

MOBILITY ACCESS COMMITTEE SCOTLAND (MACS)

MAIN COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 February 2008

CONFERENCE ROOM 5 VICTORIA QUAY

Members Present:

Bryan Alexander
Jane Horsburgh
Fiona McCall
Roderick McLeod (Chair)
John Moore
Alan Rees

Apologies:

Trevor Meadows (Convener)
Mairi O'Keefe (Deputy Convener)
George McKendrick
Jean Dunlop

Secretariat:

Lynne Duff
Alison Dewar

Scottish Government:

John Ewing (part of meeting)
Diane McLafferty (part of meeting)
Fiona Locke

Private Meeting

1. MACS held their own private meeting to discuss the merger with PTUC following the First Minister's statement on Effective Government.

Welcome and apologies

2. Members were welcomed. MACS stressed that their vision had been consistent for 6 years and it was vital that this vision continued following the merger. Following their earlier meeting, MACS asked the following questions/raised concerns over their position:-

2.1 Who are the key stakeholders that the Government will be engaging with?

2.2 Why were there no discussions on the principle of the merger?

2.3 MACS feel that only one member from MACS on the new sub-committee will weaken MACS position

2.4 Can the sub-group name be changed from *Accessibility Working Group*?

2.5 Concerning the sub-group of external experts who will these be? What the mix be? How many of the members will be disabled?

2.6 What will the additional functions of the sub-group involve?

2.7 How much autonomy would the sub-committee have?

3. In answer to the above questions, officials informed MACS that the Equalities Unit in the Government provided us with a list of stakeholders who would be consulted. If there were any additional bodies MACS wished us to approach, we would do so.

Action Point: List of consultees to be sent to MACS

4. As Scottish Ministers were clear in their intentions over the proposal, and our Equality Unit were aware of this, an equalities impact assessment would be carried out. Insofar as the name for the new working group is concerned, PTUC regulations required certain names, however, officials would be happy to look at suggestions for a working name for any accessibility sub-committee, together with PTUC members.

5. Membership of PTUC is subject to OCPAS rules, however, there would be a limited appointments process, restricted to MACS members. The Convener would be able to co-opt members to any new sub-committee. MACS were informed that the sub-committee cannot set its own priorities and when the Minister asks for advice the Convener will set the agenda accordingly. As to the autonomy of the sub-committee, members cannot set their own priorities and must work within PTUC remit.

6. MACS were concerned that following 6 years of honing their aims and visions that these could be lost. However, they would ensure this does not happen and would ask the convener of PTUC to take this forward.

7. MACS also stated that they felt they were losing experience of mobility issues at a loss insofar as the PTUC convener was not required to be disabled in legislation, as with the MACS convener. MACS recognise that, although, there are formal links between the committees, there could have been more engagement to enable MACS to fit into the wider agenda, thus leading to the loss of a huge element of the reason for setting up MACS. MACS felt that they gained great experience through their representation on other organisations.

8. When the Deputy Director of Transport Directorate arrived at the meeting, Alan Rees took this opportunity to explain the reason behind his resignation from MACS. Roderick McLeod added that although he fully supports Alan's position on the issue, for the present time he will remain committed to MACS.

9. At this point it was suggested that the next MACS meeting, due to be held on 20 March should be changed to make it a joint meeting with PTUC members, where MACS vision could be put forward. This was agreed.

Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

10. Amendments made as requested.

Action point: MACS to draft letter to CoSLA on self assessment of concessionary fares scheme.

Action point: Secretariat to update list of members on website.

Ferry Services

11. Roderick informed the meeting that he e.mailed David Stewart MSP about the Ferry Inquiry, in response to hearing him on Radio Orkney. Roderick explained to David that he attended the previous steering group meeting; these meetings were previously attended by Mairi. Members agreed that Roderick worked on this group and should give evidence to the TICC and guidance to DPTAC.

Action point: Emma previously produced information on ferries which Roderick agreed to pull together, pass to members for information then submit to the Parliamentary Committee.

Key Areas of Outstanding Work

12. MACS appreciate that DRT will now be part of the National Indicators and Targets following the concordat drawn up between the Government and CoSLA. As it is not a realistic approach for MACS to contact 32 local authorities, John Moore will draft a letter for the secretariat to send to the PTUC convener drawing attention to their concerns that DRT is no longer ring-fenced.

Action point: John Moore to draft a letter and circulate to the Policy & Research Working Group before issuing to the PTUC convener.

13. MACS agreed that a position paper would be helpful detailing all outstanding work.

Action point: Before the meeting on 20 March all members would let secretariat know what outstanding work they have and secretariat will co-ordinate and circulate.

14. As the Blue Badge consultation document was too extensive to discuss at a meeting it was agreed that this item should be carried forward to a future meeting.

Action point: Secretariat to place on next agenda.

Meeting with PTUC on 20 March 2008

15. The format would be a private MACS meeting in the morning, a buffet lunch joined by PTUC followed by a joint meeting in the afternoon. In preparation for the joint meeting, MACS would bring along a paper showing the key work they would like taken forward. MACS would also respond to the questions raised in the consultation paper on the MACS/PTUC amalgamation which was given to members at the last meeting. The discussion would cover the amalgamation, legislation and the future.

Future of MACS Working Groups

16. Given that MACS are soon to be amalgamated with PTUC, John Moore stated that the structure of the working groups was no longer sustainable.

Resignation of Alan Rees

17. As this was Alan's last meeting following his resignation, Roderick thanked him for all his help stating that as an outgoing member Alan had been the most active member of MACS since its inception, had established good connections and he would be greatly missed. Alan replied saying he was sad to be leaving but had enjoyed his time as a member of MACS.