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journeys

SPT

committee minute

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Operations Committee meeting

19 March 2010

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 19 March 2010

Present Councillors Denis McKenna (Chair), David Fagan, Jonathan Findlay, William Hendrie, Bobby McDill, Marie McGurk, Eddie Phillips, Alan Moir, John Murray (deputy) and appointed members Tom Hart and Bill Ure.

Apologies Councillors Bill Grant, Mark Griffin, Tommy Morrison, Chris Thompson and appointed member Ronnie Mellis.

Attending Valerie Davidson, Secretary; Gordon MacLennan, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations); Eric Stewart, Director, Bus Operations and Pat Doherty, Public Transport Officer, Operations.

Also Attending John Yellowlees, First ScotRail.

1. Declaration of interest

The committee noted that there were no declarations of interest.

2. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 22 January 2010 (issued) was submitted and approved as a correct record.

Arising from the minute with regard to

- (1) page 1, paragraph 2, Mr Stewart advised members that due to the recent proposed changes to the committee cycle, the report on patronage figures on the usage of limited stop service 904 between East Kilbride and Edinburgh would now be submitted to the next committee meeting;
- (2) page 2, paragraph 3, Mrs Davidson advised members that to date, no response had been received from Transport Scotland in relation to the provision of Park and Ride statistics for all First Scotrail stations within the SPT area being submitted to committee on a regular basis;
- (3) page 5, paragraph 7, Mr Stewart advised members
 - (a) that discussions were still ongoing on the issue of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations) on the undernoted contracts;

19 March 2010

- 6485J Kilmarnock – Cumnock – Muirkirk (service X76);
- 6917D Dundonald – Troon (service 110); and
- 6965A South Ayrshire DRT; and

(b) that it was anticipated that an update would be available at the next Operations Committee meeting; and

(4) page 7, paragraph 11, in response to a question raised by Councillor McDill, Mr Docherty advised members that although contract 6941L Sorn – Cumnock – Ayr (service 347) had been operating from Rankinston – Ayr it had left Skares without a service. He explained that SPT were currently looking at various transport options to provide Skares with a link into Cumnock to meet the needs of the local community.

3. Public transport services monitoring report

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 10 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

- (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 and on ScotRail services in the SPT area; and
- (2) providing information on the current status of SPT's six point bus action plan for the continuing improvement of bus service delivery within the region, together with regulating and fleet profile statistics.

After considerable discussion, particularly in relation to recent press reports on the reduced frequency of Subway services and the possible extension of the National Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme to include the Edinburgh tram system and having heard

- (a) Mr MacLennan advise members that SPT had investigated the travel patterns of its passengers through Subway ticket sales and had attempted to produce a service frequency which would increase the efficiency of all services for the travelling public; and
- (b) Mrs Davidson advise members that SPT would continue to monitor the Scottish Government's position on the inclusion of the tram system in the National Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme and would seek parity for the subway,

the committee noted the contents of the report.

4. Demand Responsive Transport services: new marketing strategy

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 10 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

- (1) advising members

19 March 2010

- (a) that SPT regarded Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services as a key element in the public transport mix and was keen to heighten awareness of them; and
 - (b) that following the 21st anniversary of Dial-a-Bus this year there was an opportunity for consideration of a wider re-branding and re-marketing exercise;
- (2) informing members
- (a) that of particular concern was the fact that, whilst the Dial-a-Bus service was available to the mobility-impaired of any age, its customers were predominantly elderly; and
 - (b) that although this was undoubtedly the main client group, and would remain so, it was SPT's duty to make every effort to support those younger people who could benefit from the service;
- (3) indicating
- (a) that SPT had been pursuing a more proactive role in the coordination and development of the community transport (CT) sector which had included the establishment of the West of Scotland Community Transport Forum and the provision of both revenue and capital support (the latter taking the form of providing vehicles to various groups on a full repairing lease basis) in order to engage actively with the CT sector; and
 - (b) that while some of these groups could be used for delivery of SPT subsidised bus services where the costs would otherwise be prohibitive, there was currently no underpinning brand to identify this sector; and
- (4) recommending
- (a) that Dial-a-Bus and DRT services be re-branded with the single identity 'MyBus', with the buses repainted in an orange colour which had been developed as part of the overall re-branding package for the Subway modernisation project by Stand-United Design Consultants; and
 - (b) that a dedicated link on the SPT website portal be introduced for the 'MyBus' brand, with the web address being prominently displayed on the buses themselves which could offer the opportunity for two-way interaction with existing and potential customers for the Dial-a-Bus and Ring'n'Ride services.

After considerable discussion and having heard Mr Stewart explain

- (i) that, progressively, all vehicles purchased by SPT or those required under its Conditions of Contract would be in SPT livery and feature the new corporate orange colour;
- (ii) that whilst the colour synergy would therefore be present on all vehicles eventually, those used predominantly on subsidised local bus services would not

19 March 2010

carry the 'MyBus' decals, with this identity scrolled on the electronic destination display if any such vehicle was being used on DRT work;

- (iii) that although the 'MyBus' decals would be applied to all DRT vehicles from the date of launch of the re-branding in place of the existing Dial-a-Bus and Ring'n'Ride identity, only those buses presently in the build programme would be painted in the new colour, with those currently in service dealt with progressively as part of an ongoing programme; and
- (iv) that in due course, all customer information literature associated with SPT's DRT services, such as Dial-a-Bus information/application leaflets, would also be re-branded with the new identity and a suitably targeted marketing campaign would be undertaken,

the committee approved the recommendations at (4) above.

5. Subsidised local bus service contract recommendations – financial implications

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 9 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support) advising the committee of the financial implications 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 2009/2010, 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.

6. Homologation of contract LS051T Montgomerie Park – Middleton Road – Irvine Rail Station

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 4 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

- (1) informing members of the withdrawal of commercial service 29 Hill Roundabout to Hunter Drive, Irvine on 11 January 2010 which had left gaps in bus service provision in the Littlestone and Middleton Road area of Irvine;
- (2) advising members that although prices had been sought for temporary contract LS050T Littlestone – Irvine Town Centre until longer term tenders could be invited, the received bids were considered excessive for the expected demand and that a more competitive price might be achieved by modifying the tender specifications; and
- (3) explaining that following a review of the tender specification, bids had been invited for temporary contract LS051T Montgomerie Park – Middleton Road – Irvine Rail Station on Mondays to Saturdays and a contract awarded to the lowest tenderer, Western Buses Ltd, at a cost of £1,271 per week from 1 March to 17 July 2010.

7. Amendments to subsidised local bus services

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19 March 2010

After consideration of a report (issued) of 4 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) detailing proposed changes to subsidised local bus service contracts at no cost to SPT, the committee agreed

- (1) that the route of contract 6518D Brodick – Whiting Bay – Blackwaterfoot (service 323) be extended to include two return daytime journeys to the Auchrannie Hotel Monday to Saturday from 21 March 2010;
- (2) that the route of contract 9561C3 Wishaw Hospital – Holytown (service 248) be revised via Pather to accommodate evening visiting hours at Wishaw General Hospital from 10 May 2010; and
- (3) that the new timetable on contract 2827H Milngavie/Kilsyth – Cumbernauld – Airdrie – Monklands (services 47/147) be implemented at the earliest possible start date of 22 April 2010 as detailed in the report.

8. Community Transport Projects: grant funding update

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 9 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

- (1) reminding members that since April 2008, SPT had been managing funding for community transport projects on behalf of constituent authorities;
- (2) providing a brief summary of the following community transport projects which had been awarded grant funding during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010:-
 - British Red Cross Society - North Ayrshire & Arran Community Transport & Escort Project;
 - Coalfield Community Transport – Coalfield Community Transport Initiative;
 - Create Ltd – CamGlen NHS Car Sharing Project ;
 - East Dunbartonshire Transport Management Organisation;
 - Retired & Senior Volunteer Programme Primary Care Project East Renfrewshire;
 - Rural Development Trust;
 - Stepping Stones for Families – Travel Connections - Girvan and Maybole Schemes; and
 - Womens Royal Voluntary Service, Clydesdale; and
- (3) appending a table detailing the amount of grant funding awarded to each of the projects.

9. Requests for subsidised local bus services

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 10 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations), advising members of various requests for the provision of subsidised local bus services.

After consideration, the committee

19 March 2010

- (1) agreed not to take any further action in respect of the local subsidised bus service requests at paragraphs (c) - (e), (g) (j), (l), (m) and (p); and
- (2) approved the recommendations in respect of the undernoted requests: -

Request

Decision

Provision of an additional morning and evening journey from Twechar to Kirkintilloch to suit work patterns.

(item a)

The committee agreed that the possibility of providing extra journeys on commercial or subsidised services to give workers better connections to and from Twechar be investigated.

Revision to the timetable and route of service 416 Maxim/Eurocentral to Coatbridge to improve reliability.

(item b)

The committee agreed that route and timetable modifications to avoid traffic congestion around the Shawhead junction (A725/M8) be implemented.

Revision to the timetable of service 90 to depart later from Parkhead Forge to assist Mecca Bingo Patrons.

(item f)

The committee agreed that the existing 2135 journey be amended to depart Parkhead Forge at 2142 hours arriving at Govan at 2224 hours as from the next service change.

Provision of a bus service from Skares to Cumnock.

(item h)

The committee agreed that the potential of a service to be provided through the Community Transport Forum being developed by SPT be examined and that tenders for two return journeys per day, to provide links to Cumnock, be sought.

Provision of a bus service from Southcraig Drive to Kilmarnock

(item i)

The committee agreed that tenders be invited for transport options to be examined and costed to provide some journeys into Southcraig Drive to meet expected patronage and that the results of the tender exercise be considered at a future meeting of the committee.

Extension of commercially operated service 38 into Speirsbridge, Thornliebank, Main Street and Orchard Park.

(item k)

The committee noted that route options for a commercial local bus route within that area were due to be considered by operators.

19 March 2010

Diversion of commercially operated service 30 and/or service 1 via Rowantree Road, Johnstone.	The committee agreed that further investigations be undertaken in liaison with Councillor McGurk.
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(item n)

Provision of transport from Lower Braidwood to Carluke to restore previous transport connections following the cancellation of all local bus services by William Stokes and Sons Ltd.	The committee noted that a temporary contract had been secured and was awaiting approval by the Traffic Commissioner and that prices for a long term contract from July 2010 would be advertised.
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(item o)

10. Additional item

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

11. Renfrew Ferry – progress update on potential commercial operators

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With reference to the minutes of the Partnership of

- (1) 22 January 2010 (page 2 paragraph 2) when the Partnership had agreed to end SPT's direct operation of the Renfrew-Yoker ferry service as part of a range of efficiency measures which had been identified for implementation in 2010/2011 to ensure a balanced revenue budget; and
- (2) 26 February 2010 (page 3, paragraph 8) when the Partnership had noted that following various commercial operators expressing an interest in running a ferry service, SPT had subsequently advertised the sale/lease of its assets for potential operators and invited proposals to be submitted to SPT before 12 noon on 15 March 2010 in line with the following two principles:-
 - SPT would not provide an operational subsidy; and
 - proposals would be reviewed and assessed on the basis of utilising the available assets to achieve the best transport ferry service (in the first instance between Renfrew and Yoker),

there was submitted a report (tabled) of 18 March 2010 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

- (a) summarising the proposals which had been submitted by various commercial operators for the provision of a Renfrew – Yoker ferry service;
- (b) informing members that following discussion and further analysis of two short listed proposals by the Clyde Waterbus/Ferry Group, consisting of representatives

19 March 2010

from various councils, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government and SPT, it was recommended that the Silvers Marine (UK) Ltd proposal be accepted given their commitment to retaining a Renfrew – Yoker ferry crossing and plans for undertaking trials for an extended service in the near future;

- (c) explaining
 - (i) that the Silvers Marine (UK) Ltd (on behalf of proposed new company “Clydelink Ltd”) proposal offered the best transport ferry service by utilisation of SPT assets (slipways) and without any operational subsidy;
 - (ii) that Silvers Marine (UK) Ltd’s proposal document had disclosed a substantial marine industry background and experience, including water transport and the company had carried out trials of their vessels on the slipways to prove the operational feasibility of their proposals; and
 - (iii) that it was also clear from the proposal that they had researched and considered the necessary consents, leases, etc. which would be required to operate a ferry service;
- (d) advising members
 - (i) that following the cessation of SPT operations on 31st March 2010, the two existing vessels would be removed from the water and be offered for sale to interested parties whilst on dry dock, where the necessary marine surveys could be undertaken;
 - (ii) that a formal licence/lease arrangement now needed to be put in place with Silvers Marine (UK) Ltd / Clydelink Ltd on the basis of a nominal charge for a period of 5 years and the use being restricted to ferry operations; and
 - (iii) that the new operator would be responsible for all operational aspects of the service including agreements with Clydeport Ltd for the crossing of the River Clyde together with any berthing at Primrose Quay or elsewhere, statutory and regulatory approvals, maintenance of the slipways, insurance, fares, timetable and all ancillary customer services aspects;
- (e) confirming that SPT affected staff had been offered alternative positions or had accepted voluntary severance; and
- (f) detailing the proposed timetable and fare structure to be operated by Silvers Marine (UK) Ltd.

After considerable discussion and having heard various members commend the SPT officers for their hard work, professionalism and immense efforts made to maintain this significant service on the Clyde, the committee

- (A) noted the terms of the report; and
- (B) agreed that the operator would be invited to provide a progress report in six months time on the performance of the service.