

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

Pitlochry and Moulin Community Council

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

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation
Please tick as appropriate

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

Please tick as appropriate X 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 X 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

X 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: The general approach of a dual focus franchise is supported. However the distinction between economic and social services is not clear. Where does the support for services with a heavy tourist use lie, such as all services north of Perth?

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

Q2 comments: no comment

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

Q3 comments: no comment

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

Q4 comments: no comment

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

Q5 comments: no comment

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

Q6 comments: no comment

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

Q7 comments: no comment

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

Q8 comments: no comment

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: The franchise is let under the assumption of good performance and only the penalty aspect should remain.

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: Different routes operate under different conditions and with a different mix of end-to-end and interchanging passengers. Core routes such as the highland line should be identifiable.

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

Q11 comments: By maintaining the “basket” of issues related to different elements of a journey including train cleanliness and toilet operation.

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

Q12 comments: For services on the Highland line reliability is the core issue.

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: yes and it should cover all aspects of all stations

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

Q14 comments: Station quality needs additional factors based on ability to be used freely by people with mobility difficulties.

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: Our principal interest is the Highland line and connections. Visitors to Pitlochry are generally engaged on a longer than average journey and standing should not be a component of this. Rail congestion on any journey leg is a disincentive to visitors. This question also ignores the large numbers of elderly persons or those with a mobility difficulty for whom a journey that involves standing is not possible.

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: Pitlochry is a major tourist destination for Scotland and the presence of a direct rail connection to England is a huge benefit and of crucial importance to the town. We are completely opposed to the idea that travel to and from England should be made more difficult for both tourists and visitors simply to establish a monopolistic operation. The consultation has no discussion as to the treatment of subsidies between the UK government for the ECML franchise and the Scottish Government for Scotrail. If the Inverness service is part of the former franchise then it is subsidy –free and it seems perverse to discard it to simply reduce the Scotrail subsidy. A consultation intended to be customer driven should not explore this issue.

The question has no regard to mobility difficulties. A person with mobility issues (including the elderly) may be discouraged from travel altogether if interchange is involved. This is particularly an issue at stations such as Edinburgh Waverley or Haymarket where queues form for lifts and delays of up to half an hour have been experienced.

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: On a rural lifeline service with no recognisable peak/offpeak split for much of the year government should continue to specify frequencies and core journey times. In the central belt more latitude should be given to operators. Government should restrict the ability of operators to impose interchange. This creates difficulties for passengers with mobility difficulties or large amounts of luggage and would be a disincentive to rail-based tourism.

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

Q18 comments: Targeted specification as above.

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: To cover a fixed proportion of train operating costs across Scotland and maintain basic affordable accessibility on life-line routes.

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: Fares in more rural areas should be regulated and a greater element of commercial discretion be available in commuter dominated routes.

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: Fares should be maintained at a roughly constant proportion of operating costs within each franchise agreement period. Any increases should recognise RPI. There should be no link to improvement. A doubling of the line from Perth to Inverness would attract increased costs while the parallel dualling of the A9 would reduce costs from mode competitors. Enhancement payments do not apply on the competing road network and should not be entertained here.

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 concept of "peak" is less applicable north of Perth and differences should be minimised.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: The consultation indicates that this is an issue in the central belt. There is no scope for station closures on the Highland line.

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: Councils have scope for funding stations. In Highland Perthshire it is unlikely that either the Council or a local business could find the start-up funding for a service. This should remain a government responsibility.

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: The franchisee should operate all stations outwith the main line terminals. Maintenance should be linked with track maintenance.

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

Q27 comments: By offering easy access to vacant space. In Highland Perthshire by allowing local communities to advertise their presence at stations and customise station signage and by making it easier for small businesses to take vacant space.

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

Q28 comments: Stations do not easily fall into single categories. For example Pitlochry serves long distance services, is an important destination and serves an important and growing tourist market. The station serves as railhead for a very large area. Stations of this type require parking, staffing through the working day and shelter, toilets and washrooms at all train times.

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 Cross border services should continue to operate beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow and there seems no cogent reason to cease. Travellers, especially those less mobile or tourists, value the opportunity to travel without an interchange penalty. Scotrail services do not offer this facility and there is no discussion of this element. Drafters of this section should attempt to change platforms at Waverley where Scotrail to long distance involves stairs or a long queue for a lift. Long distance services also offer a far better luggage capability than the local services recognising the nature of travel. Tourism is especially important for Pitlochry and significant numbers access Pitlochry via the cross-border trains and this is an important promotional point especially given the amount of luggage space on alternative trains. Highland Perthshire residents also use the services for cross-border trips. The consultation suggests benefits for Scotrail if the services are removed suggesting that there would be no replacement local train to Edinburgh on withdrawal. The difficulties of interchange at the Edinburgh stations are mentioned in respect of Q16.

Who specifies the service in terms of bureaucratic control is less important than their existence.

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: See above. No benefits and many disbenefits, especially for those with mobility issues. This consultation is seriously flawed in its lack of consideration of issues for the increasing proportion of the population with mobility difficulties..

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: No comment

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

Q32 comments: We agree with the view of Passenger focus, ie

- the ability to get a seat
- comfort of seating
- ease and safety of boarding and alighting from the train
- safety in standing areas
- provision of adequate luggage space
- the on-board temperature
- the provision of on-board information and announcements
- general cleanliness

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 longer distance trains and in areas with poor reception such as on the Highland Line

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: The present mix seems appropriate

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

Q35 comments: This should be selective and risk-based

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

Q36 comments: on-train updates as to arrival time

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: The sleeper service is an important part of the Franchise and should be specified. It is an important link where air services are not available and is a component of the Highland tourist economy.

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 should be contracted as part of the franchise to ensure compatibility.

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 sleeper is an important link for overnight trips where air services are not readily available and are very heavily used on the Highland line. Inverness should remain as a destination with intermediate stops.

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: Rail should be an inherently "greener" mode. Energy use and carbon footprint should be indicators