Respondent Information Form and Questions

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

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

John Pentland MSP

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

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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:

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:

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:

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:

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:

I wish to take particular issue with the suggestion that Airbles station be considered for closure.

I am aware that the Minister has said that there are "no plans to close stations", and that the answer to S4W-04884 states:

> "There is no list of stations in the Rail 2014 Consultation document. The Fact Sheet was provided during the consultation period at the request of stakeholders. The pairs of stations listed in Rail 2014 Consultation – FACT SHEET – 1, on the Transport Scotland website, are those with footfall of less than 120,000 at one or more of the stations in the pairing, as stated in the request from stakeholders and not as part of any Transport Scotland plan or option, based on data from the Office of Rail Regulation's Station Usage report (2009-10) and Google maps.

Despite such Ministerial disclaimers that the 11 stations are not mentioned in the consultation document, and that they are not "part of any Transport Scotland plan or option", it is the case that the consultation document referred to 11 stations within a mile of another station, in para 7.10:

> 7.10 There are also a number of stations on the rail network that are located in close proximity to one another. In the Glasgow commuter area, there are 11 stations located less than one mile from another rail station offering similar services. The lease costs associated with these 11 stations total £208,000.

The naming of those stations in the fact sheet cannot therefore be considered as somehow separate from the consultation.

The parliamentary question was tabled because there are more than 11 such stations, as the written answer illustrates (albeit incompletely – at least three stations were omitted from this list). What was not made clear in the consultation or the fact sheet, but was revealed in the written answer, was that there was an additional criteria for the 11 stations in question, namely that they had an annual footfall of less than 120,000. I believe that this should have been made clear in the consultation document when referring to the 11 stations, as indeed should the method by which proximity had been estimated.

Especially now that they have been clarified, these criteria seem somewhat arbitrary, and no justification is given for the choice of distance or footfall, or as opposed to other possible criteria such as public transport integration,

parking availability, trends in footfall, or other social, economic and environmental factors.

With regard to such factors, I believe that Airbles station has great value:

- Among the 345 Scottish stations listed in passenger statistics, Airbles is just below the median level for footfall, with well over 100,000 passengers in each of the last two years for which figures are available.

- Motherwell is the one of the busiest stations on the network, with about 1.2 million annual footfall. Airbles take some of the pressure off this busy station, and provides alternative parking and public transport links. This is particularly important for commuters, using Airbles as an alternative at peak travel times.

- Airbles is well placed for those travelling to and from the Motherwell FC ground. Use of this stations avoids large numbers of fans having to make their way through the town centre.

- The closure of Airbles would have cause problems for many users, for example, through additional travel time and distances creating difficulties for parents and carers.

- Airbles is a relatively new station, opened in 1989. It was justified then, and the factors that justified its construction are stronger than ever.

I also question the assumption of savings from closure of the 11 stations. You quote the lease costs of the 11 stations, but this will be offset by a number of other costs, to the network and to the public, that are not identified. What research has been done to ascertain the extent to which passengers would transfer to alternatives? In addition to fares lost, what account has been taken of the externalities of increased car and road usage, such as congestion and carbon emissions?

When we consider the benefits of public transport, we should not just look, as Beeching did, at the bottom line of the balance sheet for the service in question. We must also consider the wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

We should also not just look at where we are now but at where we want to be — we want increased use of public transport — and how to get there. Surely the best way to get there is not by closing stations – we must learn the lessons of the past and look to the future.

I know that in my constituency, Motherwell and Wishaw, great importance is attached to Airbles station. I have received a petition with hundreds of signatures, in print form and online, asking for its retention. I know that some will also have responded to this consultation, but the depth of support should also be noted when considering the responses.

In summary, I consider that closing stations is a retrograde step when we wish to expand public transport, and that all aspects of the long term value of stations should be taken into account, not just the potential short-term savings for the network.

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:

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:

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: