson and appointed members Tom Hart and Bill Ure.
- Apologies** Councillors Jim Buchanan (Deputy), David Fagan, Bill Grant (Deputy), Kaye Harmon, William Hendrie, Bobby McDill, Marie McGurk, Bill McIntosh, Ian Nicholson (Deputy), Tommy Morrison, John Reid and Alastair Watson and appointed member Niall McGrogan.
- Attending** Valerie Davidson, Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)/Secretary; Valerie Bowen, Senior Clerk; Gordon MacLennan, Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services); Eric Stewart, Director, Bus Operations and Neil Wylie, Director of Finance.

1. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 18 January 2008 (issued) was submitted and approved.

Arising from the minute with regard to page 1 paragraphs 2(i) and (iii), Mrs. Davidson informed members

- (1) that to date, no response had been received from Network Rail in relation to attendance at future meetings; and
- (2) that a letter had been received from Transport Scotland within the last few days on the level of Park and Ride usage at each site within SPT's area and that this would be issued in due course to all members.

2. Revised Conditions of Contract

The Director, Bus Operations, gave a presentation on proposed revised conditions of contract in relation to subsidised local bus services, school contracts and demand responsive services which included a new focus on passenger safety, vehicle maintenance, contract price volatility, monitoring, fairness and consistency and improvements.

After consideration and having heard Mr Stewart in answer to members' questions the committee noted the proposed revised conditions of contract.

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3. Public transport services monitoring report

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 4 March 2008 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services)

- (1) informing the committee of the latest trends in the number of passengers carried and the reliability of Scotrail services in the SPT area and services directly operated and supported by the Partnership; and
- (2) providing newly collated statistics relating to SPT's plans for bus improvements.

Having heard Mr.Stewart in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the committee noted the contents of the report and that the format of the report would continue to develop with the addition of new information.

4. Subsidised local bus service recommendations – financial implications

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 29 February 2008 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support) advising the committee of the financial impact of members' possible decisions relating to the remaining items on the agenda.

After discussion and having heard Mr.Wylie inform members of the current funding position for the subsidised local bus budget for 2008/09, the committee noted the report in relation to the financial implications of awarding any contracts and agreed to give due consideration to these implications when making decisions on these contracts.

5. Renewal of local bus service contract 2802D - Croy Interlink

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P With reference to the minute of the Partnership of

- (1) 20 April 2007 (page 4, paragraph 7) when the Partnership had approved the continuation of the Croy Interlink service from the earmarked fund for rail for the period April to September 2007 with a tendering exercise to take place to determine options for continuing the service beyond 2007 to late 2009 to facilitate the completion of the Park and Ride development at Croy Railway Station; and
- (2) 17 August 2007 (page 4, paragraph 6) when the Partnership had approved acceptance of a tender from Stagecoach Glasgow to operate the contract on a temporary basis for a 15 week period from 30 September 2007 to allow the Partnership to consider future options for the operation and funding of the contract,

there was submitted a report (issued) of 28 February 2008 by the Chief Executive

- (a) advising members that since the last report
 - (i) operators had been invited to submit tenders for two options:

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Option A – the vehicles to be provided by SPT in line with SPT's policy contained in the RTS of raising vehicle standards both in terms of quality of vehicles and maintenance regime; and

Option B – the vehicles to be provided by the operator; and

- (ii) the contract had been revised to incorporate contract 2865 (service 403) Cumbernauld Village – Croy station, currently operated by First Glasgow, with a view to producing a more cost effective service; and
- (b) informing members of tenders received for renewal of the contract as revised; and.
- (c) recommending that the committee agree to recommend to the Partnership
 - (i) that the contract (2802D) Croy Interlink) be awarded to Stagecoach Glasgow for option A at a cost of £599,115 for an 18 month period from 20 April 2008;
 - (ii) that until SPT was able to gain approval and purchase the vehicles as per specification, an additional £387.73 per week (subsequently revised after the meeting to £701.07) be paid to Stagecoach Glasgow for utilising their fleet vehicles;
 - (iii) that a contribution of £453,949 be made from the earmarked fund for rail; and
 - (iv) that contract 2865 be cancelled as of 20 April 2008 and a payment of £6,565.34 be made to First Glasgow in lieu of notice of cancellation.

6. Award of temporary local bus service contract: Hamilton – East Kilbride via Strathaven

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There was submitted and approved a report (issued) of 28 February 2008 by the Chief Executive,

- (1) informing members of tenders received for the award of a temporary local bus service between Hamilton and East Kilbride, following a change to the current timetable which had resulted in the withdrawal of one early morning journey and all evening journeys after 2000 hours Monday to Saturday and all Sunday evening journeys after 1800 hours, by Henderson Travel from 17 March 2008; and
- (2) recommending that the committee approve
 - (a) the award of the contract to Henderson Travel at a cost of £4,999.99 for a 12 week period effective from of 18 March 2008; and
 - (b) that further tenders would be invited in order that a longer term contract could be considered at a future meeting.

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7. Funding arrangements: Coalfield Community Transport and British Red Cross (West Central and South West Scotland)

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 28 February 2008 by the Chief Executive,

- (1) reminding members that in recent years, the Scottish Government, through the Rural Community Transport Initiative (RCTI) had funded a number of transport-related projects throughout Scotland which supported local communities, including projects involving community minibuses and volunteer car schemes;
- (2) informing members
 - (a) that the Scottish Government had now brought the RCTI to a close and that funding for the projects already in place had now passed directly to constituent authorities as part of their general grant; and
 - (b) that with the exception of Glasgow City Council, all of SPT's constituent councils had agreed to pass this funding, which was not ring-fenced, to SPT for it to manage on their behalf;
- (3) advising members
 - (a) that due to the protracted nature of the Scottish Government's comprehensive spending review in 2007, decisions on post RCTI funding had not been announced until late in the year which had led to uncertainty for those community transport schemes whose funding was scheduled to end on 31 March 2008; and
 - (b) that two groups currently in that position were Coalfield Community Transport in East Ayrshire and the British Red Cross who provided a transport/escort service in North Ayrshire and Arran;
- (4) enclosing various appendices detailing the work of Coalfield Community Transport and the British Red Cross; and
- (5) explaining that in order to ensure continuation of the groups' activities and the valuable role that they had within their respective local community areas, SPT, in accordance with the Partnership's revised Scheme of Delegations had agreed to provide funding for 2008/2009 as an interim measure in order that a more thorough audit of those and other community transport schemes in the SPT area could be carried out.

After discussion, the committee noted

- (i) that SPT had provided funding in the amount of £93,294 to Coalfield Community Transport, taking account of an inflationary increase of 2.5%; and
- (ii) that SPT had provided funding in the amount of £43,822 to the British Red Cross (West Central and South West Scotland), taking account of an inflationary increase of 2.5%.

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8. Requests for subsidised local bus services

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 6 March 2008 by the Chief Executive advising members of various requests for the provision of subsidised local bus services.

After discussion, the committee agreed to take no further action in respect of the requests outlined in the report.

9. Additional item

In terms of Standing Order no 3.2, the Committee agreed to consider the following additional item of business.

10. Bus Route Development Grant: Ayrshire hospital service

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With reference to the minute of 16 March 2007 when the committee had approved the submission of an application by Stagecoach Western to the Scottish Executive for funding under the Bus Route Development Grant Scheme (BRDGS) for an enhancement to the existing Ayr to Dundonald service which would provide direct links to both Ayr and Crosshouse hospitals, there was submitted a report (tabled) of 14 March 2008 by the Chief Executive

- (1) informing members
 - (a) that the scheme had been suspended pending the comprehensive spending review following the election in May 2007; and
 - (b) that in November 2007, the Scottish Government had devolved public transport funding to councils and had intimated that any subsequent BRDG grants would need to be sourced from this;
- (2) explaining that it was proposed that SPT should to introduce a scheme similar to the BRDG using monies allocated to the partner councils to implement priority proposals such as the Stagecoach submission; and
- (3) advising members
 - (a) that although Stagecoach required a total of £170,000 to provide the service for a four year period, Ayrshire and Arran Health Board were committed to providing £20,000 per annum for two years to support the service; and
 - (b) that at the end of the contract period, it was anticipated that the service would be established sufficiently and that public subsidy would no longer be required.

After consideration, the committee

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- (i) noted that the Scottish Government had devolved the finance for the BRDG to the partner councils;
- (ii) approved the implementation by SPT of a similar scheme; and
- (iii) agreed to award a contract to Stagecoach Western in the sum of £170,000 to operate the Ayrshire Hospital service as indicated in the report.

11. New Dehli/Dubai visit

Mr Maclennan gave a presentation to the committee,

- (1) detailing the outcome and the valuable insights gained during his recent visit to New Dehli and Dubai with the Chair and Chief Executive;
- (2) providing members with details of the various topics covered during the visit, including development phases of the Metro systems, rolling stock, security systems and smartcard fare collection systems; and
- (3) highlighting a number of contributory factors to the success of the systems:-
 - ambition;
 - new build Metros;
 - maximisation of elevated tracks;
 - swift planning procedures;
 - modular construction;
 - smartcard fare collection systems based on existing technology;
 - maximisation of retail opportunities at stations; and
 - security provisions.

After consideration and having heard Mr Maclennan in answer to members' questions, the committee thanked him for his interesting and informative presentation.