

MOBILITY ACCESS COMMITTEE SCOTLAND (MACS)

MAIN COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17 June 2008

Room 2D44, Victoria Quay

Members Present:

Trevor Meadows (Convener)
Roderick McLeod
Jane Horsburgh (from Item 3.5 onwards)

Secretariat:

Alison Dewar

Also present from the Scottish Government were:

Diane McLafferty, Transport Strategy
Fiona Locke, Strategy and Policy Branch, Strategy Division
Bill Brash, Local Authority and Partnerships Branch, Strategy Division

1. Governance issues

1.1 MACS were pleased with the vote by the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee which meant that MACS would continue in its own right and be a strengthened body, rather than being amalgamated with the PTUC.

1.2 MACS were passionate about getting going again but cautioned that it would be important to take the time to get it right, as the Committee had a huge agenda to push forward. MACS would continue as an arms length advisory NDPB and it would be important to set out roles and responsibilities, processes for appraisal of members etc. through an agreed Financial Memorandum and Management Statement which would bring MACS in line with the requirements now in place for all NDPBs.

1.3 It would be important to set out for the new Committee that members should have an holistic view and be able to come up with solutions based on sound analysis and evidence. MACS was not a campaigning organisation but ought to work to offer balanced advice to Scottish Ministers.

1.4 In line with the Code of Practice of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland (OCPAS), there was a need for regular appraisals for members, which did not appear to have been carried out in recent years. In future, these should be carried out by the Convener in conjunction with someone senior from the Scottish Government who was able to contribute to the appraisal from their knowledge of members' performance. The Convener would be appraised by a member of the Senior Civil Service.

1.5 There was discussion on the payment of fees for members' attendance. The following points were made:

- fees could pose problems for members who may be in receipt of benefits – however fees did not have to be claimed;
- members who lived further afield e.g. in Shetland and the Western Isles would be penalised by having their travel, - effectively to and from their place of work – taxed.

1.6 The Convener was reminded that it was possible to co-opt members to the Sub-Committees but not to the main Committee of MACS.

1.7 Action: Secretariat to draft a revised Financial Memorandum and Management Statement for agreement with the new MACS.

2. Secretariat position

2.1 The Committee is supported by members of the Scottish Government, as is normal practice for advisory NDPBs. MACS was clear that the Secretariat must be properly resourced to support the Committee. As the Secretariat was now situated within Transport Directorate, it would be able to alert the Committee to relevant transport policy developments on which it may wish to contribute advice.

2.2 Once the new MACS is in place, it would be important to use Secretariat guidance on the appropriate method and timing of engagement both formally and informally with the PTUC.

3. Questions posed by Convener by email

3.1 Current Work Programme – . Now the Convener was back, it would be helpful to get his views on pieces of work which had not been finalised but where transport policy had moved on in the interim.

3.2. While there had been a number of smaller transactional issues covered, MACS recognised that it was difficult to say how effective they had been at influencing the policy debate. There was a need for the new MACS to identify where engagement had taken place in terms of a 3-5 year strategy and identify milestones through their work programme and how those responded to the National Outcomes of the National Performance Framework.

3.3 Some concern was expressed at the possibility of fewer meetings of the new MACS (latterly MACS had been in the habit of holding monthly meetings) but it was recognised that there was scope to use technology to a greater degree, with telephone conferencing, email briefings and regular updates by the Secretariat. The setting up of a members' section of the website was suggested. (Investigations since, have revealed that this is not possible via the MACS website which is hosted by the Scottish Government website. However, we are continuing to investigate the possibility of a forum for members out with the website.) It was noted that preparation for meetings would be required.

3.4 Current work programme – Gap analysis – A Specification of Requirements setting out the background, aims and objectives had been drawn up for tender but not commissioned. This work was to obtain evidence of obstacles to personal mobility and then to carry out behavioural content analysis to find out the effect on

lifestyles and identify what it was that people were prevented from doing. The outcome of the work would be a practical tool or suite of questions which could be used by local authorities to gather information to maximise mobility outcomes in local areas.

3.5 Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) – MACS had commissioned research titled “Comprehensive Guidance for the Development of DRT”. The Convener agreed that he would look at the report with a view to further editing. The Secretariat were asked to establish with policy colleagues where things lay in relation to supplementing existing DRT guidance.

3.6 As stakeholders had not been aware that MACS had undertaken this work, there was a fundamental lesson to be learned in how such work was publicised in terms of influencing the mobility debate.

3.7 Action: Secretariat to investigate the steps required to set up a web based forum for new MACS Committee members to communicate.

3.8 Action: Secretariat to send the Convener a copy of the gap analysis specification electronically.

3.9 Action: The Convener to consider further editing of the DRT research report.

3.10 Action: Secretariat to speak to George Davidson regarding existing DRT guidance.

4. Latest position on legislation

4.1 Bill Brash updated MACS on the legislative position. The two statutory instruments upon which the TICC committee had voted had now been revoked. This had the effect that the legislation was back to the original position.

5. Appointments Process

5.1 Bill updated MACS on the appointments process. The current appointment round would now fill one vacancy on the PTUC. In discussion with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland (OCPAS), a further round of appointments would be necessary to bring MACS back up to full complement. Candidates applying for the vacancy on the PTUC would be asked if they were interested in applying for either Committee or both. If successful at interview, but not selected to fill the PTUC vacancy, they would be invited to interview by the MACS’ selection panel in the Autumn. Existing and former MACS members would be eligible to apply.

5.2 It was hoped to have the full complement of MACS members in place by the end of the year. As with the PTUC appointments, we will be writing to over 300 disability organisations in order to attract a wide field of candidates who would be able to represent the full range of mobility and accessibility issues on the Committee. Information on the appointments process will also be placed in appropriate publications and on the Scottish Government and MACS websites.

6. Annual Report

6.1 The annual report was now on a financial year cycle and should be completed and submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval by November at the latest. There was discussion on the style and content of the report. It was agreed that the document need not be long but should point to advice given to Ministers by the Committee, as opposed to the style of previous MACS reports which delivered the detail of what had been done by MACS. Past Chairs of Working Groups would be approached for input to the report. The Convener agreed to take production of the report forward.

6.2 Action: The Convener to produce the MACS Annual Report with input from past Working Group Chairs.

**MACS Secretariat
June 2008**