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SPT

committee minute

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Operations Committee meeting

14 September 2007

held at: Consort House, Glasgow

contact officers:

Valerie A Bowen phone: 0141 333 3130
Kirsten Clubb phone: 0141 333 3576

Minute of the meeting of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Operations Committee held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 14 September 2007

- Present** Councillors Davie McLachlan (Chair), David Fagan, Bobby McDill, Marie McGurk, Tommy Morrison, Eddie Phillips, Chris Thompson and Alistair Watson and appointed member Bill Ure.
- Apologies** Councillors Bill Grant (deputy), Kaye Harmon, William Hendrie, Bill McIntosh and David Wilson and appointed member Niall McGrogan.
- Attending** Valerie Davidson, Secretary; Valerie A Bowen, Senior Clerk; Gordon MacIennan, Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services); John Halliday, Assistant Chief Executive (Transport & Strategy); Eric Stewart, Director of Bus Operations and Neil Wylie, Director of Finance.

1. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 16 March 2007 was submitted and approved.

2. Public transport services monitoring report

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 5 September 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services) informing the committee of the latest trends in the number of passengers carried and the reliability of public transport operators' services supported by the Partnership.

After discussion and having heard Mr MacIennan in answer to members' questions, the committee noted the contents of the report.

3. Subsidised local bus service recommendations – financial implications

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 30 August 2007 by the Chief Financial Officer advising the committee of the financial impact of members' possible decisions relating to the remaining items on the agenda.

After consideration, the committee noted the report in relation to the financial impact of awarding any contracts and managing the award of contracts within the constraints of the existing budgets and agreed to have regard to them when making decisions on these matters.

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4. Recovery of roadside information costs

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P There was submitted a report (issued) of 6 September 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services),

- (1) reminding members
 - (a) that under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, SPT was required to set the standards as to how bus information was presented to the public, both at bus stops and in the form of printed timetables;
 - (b) that, although the Act required that bus operators voluntarily provided and maintained the timetables and bus information panels, where an operator did not provide the information, SPT was required to provide it and recover the cost from the operator; and
 - (c) that the Information Section of the Operations Department had been created to procure the provision of timetable information in the public domain;
- (2) explaining
 - (a) that whilst the major bus groups had endeavoured to provide bus stop information, the vast majority of smaller operators had not and compliance with the Act across the Partnership area was barely above 40%; and
 - (b) that work was underway with the office of the Traffic Commissioner for Scotland to use existing powers to apply penalties to operators who did not comply with the Act;
- (3) highlighting that delivery of a software programme to assist in the production of bus stop and printed timetables was imminent and SPT was now in a position to provide information for commercial services on a self funding basis;
- (4) informing members
 - (a) that First Glasgow had agreed, in principle, to transfer responsibility for its roadside information production and distribution to SPT;
 - (b) that although the company had indicated an initial undertaking to have SPT provide information for changes to commercial services to be implemented in October 2007, First Glasgow was as yet unable to confirm the detail of services involved in the service revision;
 - (c) that, in an attempt to identify costings, last year's service changes had been utilised; and
 - (d) that in order to facilitate production of the number of information cases needed, funding of £100,000 per annum was required and would include a re-structuring of the Information Section, together with the engagement of flexible contracted labour to align to the seasonality of service changes.

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After consideration and having noted that First Glasgow had agreed in principle to fund the project until the end of the financial year 2008/09 to ensure financial viability, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Partnership

- (i) that an agreement be entered into with First Glasgow to produce all of the company's roadside information, targeted to commence with the service changes planned for 28 October 2007;
- (ii) that First Glasgow be re-charged £100,000 per annum until 31 March 2009; and
- (iii) that the staff structure be amended to accommodate the proposed changes.

5. North Lanarkshire public information provision

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P There was submitted a report (issued) of 30 August 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services)

- (1) reminding members that the Operations Committee of the former Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority had considered the issue of travel centres in 2003 and
 - (a) had concluded, inter alia, that locations should be kept under review to take account of new developments; and
 - (b) had endorsed the policy of working in partnership with "like minded" organisations to establish a network of travel points to disseminate information in a wider and more cost effective manner;
- (2) intimating that a review of the provision of information in North Lanarkshire had been undertaken in the spring of this year and the review had concluded that the residents of North Lanarkshire would be better served by SPT working in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council to widen the availability of public transport information and other services throughout the council area;
- (3) outlining a number of proposals in relation to the provision of public transport information through North Lanarkshire Council's "First Stop" shops, the extension of SPT's electronic passenger information system to the bus stances in Central Way, Cumbernauld, paper based bus stop specific information in information cases and enhancements to waiting areas, together with an indication of consents which might be required and estimated costs;
- (4) highlighting alternative measures to assist customers in the purchase of tickets and concessionary travel card applications; and
- (5) recommending that the Partnership be asked to approve
 - (a) the termination of the lease at Cumbernauld Travel Centre at the end of its term in May 2008; and

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- (b) the package of alternative measures as detailed in the report for the provision of travel information in North Lanarkshire and their progressive implementation.

After consideration and having heard Mr Maclennan in further explanation, the Committee approved the recommendations at (5) above.

6. Silverburn Bus Station management proposal

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P There was submitted a report (issued) of 5 September 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services),

- (1) intimating
 - (a) that SPT had worked with Retail Property Holdings Ltd (the developer of the planned Silverburn retail complex in Pollok, Glasgow) during the planning and design phase of the bus facility which would serve the Silverburn complex to secure improvements to the facility being provided; and
 - (b) that as part of this evolving relationship, Retail Property Holdings (RPH) had become aware of SPT's role in developing and managing East Kilbride Bus Station and had approached SPT to establish its interest in managing the new facility in Pollok on its behalf;
- (2) informing members
 - (a) that discussions had taken place over the past few months to explore the opportunities and benefits for both parties in entering into such an agreement;
 - (b) that it had been agreed that any partnership agreement would have to be founded on the following 3 key principles
 - (i) SPT's licence agreement and bus station rules, suitably amended to reflect the different ownership arrangements, would underpin the operation of the new bus station thus ensuring that all bus operators using the facility would be treated fairly and impartially;
 - (ii) SPT's involvement would be on a full cost recovery basis; and
 - (iii) the agreement between SPT and RPH would require to be for a significant period to justify the resource in setting up an agreement (5 years was the period discussed with an option to extend thereafter); and
- (3) recommending that the Partnership be asked to approve a partnership agreement between SPT and RPH for the management of the new bus facility at the Silverburn retail complex, subject to the necessary approvals and based on the key principles outlined at (2)(b) above.

After consideration, the committee approved the recommendation at (3) above.

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7. Change of operator: contract 4946C

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After consideration of a report (issued) of 31 August 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services) on the acquisition of the local bus service operations and assets of Hutchison's Coaches (Overtown) by First Glasgow, the Committee agreed to the formal assignment of contract 4946C to First Glasgow which would result in an improved service provision at no additional cost to SPT.

8. Changes to subsidised local bus services

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After consideration of a report (issued) of 5 September 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services) on proposed changes to subsidised local bus services, the Committee agreed

- (1) to the award of contract 5645J (evening service 169 Renfrew Ferry to Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley) in the sum of £46,914 for the contract period, equivalent to £56,296 per annum, to First Glasgow; and
- (2) that the area covered by Ring 'n' Ride service 900 (the "Three Valleys") be extended to provide journeys on request between Crawfordjohn and Lanark from the end of September 2007.

9. Renewal of subsidised local bus service contract Lanark – Sanquhar

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After consideration of a report (issued) of 31 August 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services) on tenders received for the renewal of subsidised local bus service contracts in the South Lanarkshire area, the Committee agreed

- (1) that contract 4953B (Lanark – Wanlockhead) be awarded to Stuart's Coaches Ltd at a cost of £390,000 for the contract period, equivalent to £78,000 per annum, with effect from 1 October 2007; and
- (2) that no award be made for contracts 4785B and 4908D.

10. Requests for subsidised local bus services

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 5 September 2007 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Services) advising members of various requests for the provision of subsidised local bus services.

After discussion, the committee

- (1) agreed not to take any further action in respect of the local subsidised bus service requests at paragraphs (a) - (e) and (g) of the report; and
- (2) approved the recommendations in respect of the undernoted requests: -

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
Operations Committee

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Request

Provision of a subsidised local bus service in Allanton, near Fernigair

(item f)

Revision of subsidised service 117 (Townhead-Coatbridge town centre) to provide Monday to Saturday morning journeys at 0700 and 0730 hrs from Townhead and journeys until 1830hrs daily

(item h)

Revision of subsidised service 209 on Sundays to provide a link from North Motherwell to Motherwell Cross beyond the hours of operation of the unsubsidised bus service in the area

(item i)

Provision of a subsidised bus service in the Cliftonville area of Coatbridge on Saturdays and Sundays

(item j)

Decision

The committee agreed that options to revise existing services in the area be investigated as the village was marginal in terms of the walking distance criteria.

The committee agreed that tenders be invited.

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