

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

Civil Service Pensioners Alliance Glasgow and West of Scotland Group

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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 no merits whatsoever in operating Scotrail as a 'Dual Focus Franchise'. For as with all privatisation operational methods, they are shareholder led and shareholders, as always, want the best return on their investments. Those lines that you have designated as 'Economic' (Commuter and Intercity), I can only assume are making a profit, and if that is the case, then the profits from these lines should be re-invested in those lines you classify as the 'Social Rail Element'. This verbiage gives me the impression of a 'them and us' system, whereby Commuters and Intercity are the elite and have to be catered for at all costs and that at the other end of the spectrum a social underclass travel, with rolling stock which is substandard for that purpose – a type of slum railway, where trains can be cancelled or removed entirely at a moments notice without any consideration for the passengers it caters for. I also suggest that statistics acquired from the Franchise Holder be supplemented with 'on the ground' research before making any concrete decisions regarding passenger services, because statistics from Franchise Holders are almost always in favour of the shareholders to the detriment of the passengers.

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

Q2 comments: As far as I am aware First Group do not own any of the rolling stock in Scotland, but lease them from ROSCO. The First Group over the past ten year franchise (extended) have delivered, overall, a proven quality of service. The Ayrshire Routes now have state of the art rolling stock with increased passenger capacity. I ask the question – would this have been achieved with a shorter franchise....shorter franchises don't benefit the passenger. Ten years has therefore proven itself to be a more comfortable and acceptable amount of time for the Franchise Holder to deliver a quality of service expected by its' passengers. A shorter franchise would generate passenger dissatisfaction, particularly at the frequency of changes of the Franchise Operator, as there would be little or no 'bedding in process'.

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

Q3 comments: If the railway is run for the passengers' and taxpayers' interests then the risk support mechanism is in-built. In other words, if there is little or no revenue being outlaid on shareholders and so-called stakeholders, it would not impact on the overall viability of the franchise should the revenue growth be substantially less than originally forecast. Finance should be put to one side for the running of the franchise from profits. This should create sufficient buffering should shortfalls occur.

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

Q4 comments: There should be no profit sharing. This depletes the revenue useful for maintaining the infrastructure. E.g. Leasing of Rolling Stock; state of the art signalling; Track maintenance (there is bad sections of track work all over the network, and not enough finance to eradicate the faults). The Government, who have made it quite clear that they will not re-nationalise can't have it all their own way. Shareholders and Governments should not be gaining from any profits made by any franchise holder.

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

Q5 comments: Unless third parties have experience in running passenger rail services, then in general they should have no involvement. The notable exception being Network Rail who own the track and buildings. The franchise holder must work closely with Network Rail to ensure a smooth operation and quality of service, not fragmented or even diminished.

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

Q6 comments: In order to achieve a 'value for money' service overall, a monitoring body such as that of the Rail Passenger Transport Users Consultative Committee should be given the powers to monitor, every two years, the progress of the Franchisee, and would have the legal power to impose monetary sanctions, in the form of hefty fines, should the Franchisee fall short on Quality of Customer Service.

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

Q7 comments: A guaranteed Performance Bond to be in place for the whole period of the Franchise for no less than a basic £10,000,000 to be utilised in whole or part thereof should the Franchisee not provide a quality of Customer Service.

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

Q8 comments: See comments questions 5; 6 and 7

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Good performance should be 'normal operating practise', and the aims and ambitions of the Franchisee should reflect this in their everyday operational running. The customer pays a high price for a quality of service. This type of 'bonus culture' must stop. If, however, the quality of service required of the Franchisee falls short, then the Franchise holder should be heavily penalised financially. There is no need to incentivise good performance, the Franchisee has promised to deliver this when the Franchise was given to them in the first place.

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: Aligning the performance regime with actual routes or service is ridiculous. The whole of the Scottish network would become fragmented. It has to remain as one Scottish system.

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

Q11 comments: Network Rail must work closely with the franchise holder, being more flexible in its' approach, and more sympathetic to the needs and requirements of the customers. It would be more practical, and aid performance radically if the Franchisee controlled the running and maintenance of the infrastructure, as well as running the train service, then there would be no reason why a PPM of 98 – 100% should not be achieved.

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

Q12 comments: Today with the infrastructure the way it is and state of the track, journey and performance times are at their optimum, and no variation to that could be attempted, as it would impact on the performance and standard offered to customers. However with large amounts of financial input improvements could be made to trackwork, which would marginally increase timings. Note that the timings for a service to Edinburgh Waverly from Glasgow Queen Street in 1993 was exactly 50mins. Today the fastest the same journey can be undertaken is 49mins. Tells me that there is a problem if there is only a saving one minute in 19 years.

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: It is imperative that a high quality of service is maintained throughout the whole of the infrastructure inclusive of the franchise. The pricing of rail fares demands a high quality of service throughout.

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

Q14 comments: Increase the use of the SQUIRE system already in place, in that both Network rail and the Franchisee should work closely together for the benefit of the customer.

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: As there is no Health and Safety regulations governing how many people can be carried on a basic train, let alone how many are allowed to stand, the issue of capacity is a problem, and has always been a problem since the concept of railways in 1830. To limit the number of passengers carried would mean the introduction of either reservations for every train or some form of policing at the barriers. Both of these methods are not feasible especially during peak times or whenever heavy loads of passengers are demanded...Edinburgh Festival; Hogmanay etc. In my view there is no acceptable limit for standing times. A fare paying passenger is entitled to a seat. Increase capacity is the only answer, though purchasing more rolling stock is expensive, however as a stop gap it might be a wise decision to remove on all trains, except Inverness and Aberdeen Services, first class accommodation. It is underused on the Edinburgh Queen St services. That would give more capacity, especially if the seating arrangements in these areas were readjusted.

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: In table 4 Page 34 Table of Interchange Stations – the Office of Rail regulator has omitted the following Interchange Stations: 1) Kilwinning for Ardrossan, Largs and the Arran Ferry 2) Inverness for Kyle of Lochalsh, Wick and Thurso. 3) Aberdeen for Elgin. 4) Wemyss Bay for Rothesay Ferry and 5) Gourock for Dunoon Ferry.

Decreasing the use of direct services would impact on the paths of such

services thereby reducing the timings from point to point, as the paths of the direct services would be blocked by slower trains; unless you provide passing loops, and or bay platforms.

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: Under no circumstances must the Government interfere with timings and frequency of services. This should be left solely to the Operator.

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

Q18 comments: As you have rightly identified, in this instance, Targeted Specification.

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

Q19 comments: Revenue from high earning and lucrative lines should be utilised to subsidise those lines that are not high revenue earners, thus giving the same quality of service to all customers no matter where their location.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: Value for money without overpricing. In general since the onset of privatisation the rail network of the British Isles has returned, in basis, to the days of the 'Railway Clearing House' ; whereby tickets purchased for through journeys which criss-crossed through different companies' networks were sent to one central point, known as a Railway Clearing House' so that the portion of revenue owed could be apportioned accordingly. If that sounds complicated so is our ticketing system today. Prior to privatisation I could go down to my local station and purchase a return ticket to anywhere in the British Isles. I would have two tickets. In theory one outward journey and one inward journey, with a choice of route if possible. Now I have a multitude of single tickets depending on where I am going for example : Prestwick Town to Formby in Lancashire – single to Glasgow – single to Wigan – single to Southport and a single to Formby. Include the return and you have eight tickets. I have to book in advance for cheapness and I now have to have a reservation on the long haul trains – another two tickets ! Use the KIS philosophy 'Keep it Simple'.

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: There should be no differentiation of geographical area. All fares throughout the whole of Scotland should be regulated by agreement with the franchise holder and the government and those fares set at an affordable level for the customer.

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: The Westminster Government has seen fit to have pensions calculated by the Consumer Price Index, whilst allowing fares increases to be calculated by the Retail Price Index + 6%. This is unjust. The fare calculations should be by the Consumer Price Index with NO percentage increases added on. The rail network has been labelled “A rich mans’ toy”. The rail network is not, at this time for the benefit of the people.

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: On the face of it there appears to be no strict formula for pricing tickets for peak and off peak fares. Pricing of peak and off peak should be calculated on a percentage basis throughout the Scotrail network. A suggestion could be that peak fares should be calculated as a 50% increase of the off peak fare. So an off peak return from Queen Street to Waverley is now £12.10 add 50% and the peak return would then be £18.05...not £21.00 as it is now. Note that it wouldn't matter what the cost of the off peak fares are; as if people have to travel during peak times with railcards etc to make connections with long haul trains, or other modes of transport, they will do so.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: So this consultation document is not about closing stations ? In section 7.11 the word 'reconfigure' is used. That means closures to me. The word 'reconfigure' means in essence to re-form; which means closures. You also make statements about the under use of stations, how do you translate that into 'no closures'. Historical Note: - During the research undertaken by Beeching prior to his decimation of the rail network in the 60s his 'researchers' assessed the line from Liverpool to Southport, and concluded that it should be closed for lack of passenger numbers. These researchers assessed the lines' capabilities on two afternoons during the winter time and mid afternoon, not taking into consideration schools and commuters. This line now is one of the more busier lines of the Merseyrail network, and had closure taken place would have heaped more cars onto an already strained road network in the area. There are lessons to be learned from this.

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: Non what so ever. Tesco rail is not an option. Safety must be taken into consideration. That is a big factor, and with the legacy of network Rail, and previous to that Railtrack safety on Britains' railways needs to be always scrutinised closely. There is no way that you can regulate or scrutinised third parties successfully, As they will always complain of victimisation and witch hunts. Can I use my Club Card points to get a day return to Glasgow ?

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: Section 7.9 refers to Table 5 illustrating the high number of stations currently serving 20 passengers or less. Where are they ? What time do these passengers travel ? What is the reason for the location of such stations ? When was this survey undertaken ? I refer back to question 25. The management of stations, at this time, is controlled by Network Rail, with the exception of Prestwick Airport. If you are proposing that the Franchisee takes over the maintenance of the stations, then the franchisee must also take over the responsibility for the whole of the network: track, buildings etc, making Network Rail redundant in Scotland. The question is academic. The railway should be run for the people, and the Franchisee should have no responsibility to pay out shareholders and Government, as profits made would be reinvested in the infrastructure.

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

Q27 comments: Reduce fares to an acceptable realistic level. Make ticketing easier. More frequency of services. Easier access for disabled and elderly on ALL stations. Have all stations manned so that people don't feel vulnerable. Make them brighter places. Keep waiting rooms open and heated; have toilet facilities clean and available. In other words give the passengers the facilities that they used to have before privatisation.

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

Q28 comments: So we're back to the 'Slum railway' again. If I am a fare paying passenger I want proper facilities as part of the service. I don't want to stand on a cold drafty station in a glass waiting shelter, with a gap around the bottom with a metal bench to sit on. I want a waiting room that is heated and toilet facilities, especially as I am elderly and a carer to my disabled wife. Stations should not be categorised. I pay an extortionate fare, even with a railcard, I am entitled to proper facilities.

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: Yes it must be possible for fare paying passengers to travel through to their destinations without changing trains, which is in itself an inconvenience, and as Network Rail policy stands, any train arriving late with onward connecting passengers, Network Rail not only fine the late arrival they also fine the train that is waiting for the onward connection. Result the Franchisee will always depart on time leaving the connecting passengers stranded in some instances. With Cross Border services the passenger is on one train until their ultimate destination, whether that service is late or otherwise. The specification of these services should be left to the Franchisee let by Westminster with close co-operation with Scotrail.

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: A service must be provided north of Edinburgh. However a recommendation to reduce the number of Aberdeen services down to one / two; also divide the Cross Country Services (say Penzance) one starting in Edinburgh covering Leeds, Sheffield, Derby etc to Birmingham, with the other starting in Glasgow covering Preston, Manchester, Birmingham: couple up at Birmingham and proceed as one train through the West Country to Penzance. It would mean a more streamlined service, and it would open out the service

to more customers. There is no advantage of having Edinburgh as a hub, as most of the Cross Border traffic already passes through that station. Creation of a hub would impact on an already overcrowded environment making it harder to police against terrorist activities.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: To be realistic there is only one other solution and that is that Scotrail be Nationalised and own all the infrastructure and there own Rolling Stock. The rail network of Scotland, as with the whole of the British Isles is run piecemeal, with so called 'experts' who couldn't identify one end of a train from the other, inputting here and there, and creaming off the top large salaries which should be put back into the system for the benefit of the passengers. That is the real solution to the problem re-nationalisation privatisation is costing the Westminster Government billions of pounds in lost revenue.

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

Q32 comments: Short hauled routes for example:- Glasgow – Whifflet; Glasgow - East Kilbride, toilet facilities are not necessary, and are in many cases used as an avenue for drug abuse, violence, sex and general vandalism...particularly on services in and around the inner city irrespective of close circuit television. All vehicles should be fitted with CCTV as a matter of course. All train crews should all be given the most up to date state of the art devices to call for assistance should that be required. All vehicles should have through and through gangway connections especially at their driving ends. The class170 is a perfect example for this, as when coupling two of these units together forces the Conductor to run from one set to another, when the train stops at a station. Not really safe for the Conductor or onboard ticketing crew. Suggest that, as electrification of the whole of the Scottish network is rather a long way off, Voyager units should be used on the Inverness and Aberdeen Services with full onboard catering facilities. Give us back the service that once existed, and create easier connectivity with trains for the far north: Kyle of Lochalsh; Wick; Thurso etc. All services should have at least one other member of staff on board, other than the Driver. One man operation has to cease.

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: There should be no priority investment for mobile phones or Wi-Fi . These are luxury items and not of a priority, unless it is for the benefit of the train crews and safety of the passengers. As a luxury for the passengers it is not necessary, as from what I've observed on the Glasgow Edinburgh service most business people put on their lap tops, and then end up in conversation with the person sitting next to them.

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: First Class accommodation should only be available on services of over one hour long. There is no real need for first class accommodation on the Edinburgh to Glasgow intercity route. Removal of such would free up extra standard class seats. First Class is not provided on the Glasgow to Oban, Fort William and Mallaig services; neither is there any on the Inverness to Kyle, Wick and Thurso. So why Glasgow to Edinburgh. I've only ever seen a handful of people, if that, utilising the first class facility.

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

Q35 comments: All trains in Scotland, with the exception of Cross Border services, and excursion traffic (SRPS Railtours) should have a blanket ban on the sale of alcohol, unless that service is doing an at seat meal. This ban should also include alcohol being brought on to trains for personal consumption during the journey.

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

Q36 comments: I refer to item 10.30. When things go wrong tell the passenger, and don't flannel....be high profile I. If there's a delay say so, and tell the passengers what the delay is. A late service must be met by station crew trained to sort out any issues of onward connections. Get Network Rail to agree to hold onward connections at no cost to the Franchisee, should an incoming service be late in arriving.

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: Transport Scotland should continue to specify sleeper services as they are of vital importance in generating tourist revenue, particularly in the summer months through railcards, European rail passes etc.

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: It would be an interesting exercise to experiment with a separate franchise for the sleeper services, only with the proviso that if this did not succeed then the sleeper services would be returned to the main Franchisee. This has to be written into the agreement.

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: “ It’s the most civilised, romantic, time effective, stress free, environmentally friendly way “ (www.seat61.com/CaledonianSleepers) to travel from London to the Highlands of Scotland. It is also a most effective way of generating tourist revenue for Scotland. The journey is hassle free, board your train at London, have a hot meal and a drink in the Lounge Car, go to bed or sleep in a recliner seat. The train does the rest.

Aberdeen, Fort William, Inverness. The latter two are the gateway to the Highlands. In particular the now famous “Deer Stalker” which in itself has become somewhat of an institution. I would suggest that a survey be done on the Aberdeen service as I’m not at all familiar with that route, and so cannot comment on the traffic. However I suggest that Oban should once again become a sleeper destination as Oban is the “Gateway to the Islands”. It would mean that passengers could catch early ferries to Mull, Tiree, Coll.

The MkIII sleepers are elderly and are needing replaced: suggest looking at the facilities offered by the “ Train Hotel” from Paris to Madrid. This service has ensuite toilet and shower facilities. At the moment the Caledonian Sleeper Service is excellent value for money. Advanced one way ticket from London to Glasgow/ Edinburgh starts at £56.70 for a berth or from £26.00 for a reclining seat. A hot meal in the Lounge Car is £5.00, and though tea and coffee in the morning are included in the ticket price a breakfast can be had for £4.00.

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: The only comment that I will make regarding environmental issues is that the whole of the Scotrail network has to be electrified, and the trackwork brought up to high running standards; that is most of it to 125mph effectiveness. Forget High Speed lines. Use what there is as there is plenty of scope for improvement.