

**Mobility & Access Committee Scotland (MACS)
Main Committee meeting**

**Minutes of meeting held on 25 January 2011
Conference Rooms 4 & 5, Victoria Quay**

Present:

Anne MacLean, Convener

Members:

John Ballantine (JB)
Clare Byrne (CB)
Heather Fiskin (HF)
James Glover (JG)
Andrew Holmes (AH)
Jane Horsburgh (JH)
Grahame Lawson (GL)
Muriel Masson (MM)
Annette Monaghan (AM)
Jane Steven (JS)

Secretariat:

Linda Craik (LC), Secretary
Jean Goldie, Assistant Secretary.

Apologies:

Bob Benson

In attendance:

Fiona Locke, Head of Sponsor Team
Laura Harrison, Palantypist

Welcome and Introductions

1. The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Linda Craik and Jean Goldie as the new Secretariat and Fiona Locke, Head of the sponsorship team for MACS. Heather Fiskin was congratulated on the birth of her baby and welcomed back after her maternity leave.
2. Members were reminded that, to allow the palantypist to carry out her role effectively, they should indicate to the Convener when they wished to speak and not talk at the same time as other members.

Apologies

3. Apologies had been received from Bob Benson.
4. The Convener informed the members that Shonagh Terry had tendered her resignation from MACS due to work pressures and health issues, and indicated that she would write to Shonagh to thank her for all her efforts on behalf of the Committee.

Minutes of the last meeting

5. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved subject to a minor change to paragraph 33 to indicate that all vehicles, including those with blue badges, were required to pay the drop off charges at Edinburgh Airport when entering, not just after a 10 minute grace period. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Secretariat would make initial contact with SG Aviation colleagues to obtain background information and then consideration could be given as to whether it would be appropriate for MACS to write to Edinburgh Airport to raise their concerns about this issue.

Action: Secretariat

6. In relation to the requested training session on the Equality Act which was noted in para 32 of the minutes, LC informed members that she was in discussion with BB on this to ensure the session was highly relevant for MACS work and to optimise learning from the training and would feed back to members in due course.

Action: Secretariat

7. The Committee were informed by JS that, as a follow up to the action point on DRT at the previous meeting, both she and AH would be meeting with Brian Juffs to discuss DRT further, later that afternoon.

Matters arising

8. The Convener informed members that she had written to David Middleton, Chief Executive of Transport Scotland, regarding the use of the term 'PRM' (persons with restricted mobility) in the recent Ferries Consultation document. Mr Middleton had responded indicating that officials from the Ferries Directorate would be happy to meet with MACS to discuss this and any other concerns which they might have. He also invited a MACS member to participate in the next part of the review. This was welcomed by the Committee.

9. Members agreed that the Convener should write a follow up letter to Mr Middleton emphasising that, although some bodies recognised that the term, PMR was intended to cover all disabilities and not just those directly connected to mobility. It was felt to be misleading to those operators who were not familiar with considering the wide range of disabilities (e.g. hearing/sight impairment, learning difficulties etc) which might affect passengers.

Action: Convener

10. Fiona Locke (FL) thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend the meeting and indicated that she hoped to be able to offer a positive contribution to the work of the Committee now that she had now taken on the role of Team Leader for PVS, MACS and Mobility issues. FL informed members that the summary of the Ferries Review Consultation responses was due to be published in the near future.

11. With reference to the resignation of ST, JG requested that a member of the Committee be allocated to offer support to the Disability Equality Rights, Standards and Outcomes workstream. HF offered to join this group and this was accepted by the Convener. Secretariat indicated that they would circulate an updated workstreams chart to reflect this change.

Action: Secretariat

Secretariat Update

12. Members noted the information which had been provided in the Secretariat update paper. LC informed them that the Blue Badge statistical returns, which GL had highlighted, were currently being reviewed and analysed.

13. The Convener reminded members that although the Scottish Parliament would dissolve on 22 March ahead of the Scottish elections in May, contact with the Secretariat and other members of Transport Scotland would not be affected.

Convener Update

14. It was noted that, as a result of the TICCC session, an article had been issued in The Herald newspaper which highlighted MACS' concerns regarding certain aspects of the transport and access planning arrangements for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Members indicated that they were content for GL's letter regarding this matter to be sent to the Project Manager of the Operating Committee for the Commonwealth Games and copied to the TICCC.

Action: Secretariat

15. JH indicated that she had recently attended the *Roads for All* meeting at Transport Scotland, but had been unable to ascertain if an access consultant had been employed in connection with the work they were undertaking.

16. Following a discussion on the various issues which MACS had covered during their evidence giving session, it was agreed that the Secretariat would collate a letter for the Convener's signature. This would provide answers to the questions raised and provide the additional information requested by the TICCC members.

Action: Secretariat

Audit Scotland Presentation on “Transport for Health and Social Care”

17. The Convener thanked AH for drawing this issue to the attention of members and welcomed Catherine Storm (Performance Auditor) and Ffion Heledd (Project Manager) from Audit Scotland and invited them to speak to the Transport for Health and Social Care project brief.

18. Ffion and Catherine explained the methodology, purpose and the background to this project and indicated that Audit Scotland would welcome any input from MACS as a Committee, or from individual’s own perspectives. It was noted that the aim was to publish the final report in August 2011 and that it would be presented to the Public Audit Committee at the Scottish Parliament.

19. It was noted that, in addition to looking at existing services operated by SAS/PTS, local authorities, RTPs, social care providers and NHS Boards, Audit Scotland were also looking at international examples for comparison purposes. There was also an intention to set up focus groups, made up of voluntary sector providers, in the near future to discuss and look at existing areas of good and bad practice.

20. Members were informed that the audit would cover, amongst other things: number of journeys being made; costs; comparisons across local authority areas; areas of joint/cross border collaboration; user satisfaction surveys etc. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and give suggestions on any additional areas which they felt would benefit from further investigation.

21. Following a lengthy and wide ranging discussion on this issue, Audit Scotland thanked the Committee for giving them the opportunity to speak to the meeting and indicated that they would keep the Committee informed of any future studies which might be of interest or within MACS’ remit.

22. The Convener thanked Ffion and Catherine for their very interesting and useful presentation and for the opportunity to feed into what was considered by MACS to be a vital and important issue.

MACS appearance before the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee (TICCC)

23. The Convener thanked AH and GL for their contribution at the TICCC and noted appreciation that other members had been present in the public gallery. LC provided an update on the actions which the Secretariat had taken to ensure that outstanding issues from the session were being addressed. Members noted that a letter was being prepared for the Convener to send to TICCC to provide the information which they had requested during the meeting.

Action: Secretariat

Future Work Programme

24. A discussion was held on the possibility of front line staff training (for transport operators) on disability issues being included as part of any future franchise contracts/agreements and how this might be achieved. It was agreed

that it would be appropriate for the “rail workstream members” to make contact with Transport Scotland officials to investigate this suggestion further.

Action: Muriel Masson

25. LC informed members that the Secretariat would seek advice and guidance from TS ASD colleagues regarding the proposal to utilise the DPTAC Disability and Equality Training Framework for Transport Staff, to obtain their views on how this might be adapted for Scottish transport providers. Members welcomed this and agreed that the roll out of this, or an equivalent document would be a step in the right direction to alleviating some of the issues of concern to disabled passengers which existed in this area.

26. It was noted that the extreme weather conditions of recent times, together with the appointment of the new Minister for Transport and Infrastructure had resulted in delayed feedback regarding which recommendations contained in the MACS Annual Report he might wish to comment on. The Secretariat indicated that they would make contact with the Minister’s office by way of a reminder on this matter.

Action: Secretariat

27. JB gave an update on the state of play regarding the status of DPTAC and indicated that he would keep members informed of any updates as and when these became available.

28. After a short discussion on the existing structure of the MACS workstreams, the Convener and members agreed that things were working well and did not require to be changed. The Minister appeared to be happy that MACS were proceeding in the right direction and producing meaningful advice.

Members reports on events attended

29. The reports which provided feedback on meetings and events attended by JH, MM, and JB were noted with interest and instigated a discussion on where, in relation to rail, MACS would be best placed to concentrate its efforts. It was agreed that the training of front line staff and issues regarding the charges being made for some advanced travel booking services should be given priority.

30. MM suggested that officials in charge of the forthcoming Waverley Steps revamp project might be asked to attend a future MACS meeting to make a presentation and it was agreed that the Secretariat should explore possible arrangements for this to take place.

Action: Secretariat

Any Other Business

31. Following discussion on the Disability Living Allowance consultation document which JB had circulated to the Committee, it was agreed that the Committee should restrict its response to the sections which dealt with mobility to

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ensure that MACS did not comment on issues which fell outwith its remit. Members agreed to send their comments to JB who would then submit a response to this document.

Action: Members/JB

32. With regards to the issue of Public Services Reform, HF asked if it would be appropriate for MACS to offer input to this. The Convener suggested that contact should be made with the Christie Commission to present MACS' views that community transport/DRT should not be forgotten or overlooked. AH agreed to prepare a draft letter for members to feed into on this matter.

Action: AH

Date of next meeting

33. Members noted that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 19 April 2011 at 11:00am in Victoria Quay. JH gave her apologies in advance of not being able to attend.

Dates of Future Meetings

34. The dates of the remaining meetings for 2011 were agreed as follows:

26 July 2011 and
25 October 2011.

The Convener closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and for their ongoing hard work and commitment to the work of the Committee.

MACS Secretariat

February 2011