

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

Glasgow City Council

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

Surname

Hughes

Forename

Anthony

2. Postal Address

City Chambers

George Square

Glasgow

Postcode G1

Phone

01412879361

Email

Anthony.hughes@glasgow.gov.uk

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

Glasgow City Council (GCC) welcomes this opportunity to respond to Transport Scotland's consultation document entitled Rail 2014 and to influence the shape of the new ScotRail franchise and the funding arrangements for Network Rail in Scotland. However, GCC considers it most unfortunate that this consultation on generalised options for the future franchise and funding arrangements has coincided with Network Rail's consultation on very definite proposals for the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Programme (EGIP).

While concerns over the references to potential station closures in the Rail 2014 Consultation Document have been dismissed as only speculative, the EGIP proposals include specific changes to passenger rail services which are almost certain to result in station closures, unless amended. The confusion has been compounded by Transport Scotland's publication of Rail 2014 Consultation Factsheet 1, which lists several of the stations affected by the EGIP proposals as being considered for potential closure.

As a consequence, Glasgow City Council is now calling on the Scottish Government to request that Transport Scotland withdraw from the Rail 2014 Consultation any reference to closure of any rail station. Notwithstanding this request, Glasgow City Council submits the following response to Transport Scotland's Rail 2014 Consultation Document and trusts that it will receive due consideration.

Before responding to the 40 questions listed in the Rail 2014 Consultation document, the Council wishes to make the following general points.

1. Both the Consultation Document itself and the Stakeholder events at which it was launched in November 2011 concentrate on affordability and minimising the cost of the franchise to the Scottish Government rather than on maximising rail's contribution to Scotland's economic growth and carbon reduction targets. While agreeing that achieving value-for-money must be a prime objective of any franchising exercise, too narrow a focus on this objective will risk the loss of major opportunities presented by the rail network and its services for delivering the Scottish Government's Purpose of creating a more successful country through increasing sustainable economic growth.
2. Glasgow has an extensive network of operational rail lines and others, currently disused, which could be brought back into service at a fraction of the cost and administrative effort entailed in building new infrastructure from scratch. Increasing the number and frequency of passenger services operating throughout the city and beyond and improving access to these services at new and improved stations would assist both Glasgow's re-generation and its aim to become one of Europe's most sustainable cities.
3. Despite several references in the consultation document to prioritising passenger interests, it appears in general more concerned with the interests of Network Rail and the service providers. This is particularly

the case as regards the locations of stations. It will rarely be in the interests of any passengers to close a station, which can only reduce access to the railway network. On the other hand, running limited-stop services reduces journey times for longer distance passengers, while retaining access to the network at intermediate stations. While a network with fewer stations may reduce rail operating costs, additional costs will be incurred by the Scottish Government elsewhere as a result. These are likely to include the cost of additional road infrastructure and maintenance and increased costs from road congestion, carbon emissions and in dealing with the adverse effects on health of less active travel and increased air pollution.

4. Recent work undertaken by Passenger focus for Network Rail¹ has found that passengers value direct services with no change of vehicle or transport mode more highly than any other transport service criterion. It is not difficult to see, on this basis, why travel by private car is by far the most popular mode for those with access to it. If the train is to compete, it must, wherever possible, seek to provide the same seamless journey as is provided by a private car. Increasing the distance between stations on the local rail network will increase the number of journeys which require a change of mode (bus/train) when undertaken by public transport. This is likely to increase, rather than reduce, the use of private cars.
5. Obviously, the limited density of rail routes, in comparison to roads, significantly reduces the number of instances in which a journey by train can match the convenience of one by car. Consequently, it is accepted that, for much of Scotland, rail will only be competitive for inter-urban journeys. However, this is not the case in Glasgow where, in many parts of the city, the density of the rail network is sufficient to enable door-to-door journeys to be undertaken by rail with a short walk at each end.
6. Rather than contemplating the closure of stations less than one mile apart, consideration should be given to providing additional stations on lines through densely populated parts of Glasgow, such that as many people as possible live or work within 500 metres of a station. This would increase rail patronage not only on local services but also on the inter-urban services to which these local services connect, thereby reducing the cost to Government of providing these inter-urban rail services. This would, in turn, reduce the use of private cars for inter-urban journeys, cutting trunk road congestion and emissions and improving Scotland's economic efficiency and sustainability.
7. To summarise the above, Glasgow City Council considers that the main aim of the new ScotRail franchise and funding arrangements for Network Rail in Scotland should be to maximise the contribution of passenger rail services to Scotland's sustainable economic growth and social well-being rather than to minimise the cost of the network and services to the Scottish Government.

Consultation Questions

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: The potential merits of offering the ScotRail franchise as a dual focus franchise are considered to be:

- That a single franchisee would be able to integrate all services on the network as regards timetabling and stock movement, while being paid on different bases for different services;
- It would be possible to guarantee the provision of socially necessary services and, at the same time, allow commercial considerations to determine the level of service provision on well-patronised routes.

However, there are drawbacks to this approach and the dual focus franchise specification would require to be very carefully constructed to avoid the situation that has arisen with de-regulated and tendered bus services, whereby operators can withdraw a service considered unprofitable, leaving it to be provided as socially necessary, at public expense.

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

Q2 comments: The optimum length of contract will vary according to the specification. A contract under which a significant number of services is provided on a commercial basis should be of sufficient length to encourage investment in the provision of these services. Conversely, a contract under which the majority of services are specified as socially necessary would be best with a short term to facilitate frequent market testing. Seven years is suggested as the minimum length appropriate and fifteen years the maximum.

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

Q3 comments: The extent to which risk is transferred to the franchisee will obviously be reflected in the tendered price. Since a stated aim is to minimise costs to the taxpayer, risks for the franchisee should be minimised. The franchise should therefore include arrangements for residual value payments to be made to the franchisee to encourage capital investment during the term of the franchise.

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

Q4 comments: For services provided on a commercial basis, profits should be retained by the franchisee. This should incentivise the franchisee to increase patronage and service provision. For subsidised services a profit-sharing

arrangement should apply proportionate to the relative costs to the franchisee and taxpayer of providing the service.

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

Q5 comments: To facilitate efficient running of the rail network, it would be preferable to encourage the franchisee to enter into partnership arrangements, with third parties providing revenue support for additional train services rather than have the third party directly provide those services. There would appear to be potential for such funding to be made available over a three to four year period (perhaps decreasing year on year) with a view to the service, once established, being incorporated into the main franchise. This would be similar to the former Bus Route Development Grant funding arrangements.

Third parties could also be involved on an open-ended basis in the provision of stations and other facilities, which did not directly involve the operation of rolling stock. There would appear to be considerable scope for local communities (and in some cases local authorities) to directly fund the provision and maintenance of stations. Such involvement could engender local ownership of the facility, perhaps reducing the potential for anti-social activity and vandalism. Local businesses could be encouraged to sponsor station provision and maintenance with opportunities for advertising and merchandising. This could lead to enhanced facilities on local stations such as heated waiting areas, catering and toilets.

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

Q6 comments: It is agreed that an output-based approach should focus the franchisee's attention on delivering improvements that matter to the customer. However, it is noted that journey time does not feature in the list of passengers' priorities (paragraph 2.23) compiled by Passenger Focus. Consequently, it is suggested these priorities are specified as required outcomes rather than rail service journey times. While it is agreed that relative door-to-door journey times by competing modes are a factor in increasing rail patronage, the scope for reducing the rail journey time over a particular route is unlikely to be sufficient to secure any modal shift. Increased punctuality and reliability is considered more likely to result in significant modal shift to rail. The franchisee should therefore be incentivised to provide a timetable with sufficient spare track capacity to deliver reliable and punctual services.

Since the franchise is primarily intended to deliver a rail service which serves the whole of Scotland, it is suggested that the franchisee is also incentivised to provide direct long distance services between as many pairs of stations on the Scottish network as possible. This would increase public confidence in the rail network's ability to provide a realistic alternative to car travel across Scotland and further increase modal shift to rail. For example, use of the

former City Union Line in Glasgow by passenger services would facilitate the provision of through trains from, say, Stranraer to Aberdeen.

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

Q7 comments: Since the costs of any performance bond would simply be an addition to the cost of the franchise, there would appear to be nothing to be gained by requiring one to be provided by the franchisee. If, as stated in response to question 3, risks transferred to the franchisee are to be minimised, it would appear appropriate for Transport Scotland to self-insure against any performance failure.

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

Q8 comments: Staged payments to the franchisee should be dependent on the extent to which commitments are fulfilled. The ultimate sanction should be early termination of the franchise.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: If the franchise agreement is appropriately drafted, good performance should automatically be incentivised through increased profit to the franchisee (e.g. from increased patronage or reduced operating costs). Therefore, specific clauses should be required only to penalise poor performance.

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: If it is decided to split the franchise into commercial and social railway sections, different performance regimes will apply for each. Otherwise, it would appear appropriate to apply a single performance regime consistently across all routes.

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

Q11 comments: By penalising shortcomings of most concern to passengers. These include late running, lack of seating, poorly appointed rolling stock and stations and non-provision of advertised services/facilities.

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

Q12 comments: As stated in response to Question 6, performance in terms of reliability and punctuality is considered to be of greater importance than journey time. The Passenger Focus research cited in paragraph 4.7 as the basis for placing a particular emphasis on reducing journey times relates not to the time taken to travel on the train but to the total time taken for a door-to-door journey. It is on this basis that car journeys are usually shorter than those by rail. It follows that car drivers will be attracted to use rail services much more by reducing the time it takes to travel to and from the station at each end of the rail journey than by reducing the time spent on the train. This will be most readily achieved by increasing the number of stations on the network such that more people can access the rail network with a shorter trip from both their origin and final destination. Performance in terms of the factors of concern to rail users (see paragraph 2.23) should therefore take priority over rail journey times.

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: SQUIRE is required and should cover all aspects of service delivery for which it is possible to penalise the provider for poor performance.

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

Q14 comments: Greater involvement of Passenger Focus and more direct market surveys of both rail users and those opting not to travel by train.

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: The limit on permitted standing time should be different for long distance services from that applying to commuter and local services. For the latter, a standing time of 20 minutes could be considered tolerable whereas, on long distance services, there should be no standing at all.

Allowing for standing beyond 10 minutes on local commuter services would facilitate the provision of station stops within the urban area, where it is currently considered uneconomical to provide rolling stock which is only required for a short length of the route. For example, the journey from Stepps to Glasgow Queen Street currently takes 15 minutes. If standing for up to 20 minutes were permissible, a station stop at Robroyston could be added without the need for an additional coach.

However, to ensure that longer distance passengers are not deprived of a seat for any part of a journey, it would be prudent to apply the relaxed 20

minute standing time restriction to services carrying only short-distance commuters. This may require additional turn-back provision to separate these services from those also carrying longer distance passengers.

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: The aim should be to increase, rather than reduce, the number of direct long distance services, while at the same time providing increased opportunities for change of mode to access destinations not served directly by the railway network. Most long distance services operate at relatively low frequencies, entailing a significant wait at each interchange station for a connecting service. Such interchanges and their additions to end-to-end journey-times reduce the attractiveness of rail as an alternative to car travel and should be minimised. For local services, operating at high frequencies and offering turn-up-and-go services, interchange is more acceptable and additional opportunities for such interchange would encourage greater use of rail services for local travel.

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: Contrary to the view expressed in paragraph 5.11, it is not agreed that journey times are more important on commuter services than on tourist routes. It is running to time (reliability) that is most important to passengers be they commuters or tourists. This includes arrival and departure times at intermediate stations, where variations from published timetables give the impression of poor performance and can increase passenger stress levels and anxiety. A reduced emphasis on rail journey times for commuter services would allow additional station stops en route improving local access to network, particularly in urban areas, thereby increasing patronage and maximising the use of sustainable rail transport in preference to private cars.

On the other hand, a case could be made for specifying a minimum service frequency of fifteen minutes for commuter services. This is generally accepted as providing a turn-up-and-go service for heavy rail, most passengers being prepared to wait up to fifteen minutes for a train. For longer distance services (inter-urban and rural), there should be a preference for constant frequency services, preferably departing at constant clock-face times. The actual frequency should not be stipulated by the Government but should be determined by passenger demand on the basis that a seat is available for the entire length of the journey for every passenger.

There would also be merit in specifying, within the franchise, the origins and destinations between which at least one direct service per day would operate in each direction. This will encourage passengers to see rail as an alternative

to car travel for travel between most origins and destinations with rail stations.

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

Q18 comments: The specification should be sufficiently light-touch to permit innovation and route/service development but must also ensure that the Government's objectives (ideally those summarised in paragraph 7 of the comments prefacing this response) are realised. The aspects of service provision listed in response to Question 17 above should certainly be specified and there may also be merit in specifying the latest and earliest departure times permitted for first and last trains respectively each day.

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

Q19 comments: The contract should incentivise the franchisee to be innovative in the provision of services by rewarding the franchisee for the operation of services additional to those specified in the contract, wherever there is potential to enhance the ability of the rail network to offer a convenient and attractive alternative to car travel. This should include the operation of late night trains and the operation of passenger services over connecting lines and current freight-only routes. The franchisee could also be incentivised to procure infrastructural enhancements to the rail network where these would facilitate additional rail services over new routes. For example provision of the Garngad Chord would enable services on the Cumbernauld line to directly access Queen Street low level station or continue via the former City Union Line to stations south of the River Clyde and construction of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link would provide passengers arriving at Glasgow Airport with direct access to Scotland's rail network.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: A principal aim of any fares policy should be to minimise the cost of rail service provision to the taxpayer. However, fares should be set at a level which compares favourably with the marginal (fuel) cost of using a private car as a single occupant. There is certainly a role for differential fares to maximise the efficiency of rail operations by encouraging travel at times when the network is least congested. Smart season ticketing should assist by deducting a lower fare from the smart-card when travelling off-peak.

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: Wherever possible fares should be unregulated but the

favourable comparison to motoring costs (see previous comment) should take precedence. This may require the regulation of suburban and rural fares, where these would otherwise exceed car journey fuel costs. It is suggested that a fixed cost per mile be applied across all off-peak fares. This would allow higher fares to be levied during peak periods, as required to spread demand, without requiring that they be levied at a uniform rate per mile across the network.

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 fixed rate per mile for off-peak fares would effectively set the taxpayer subsidy on those routes where fare-income was insufficient to cover the cost of service provision. Fares should be increased in line with inflation and at a rate above this in line with rises in comparative fuel costs for motorists. Higher increases should not be applied to Sections of the network that have recently been enhanced.

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: The differential should be whatever is necessary to balance demand to supply during peak periods. For travel between Glasgow and Edinburgh where there are now four routes available, the higher fares payable for peak period travel should be different for each route to balance demand across the available capacity.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Reference is made in paragraph 7.10 of the consultation document to 11 stations in the Glasgow commuter area being within 1 mile of another station and a suggested review of station locations. Close station location is a requirement in densely developed urban areas and is considered to be a strength, not a weakness, of the rail network, which should be extended to other parts of Glasgow where densities are similar. If the aim, as it should be, is to enhance the role of rail in the provision of sustainable public transport in Scotland, there should be a definite presumption against the closure of any existing rail station and definitely no consideration of closure where station patronage is increasing. The only circumstances in which closure might be considered is in conjunction with the regeneration of an area where it is considered that an existing station should be relocated to fit in with development proposals for the area as a whole.

The City of Glasgow suffers from the having the highest proportion of urban vacant and derelict land of any local authority in Scotland. Naturally this land is the focus of area-based and thematic regeneration initiatives with an emphasis on delivering physical development including housing, business and industry and a variety of mixed uses (Clyde Gateway and Glasgow Canal Regeneration are examples of these). Vacant land is concentrated in the north of the City, the east end, and along the River Clyde, in areas that were formerly densely populated. It is in these areas that stations within a mile of each other tend to occur and these are the very areas that the Council is seeking to re-populate.

For example, at Maryhill, on the North Glasgow Line, a masterplan for up to 700 homes and associated uses was approved in December 2007 and, while the economic downturn has slowed the rate of delivery, progress is being made through partnership working and the support of the Scottish Government in designating the area one of a number of Transformational Regeneration Areas city-wide. On the same rail line, Possilpark and Gilshochill are similarly the focus of regeneration and re-population.

In the south of the City, at Nitshill, on the South Western Line, the Council is working in partnership with the private sector and other partners to bring nine vacant sites into use, predominantly as housing. There are also plans to upgrade South Nitshill Industrial Estate, immediately adjacent to Nitshill station, and currently a low grade, low density facility, to a business park, taking advantage of proximity of the railway station to encourage higher density development.

The Scottish Government's Regeneration Strategy, issued at the end of 2011, promotes heavily the concept of area-based regeneration and localism and Glasgow's efforts in this direction must not be undermined by wider strategic transport decisions that fail to take account of the wider regeneration context. Glasgow's dense urban rail network should be seen as an opportunity to assist its regeneration as one of Europe's most sustainable cities, with rail services providing frequent, fast, sustainable public transport. Any suggestion (as made at the Rail 2014 presentation) that all public transport services within 2 or 3 miles of the city centre should be provided by buses should be rejected absolutely.

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: The potential merits are the delivery of stations and/or rail services at no additional cost to the taxpayer. The main issue which could arise is additional costs to the franchisee of operating the new station or service. Any such problems could be resolved by payment through the franchise for each additional passenger mile of service provision above that originally specified. This would at the same time incentivise expansion rather than contraction of the rail network and its services.

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: There is no reason to have a single organisation responsible for the management and maintenance of all stations. See responses to questions 3 and 5 above.

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

Q27 comments: By encouraging local sponsorship of the station and its facilities and permitting communities willing to fund the establishment of additional stations to do so.

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

Q28 comments: There should be no need to categorise stations. The aim should be ultimately to provide a full range of facilities at all stations.

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: Until such time as ScotRail's rolling stock is of comparable quality in terms of passenger comfort as that operating on cross-border services, these services should continue as far northwards as possible. Reference is again made to Passenger Focus's findings as regards the public's preference for through journeys.¹ Rather than curtail opportunities for English-based cross-border service to continue into Scotland, the new franchisee could be encouraged to continue more ScotRail services into England.

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: Terminating cross-border services at Edinburgh Waverley would provide no opportunities for Scottish connections additional to those already existing. Termination would, however, significantly inconvenience those with destinations beyond Edinburgh Waverley, including those destined for Glasgow Central. The inability of WCML services to continue to towns and cities north of Glasgow has long been a cause of frustration. There is no reason to create a similar situation for ECML services beyond Edinburgh.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: The continuing programme of rail electrification in both Scotland and England should reduce the costs of procuring upgraded diesel powered rolling stock. There would appear to be little alternative to procuring additional electrically powered rolling stock other than the purchase or lease from new. It is suggested that the costs of procuring such stock can best be minimised by ordering a large quantity will phased call-off and by specifying units of a type that are already in production and proven operation.

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

Q32 comments: Rolling stock should be tailored to the route and journey purpose to a greater extent than is presently the case in Scotland. Longer distance services should utilise rolling stock giving comparable passenger comfort to that used on the EC and WC main lines. Specifically, seating should not be cramped and adequate space should be provided for luggage, including cycles, where appropriate. Meantime, commuter services should utilise rolling stock with purpose built standing areas, rather than having passengers standing in the narrow aisle between the seats.

All trains should have on-board toilets, while catering should be provided on all trains other than local commuter services. On rural services and inter-urban services with low passenger volumes, catering could be provided from machines rather than a trolley or shop.

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: The priority should be to provide wi-fi on all services longer than 30 minutes duration. This increases potential productivity for business travellers without inconveniencing other passengers in the way that mobile phone calls do. While not suggesting that anything is done to prevent mobile phone use on trains when reception is available, it is not considered a priority in comparison to the provision of wi-fi, which can also be accessed by most smartphones.

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: Sufficient First Class accommodation should be provided to

cater for all those willing to pay more to use it. Such use can only increase the profitability of rail service provision. Additional standard class seating, if required, should be provided by increasing train lengths or service frequency – not by reducing the space between seats or removing first class seating.

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

Q35 comments: The incidence and nature of problems arising from the consumption of alcohol on trains should be the major consideration. It is likely that in most cases alcohol will have been consumed prior to the train being boarded and that much of the alcohol consumed will have been carried on by passengers. Consideration should perhaps be given to discouraging the consumption of alcohol not bought on the train rather than banning all on-board sales and consumption of alcohol.

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

Q36 comments: Primarily by extending to as many stations and trains as possible electronic displays of information and loudspeaker announcements. Information regarding disruption to services is particularly appreciated by passengers and consideration could be given to continuous in-train displays of running ahead of or behind schedule. Developments in telephony and internet services should soon enable anyone with a mobile phone or computer to have real time data on all rail services.

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: Sleeper services should continue to be specified though not necessarily precisely as at present.

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: There may be a case for separately contracting the sleeper services but these should not be an optional part of the ScotRail franchise.

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: The provision of more early and late trains would not remove the desirability of sleeper services which enable travel overnight while sleeping, such that no business time is lost travelling. Oban would not provide better connectivity than Fort William but a good connection to Oban should be provided for those wishing to use the sleeper service. There may be merit in combining the Lowland and Highland services into a single train running southwards from Carstairs but the present high patronage levels of the existing services suggests that this may not be feasible. Under no circumstances should the Lowland sleeper service operate only from Edinburgh.

The sleeper services should be upgraded to provide single standard class berths and en-suite facilities for first class passengers. Provided that the fare charged for use of these upgraded first class facilities remains comparable with the combined cost of air/rail travel and an overnight stay in a hotel, passengers are likely to pay more for these facilities, particularly if the ride quality can be improved. As soon as a direct rail link is available between the WCML and HS1, consideration should be given to running sleeper services between Scotland and Europe. By timing such services to use the first path through the Channel Tunnel each day, it would be possible to arrive in Paris or Brussels before 9 am, while leaving Edinburgh or Glasgow only slightly earlier than at present.

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 principal environmental KPI should be an ongoing reduction in the carbon emitted per passenger carried. This should incentivise both additional patronage (improving load factors) and fuel efficiency.

¹ Future priorities for the West Coast Main Line: released capacity from a potential high speed line; Passenger Focus, January 2012.