

Respondent Information Form and Questions

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Association of Community Rail Partnerships

Title Mr ☒ Ms ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ **Please tick as appropriate**

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

☐

/

Group/Organisation

☒

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate ☐ Yes ☐ No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available ☐

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address ☐

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address ☐

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate ☒ Yes ☐ No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

☒ Yes

☐ No

Consultation Questions

The answer boxes will expand as you type.

Procuring rail passenger services

1. What are the merits of offering the ScotRail franchise as a dual focus franchise and what services should be covered by the economic rail element, and what by the social rail element?

Q1 comments:

There are very clear differences between commercial and social railways. In this respect, funders need to be clear about what they're trying to achieve and in the case of the social railway, what they're buying. Mobility is vital for communities that don't have immediate access to work, training, education, health facilities or shopping and social opportunities. A social railway also helps to maintain social cohesion and reduces isolation in widely-dispersed rural communities. It also supports regeneration through tourism, helping communities to become more sustainable and reducing the environmental impact of road traffic in highly sensitive rural areas.

It could be argued therefore that financial support for these types of rail service should not only come from the transport budget but also health, education and employment budgets.....

Although not operated as separate entities, the community rail concept in England and Wales – and in particular the concept of community rail designation – does go some way towards recognising this difference and is proving very successful.

However, having an absolute divide between commercial and social operation would not be helpful. There must be an acknowledgement of the inter-connection between both and an understanding of the need to maintain a network.

2. What should be the length of the contract for future franchises, and what factors lead you to this view?

Q2 comments:

From the viewpoint of Community Rail, longer franchises mean less upheaval and the opportunity for stakeholders to develop longer-lasting strategic relationships with a TOC and its staff.

3. What risk support mechanism should be reflected within the franchise?

Q3 comments:

4. What, if any, profit share mechanism should apply within the franchise?

Q4 comments:

5. Under what terms should third parties be involved in the operation of passenger rail services?

Q5 comments:

6. What is the best way to structure and incentivise the achievement of outcome measures whilst ensuring value for money?

Q6 comments:

7. What level of performance bond and/or parent company guarantees are appropriate?

Q7 comments:

8. What sanctions should be used to ensure the franchisee fulfils its franchise commitments?

Q8 comments:

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

9. Under the franchise, should we incentivise good performance or only penalise poor performance?

Q9 comments:

10. Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

Q10 comments:

11. How can we make the performance regime more aligned with passenger issues?

Q11 comments:

12. What should the balance be between journey times and performance?

Q12 comments:

From the community rail perspective, it would seem that provided the journey is as fast as reasonably possible, passengers would prefer to have guaranteed arrival and connectional times.

This is particularly important given the limited services available on many rural routes and especially if tourist traffic – a key regeneration tool – is one of the principle flows.

13. Is a Service Quality Incentive Regime required? And if so should it cover all aspects of stations and service delivery, or just those being managed through the franchise?

Q13 comments:

14. What other mechanisms could be used for assessing train and station quality?

Q14 comments:

Scottish train services

15. Can better use be made of existing train capacity, such as increasing the permitted standing time beyond the limit of 10 minutes or increasing the capacity limit? What is an acceptable limit for standing times on rail services?

Q15 comments:

16. Should the number of services making use of interchange stations (both rail to rail and rail to other modes) be increased to reduce the number of direct services? What would be the opportunities and challenges of this?

Q16 comments:

Direct services are of value if they serve the principal flow. If interchanges are to be used properly, then the experience for the passenger must be seamless, pleasant and short. Onward services, whatever the transport mode, must be guaranteed and should have through- or joint- ticketing arrangements.

Longer-haul journeys are however attractive if they offer few changes and also, in the mind of the passenger, make an unconscious link between say the south of England and the North of Scotland.

If the number of through services from England in particular were to be reduced, would the new ScotRail franchise be able to provide the additional capacity no longer met by other franchised services?

17. Should Government direct aspects of service provision such as frequency and journey time, or would these be better determined by the franchisee based on customer demand?

Q17 comments:

See also question 1 above. In specifying a franchise, it must be assumed that Government will have some idea of what it is trying to achieve overall so to some extent, it should broadly specify services to meet those aspirations.

TOCs on the other hand, are in a good position to model their services according to passenger demand and this should be done within the broader parameters specified by Government.

Within the franchise specification therefore, Government should be absolutely clear about the outcomes it expects from its rail service, leaving the franchisee to supply these outcomes according to local need and circumstances.

There should however still be some method of policing TOC actions, should it become clear that services are being overly lead by operational or shareholder considerations.

18. What level of contract specification should we use the for the next ScotRail franchise?

Q18 comments:

19. How should the contract incentivise the franchisee to be innovative in the provision of services?

Q19 comments:

Scottish rail fares

20. What should be the rationale for, and purpose of, our fares policy?

Q20 comments:

21. What fares should be regulated by government and what should be set on a commercial basis? Do your recommendations change by geographic area (the Strathclyde area example), or by type of journey (for example suburban or intercity)?

Q21 comments:

22. How should we achieve a balance between the taxpayer subsidy and passenger revenue contributions in funding the Scottish rail network? At what rate should fares be increased, and how feasible would it be to apply higher increases to Sections of the network which have recently been enhanced?

Q22 comments:

23. What should the difference be between peak and off-peak fares? Will this help encourage people to switch to travelling in the off-peak?

Q23 comments:

Scottish stations

24. How should we determine what rail stations are required and where, including whether a station should be closed?

Q24 comments:

25. What are the merits or issues that arise from a third party (such as a local authority or local business) being able to propose, promote and fund a station or service?

Q25 comments:

In many situations, especially in less urban areas, the community can sometimes have a clearer idea of transport need than planners working at arms-length. This is not to say that they will always have a realistic appreciation of the cost of building a new station and once local travel needs are identified, it may perhaps be that rail is not the best option. Conversely, it has always appeared difficult for more local organisations or authorities to take the first steps towards developing plans for a station, the building of which seems to be disproportionately expensive.

There is a strong need to develop intermediate construction standards, such as those applied some years ago to Beaulieu station. It's been widely acknowledged that railway development is often hamstrung by the inordinate cost of construction - stations in particular - and this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

26. Should only one organisation be responsible for the management and maintenance of stations? If this was the franchisee how should that responsibility be structured in terms of leasing, investment, and issues relating to residual capital value?

Q26 comments:

It seems completely nonsensical to have two organisations managing and maintaining a station. As the TOC is the public face of the railway, it should be their responsibility.

27. How can local communities be encouraged to support their local station?

Q27 comments:

Community rail partnerships (CRPs) and station adoption groups have been enormously successful in England and Wales. Many CRPs have achieved phenomenal levels of growth on their lines through community involvement and niche marketing. A report commissioned by ACoRP (***The Value of Community Rail Partnerships***) demonstrated that a well-organised CRP could provide a BCR of 4.6:1 and could :

- Lead to additional rail use and fares revenue
- Reduce car use
- Contribute to regeneration strategies
- Support people who depend on rail for access to jobs and training
- Help develop the tourism industry
- Achieve high value for money
- Contribute to government strategies to develop the voluntary sector
- Contribute to better security at or around stations
- Contribute to a healthier population
- Contribute to a healthier environment
- Contribute to innovative practice and help develop a more holistic approach to local transport.

A station is the gateway to both the community and the railway and it's in the interests of both to provide a safe and pleasant environment for passengers. Station adoption also meets a number of social needs, bringing communities together and providing meaningful work for people with social or medical difficulties, those experiencing social isolation and retired people, to name but a few. It can also introduce children of school age – the next generation of rail travellers – to the railway, reducing trespass and vandalism and giving them a sense of community ownership. A second ACoRP report (***The Value of Community Rail Volunteering***) indicates that over 4,000 community rail volunteers across England and Wales bring an estimated £27m pa added-value to the rail industry.

The Association of Community Rail Partnerships is the national representative body for these organisations. Supported by the Department for Transport, Welsh Government, Network Rail, Association of Train Operating Companies and other industry and local authority colleagues, our broad role is to support existing CRPs and station adopters, develop new ones, spread best practice and work with the rail industry and government to develop a more sustainable approach to local and rural railways.

Although not strictly within our remit, we maintain an interest in Scottish rail developments, and have identified the potential for a Community Rail Partnership on the Stranraer – Ayr line, particularly now the ferry service has gone. ACoRP have been offering limited support to those involved, although not to the extent we would wish as our brief and funding does not currently

extend north of the border. We have also been supporting the Campaign for Borders Rail on the same basis, as we feel that the new line offers a tremendous opportunity to develop a community rail partnership in tandem with the line's construction. Having community involvement and 'buy in' from day one would be enormously helpful in getting passenger numbers up at an early stage.

ACoRP have also been assisting ScotRail with Station Community Regeneration Fund projects and where disused station premises have been identified, have offered the services of our Community Stations Officer, once again with no financial support from Transport Scotland or other Scottish sources.

To help us understand Scottish needs in more detail, we have arranged a two-day fact-finding exercise on 28th/29th March 2012 and would be happy to discuss ACoRP's work, together with community rail and station adoption, in more detail, should an opportunity arise.

28. What categories of station should be designated and what facilities should be available at each category of station?

Q28 comments:

Cross-border services

29. Should cross-border services continue to go north of Edinburgh? In operating alongside ScotRail services, how do cross-border services benefit passengers and taxpayers? And who should specify these services, the Department of Transport or the Scottish Ministers?

Q29 comments:

30. Or should the cross-border services terminate at Edinburgh Waverley, allowing opportunities for Scottish connections? And if so, what additional benefits would accrue from having an Edinburgh Hub?

Q30 comments:

Rolling stock

31. What alternative strategies or mechanisms could be used to reduce the cost of the provision of rolling stock?

Q31 comments:

32. What facilities should be present on a train and to what extent should these facilities vary according to the route served?

Q32 comments:

Passengers – information, security and services

33. How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

Q33 comments:

34. How should we balance the need for additional seating capacity and retain the flexibility of a franchisee to offer first-class services if commercially viable?

Q34 comments:

35. What issues and evidence should be considered prior to determining whether or not to ban the consumption of alcohol on trains?

Q35 comments:

36. How can the provision of travel information for passengers be further improved?

Q36 comments:

Caledonian Sleeper

37. Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

Q37 comments:

38. Should the Caledonian Sleeper services be contracted for separately from the main ScotRail franchise? Or should it be an option for within the main ScotRail franchise?

Q38 comments:

39. We would be interested in your views in the level and type of service that the Caledonian Sleeper Services should provide. Including:

- What is the appeal of the Caledonian Sleeper Service, and if there were more early and late trains would the appeal of the sleeper services change?
- What is the value of sleeper services to Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen and are these the correct destinations, for example would Oban provide better connectivity?
- What facilities should the sleeper services provide and would you pay more for better facilities?

Q39 comments:

Environmental issues

40. What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

Q40 comments: