

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

KINGUSSIE & VICINITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

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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:

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

Q2 comments:

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: **More is often gained by the use of incentives than penalties.**

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: **Aligned with routes or service groups.**

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:

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: **A possible reduction in the number of direct services would need to be very carefully thought out, as although this may work well in urban areas which have a plentiful supply of buses and trains, it could be disastrous in rural areas where bus services are few and far between, and cannot always be relied upon.**

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: **These would be better determined by the franchisee on the basis of customer demand. An improvement in the provision of rural commuter services would be welcomed.**

Any possible reduction in the number of direct services would need to be very carefully thought out as although this may work well in urban areas which have a plentiful supply of buses and trains, it could be disastrous in rural areas where bus services are not always reliable and can be few and far between. An improvement in rural commuter services would also be welcomed.

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: **On the basis that rural routes are probably less profitable due to their smaller populations, fares should be regulated by the government in order to ensure that they remain affordable.**

The ticket pricing anomaly (where it is cheaper to purchase a ticket from

Aviemore to Edinburgh or Glasgow rather than from Kingussie, when Aviemore is 11 miles further north) needs to be addressed. Besides being patently unfair, it skews the figure for ticket sales from Kingussie owing to passengers booking their journeys from Aviemore but actually picking the train up in Kingussie.

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: **Lack of usage. However, closure should not be considered without some form of public consultation.**

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 criteria for this should surely be: “Are they capable of efficiently providing services within their own remit?”**

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:

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

Q27 comments: **Engage with them and encourage a “hands on” approach. “Friends” groups could make brighter up a station with planters etc. (We are assuming that this is what you mean by local communities being encouraged to support their stations?)**

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

Q28 comments: **At the very least, all stations should have well maintained public lavatory 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: **Cross border services should continue to travel north of Edinburgh as they are of vital importance to highland communities (and life as we know it does not cease north of Edinburgh!). This is vital for the local economy and of benefit to passengers as it reduces the amount of changes they have to make during a journey, reducing their travelling time.**

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: **Well maintained public lavatories should be available on all trains. Those on rural or longer distance routes should have a trolley service at the very least, and a buffet car when possible. There should also be sufficient space for luggage storage.**

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: **On all routes where ever possible, but at the very least, on long distance and urban services.**

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: **By allowing the Franchisee the flexibility of removing first class accommodation on services where they know there are likely to be times of high passenger demand and where demand for first class services is minimal. For example on seasonal services during Hogmanay, when passenger demand is likely to be increased as a result of people returning the home having spent their holiday in Scotland. It is unacceptable for customers to have to mountaineer over piles of luggage in order to get onto a train, only to find that they then have to spend the majority of their journey standing up due to the lack of passenger accommodation and insufficient luggage storage provision.**

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

Q35 comments: **How problematic is it and whether it only relates to specific routes. Also the statistics relating to alcohol induced offences occurring on trains. Alcohol could be banned on specific routes where it is deemed to be a problem.**

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

Q36 comments: **By making sure that Station Staff and train guards receive sufficient training. People are generally far more amenable if they are kept fully informed and updated when there are problems.**

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 are a vital lifeline for highland communities and to dispense with them would have serious implications for the local economy and well being of such communities.**

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: **However it is administered, this service should not be classed as an "option". It is far too important to be classed as such.**

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: **Convenience. More early & late trains would give added flexibility to the service which would be likely to attract more passengers. A major factor would be to make sure that it is affordable when compared with other modes of transport. It would not be unreasonable to make an increased charge for en-suite facilities, although ideally these would come as standard. Any proposed increase should not be so severe as to render the service unaffordable.**

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:

Final Comments:

Kingussie & Vicinity Community Council value the Caledonian Sleeper Service and recognise that its continuance is of vital importance to both our economy and to the wellbeing of our community and the Highlands generally. It is important that this service continues to stop at Kingussie offering as it does, a convenient way to travel to London for the people living in Kingussie and its surrounding area. We would welcome an upgrade to the existing rolling stock, and are certain that en-suite facilities would attract far more customers. We are pleased that the non-sleeper Carriage has been made available for the use of local commuters travelling to Inverness, and hope that this will continue.

Whoever is successful in securing this franchise, we hope that they are able to provide a clean, efficient, affordable modern rail service of which we can all be proud.

