

Committee minute



Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Operations Committee

26 January 2018

held in 131 St Vincent Street, Glasgow

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Minute of the meeting of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Operations Committee held in 131 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, on 26 January 2018

Present Councillors David Wilson (Chair), Malcolm Balfour, Martin Bartos, Colin Cameron, Allan Casey, Jim Finn, Jacqueline McLaren, Michael McPake, Alan Moir, Richard Nelson and Donald Reid and appointed members Gregory Beecroft and Graham Johnston.

Attending Valerie Davidson, Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)/Secretary; Valerie A Bowen, Senior Committee Officer; Gordon MacLennan, Chief Executive; Eric Stewart, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations); Charlie Hoskins, Senior Director, Neil Wylie, Director of Finance and HR, Gordon Dickson, Bus Development Manager and Alex Scott, Bus Services Manager.

1. Apologies

Apologies were submitted from Councillors Graham Hardie and Marie McGurk.

2. Declaration of interest in terms of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000

Mr Beecroft declared an interest in agenda item number 5 in relation to land at Robroyston during a role held previously by him.

3. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 10 November 2017 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. Monitoring report on public transport services in the SPT area

There was submitted a report (issued) of 17 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations), together with an addendum tabled at the meeting

- (1) informing the committee of the latest trends in the number of passengers carried and the reliability of services directly operated and supported by the Partnership;
- (2) providing information on
 - (a) the current status of SPT's bus action plan for the continuing improvement of bus service delivery within the region, regulating and fleet profile statistics and details of subsidised local bus service vehicle inspections; and
 - (b) patronage, reliability and punctuality of ScotRail services in the SPT area, the data for which had been provided by the Abellio/ScotRail alliance; and
- (3) advising members of an incident on Christmas day whereby staff had had to be called out to deal with flooding at Buchanan Street Subway station.

After discussion and having heard Messrs Stewart and Hoskins in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the committee

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- (i) noted the terms of the report;
- (ii) thanked Alan Cuke, Depot Manager, and his staff for attending the incident at St. Enoch's on Christmas Day in order that the Subway could open as normal on Boxing Day.

5. Rail Update - Station Usage Statistics and Network Rail Performance

There was submitted a report (issued) of 21 December 2017 by the Senior Director

- (1) reminding members
 - (a) that the rail network in the west of Scotland was central in supporting sustainable economic growth across the region and beyond, the largest regional rail network in the UK outside London, and played a key role in integrating the transport network, whether through initiatives such as park and ride, or through interchange stations such as Partick;
 - (b) that SPT had a long track record of delivering improvements to the rail network that promoted economic growth and were complementary to wider developments by public and private sector partners and had well-established, good working relationships with the three main rail-related organisations in Scotland, Viz. Transport Scotland, ScotRail and Network Rail (NR).; and
 - (c) that, having already delivered significant schemes such as the biggest park and ride in Scotland (Croy) and been a key partner in the refurbishment of Dalmarnock station for the Clyde Gateway regeneration area and the Commonwealth Games 2014, current focus for SPT was on projects such as the new station and park and ride at Robroyston;
- (2) advising members that, as the Regional Transport Partnership for the west of Scotland with a multi-modal remit, SPT monitored continually the performance of the transport network to identify issues to address, opportunities to develop and inform its input to future rail strategies and plans for the future, such as the new Regional Transport Strategy;
- (3) providing information on estimated station usage 2016/2017 and Network Rail's performance for the period 1 April to 14 October 2017, based on reports published by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR);
- (4) intimating that these reports highlighted that station usage on the rail network in the west of Scotland remained healthy, despite significant developments disrupting service; and that ORR believed that Network Rail's performance in Scotland was, broadly, improving;
- (5) informing members that the information included in the reports provided useful business intelligence for SPT and, at a strategic level, SPT continued to engage actively with rail industry partners across a range of projects, developments and issues, and officers would continue to update the Partnership and its Committees regularly on progress as appropriate.

After consideration and having heard Mr Hoskins in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the committee noted the terms of the report.

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6. Community Transport update

There was submitted a report (issued) of 8 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

(1) intimating

- (a) that the Community Transport Association defined Community Transport (CT) as 'safe, accessible, cost-effective, flexible transport run by the community for the community';
- (b) that CT providers were not for profit organisations that varied in scale and services delivered and typically offered a range of services to members which included minibus operation for community groups, door to door services on demand, volunteer car schemes and registered community bus services; and
- (c) that the CT sector was staffed by a mix of volunteer and paid staff and provided strong economic and social benefits not only to the communities which they served, but also to wider society;

(2) explaining

- (a) that, although SPT had been leading the way in relation to the development of the CT Sector in Scotland and had provided a strong foundation through the grant funding provided for CT services, establishment of the West of Scotland Community Transport Network, delivery of Community Bus Services and through the PSP initiative, the CT sector faced a number of challenges in respect of demographic change, growing demand for healthcare services, driver shortages, access to funding and potential changes to the UK CT permit system;
- (b) that the UK Department for Transport was due to launch a consultation on the future of the CT Permit System and initial indications were that this may result in CT operators being obligated to meet full Public Service Vehicle Operator's Licence conditions, which would be particularly challenging and costly for many CT operators to achieve; and
- (c) that SPT considered that bringing such licence conditions into the CT sector would, in certain cases, strengthen the case and preparedness of the sector to provide lower cost registered community bus services, fill gaps, complement commercial bus services and support vulnerable communities;

(3) appending a list of West of Scotland Community Transport Network members, together with a list of volunteer car schemes which were supported by SPT and predominantly focussed on access to healthcare services; and

(4) informing members

- (a) that SPT's response to the Scottish Government consultation on Local Bus Services had highlighted that meaningful partnership working must form the heart of any new legislative provision to address decline in the bus market; and
- (b) that with increasingly constrained budgets, Community Transport would form a key part of any partnership solution and, encouragingly, the Community Transport

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Association had endorsed this partnership approach and had expressed formally their desire to participate in the Strathclyde Bus Alliance as this moved forward.

After considerable discussion and having heard Mr Dickson

- (i) in amplification of his report by way of a presentation; and
- (ii) in answer to members' questions,

the committee noted the terms of the report

7. Subsidised local bus service contract recommendations – financial implications

There was submitted a report (issued) of 10 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support) advising the committee of the financial implications of members' possible decisions relating to further items on the agenda.

After consideration, the committee

- (1) noted the financial implications of awarding any contracts; and
- (2) agreed to give due consideration to the implications when making decisions on those contracts.

8. Proposed renewal of the Kilcreggan – Gourock ferry service

With reference to the minute of 20 January 2017 (page 6, paragraph 11) when the committee had agreed, inter alia, to the award of a contract for the Kilcreggan - Gourock ferry service to Clydelink Ltd. at a cost of £319,538 for an initial contract period from 3 April 2017 to July 2018 to ensure continuation of the service until such time as transfer to Transport Scotland was arranged, there was submitted a report (issued) of 17 January 2018,

- (1) intimating
 - (a) that, subsequent to that meeting, the Scottish Government had announced a Policy Review of Ferry Procurement and this had effectively paused all tendering processes pending the outcome of that review; and
 - (b) that the projected transfer date of July 2018 was now unlikely to be achievable and since the existing contract for the Kilcreggan service was predicated on that timeline, it was now therefore appropriate to re-tender the service;
- (2) explaining
 - (a) that SPT had invited tenders again, based on an initial term of 12 months, but extendable for up to seven years should it prove necessary to ensure continuity of service for passengers, based on the current timetable provision, although optional tenders had been encouraged in order to stimulate possible commercial interest;
 - (b) that the sole compliant tender had been submitted by Clyde Marine Services Ltd for the contract, based upon the existing timetable provision, in the sum of £325,407 for the initial contract period from 15 July 2018 until 13 July 2019; and

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- (c) that this represented an annual increase of £77,408 against the current cost of this contract and, based on an assumption of approximately 55,000 passenger trips per annum, the subsidy per journey for SPT would equate to £5.90 per passenger journey which was substantially in excess of what would normally be regarded as an acceptable subsidy cost;
- (3) informing members
- (a) that, in view of the anticipated transfer of responsibility for the service to the Scottish Government, it was felt that award of this contract should proceed meantime; and
 - (b) that a review of the current fares structure would be undertaken to mitigate the impact of this increase in cost to the public purse.

After consideration and having heard Mr Stewart in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed

- (i) to the award of contract 1923F to Clyde Marine Services Ltd, at a cost of £325,407 for the initial contract period of 12 months, commencing on 15 July 2018, with the contract extendable for up to seven years based on the annual price submitted, and subject to any annual price adjustments provided for in the Conditions of Contract;
- (ii) that the current fares structure be reviewed and revised upwards to mitigate the public subsidy that supported the service, with a final proposal to be approved by the Partnership as part of the SPT budget setting processes; and
- (iii) noted that the award of the contract was subject to satisfaction of the requirements of the mandatory standstill period for EU advertised public sector contracts.

9. Temporary subsidised local bus contracts awarded

There was submitted a report (issued) of 18 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) advising members of temporary contracts awarded under delegated authority, which would commence in January, February and April 2018 to ensure that gaps in the network arising from commercial market changes were filled.

The Committee noted that the tendering process would continue to ensure that the contracts were replaced on a sustainable basis.

10. Amendments to subsidised local bus service contracts

After consideration of a report (issued) of 27 December 2017 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) detailing changes to subsidised local bus services arising from changed circumstances, the committee noted the amendments as detailed in the Appendix to the report which would result in savings to SPT of £5,241 in 2017/2018 and £25,688 in 2018/2019.

11. Request for subsidised local bus service contracts

There was submitted and approved a report (issued) of 11 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) recommending that members

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- (1) approve a request to operate subsidised local bus service 362 (Colmonell – Girvan) on six Monday public holidays in 2018 on a trial basis at a pro-rata cost of £271.76 per day; and
- (2) note that patronage would be monitored.

12. Community Transport projects

There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 8 January 2018 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations), providing a brief summary of the undernoted Community Transport projects which had been awarded grant funding during the period 1 April to 30 September 2017:-

Project	Grant
Ardgowan Hospice Patient Transport Service	£16,000
Coalfield Community Transport	£30,661
Community Transport Glasgow	£49,114
East Kilbride Community Transport	£15,000
Getting Better Together	£32,000
NATA (North Area Transport Association)	£59,443
Port Glasgow Voluntary Trans-Port Group	£10,000
The Rural Development Trust Ltd	£35,000
Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire–Cam Glen NHS Patient Volunteer Car Project	£2,500