

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 Station Liaison Group

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

Surname

Howie

Forename

Kate

2. Postal Address

Tulloch of Pitnacree

Pitlochry

PH9 0LW

01887 840378

katehowie@yahoo.co.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

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 No comment

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

Q2 No comment

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

Q3 No comment

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

Q4 No comment

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

Q5 No comment

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

Q6 No comment

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

Q7 Normal practice should apply

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

Q8 No comment

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 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 One system for the whole of Scotland

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

Q11 The train companies know the issues and to help overcome these issues there should be more effective monitoring - regular on-board monitoring by key staff and periodic inspection by senior staff trained for the purpose.

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

Q12 Common sense should prevail when trains are late and therefore some stations are missed just to achieve correct time at final destination. In this area 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 Emphatically YES ! For example refurbishment of Victorian bridges at stations and keeping the line side free of litter

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

Q14 More locally devolved passenger focus. Give station staff more training in dealing with the public

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 We do not think the 10 minutes should be increased

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 The loss of direct trains from London would impact very badly on this major tourist destination and in fact these should be increased

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 Government should set a challenge to the franchisee to do better, but restrict the ability of the operators to impose interchange as this causes difficulties with heavy luggage and disability

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

Q18 Targeted specification to protect the customer whilst still encouraging the franchisee

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

Q19 No comment

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 It should maximise and encourage usage and promote equity. The purpose is to collect revenue to support the network. To ensure regular users get value for money while at the same time broadening appeal to the general public.

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 A complex area. Should free travel for the over 70s be considered ?
No-one wants empty trains so there may be need to incentives

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 The whole fares matrix needs to be overhauled – it is illogical, complicated and unfair. Perhaps when this is done there could even be reductions of fares

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 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 There should be no closures of stations

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 Locality issues should be considered, but in a rural area unlikely

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 Yes only one organisation should be responsible and then hopefully they would take a pride in the station, line and its’ environ.

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

Q27 We are already nationally known for our successful bookshop at the station selling second hand books, six days a week, run totally by volunteers and raising annually over £10K a year for charity. Also our Gold Award Pitlochry in Bloom Committee plant the station beds and hanging baskets each year as well as having raised funds for a piece of iron furniture depicting a porter. In Pitlochry we also have a Station Liaison Group which meets regularly and has achieved considerable success as pressure group as well as offering advice to other groups. Consideration should be given to letting out station buildings for community based activities, approaching local artisans/craft folk with a view to setting up a gallery or workshop of some kind. This would make good use of many empty buildings.

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

Q28 It is difficult to categorise stations but each should at least have shelter on both sides of the line, a telephone and adequate parking.

There should be no diminution of existing 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 Without a doubt such services should continue beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow. Stopping this would be like insisting all flights into UK arrive in London. A joint approach to specifying services should be considered

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 Certainly not !! There would be no benefits in doing this and connectivity would be severely curtailed and would dilute Edinburgh being a hub.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 EGIP will release 170s allowing longer trains to be used

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

Q32 On tourist routes, which is pretty much every route in Scotland, there should be better provision for the disabled, bicycles, on-board information and Wi-Fi and basic buffet car facility.

The basic provision on trains should be an ability to get a seat, enough clean toilets, adequate luggage space and a clean environment at an acceptable temperature

Passengers – information, security and services

33. How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

Q33 If buses provide Wi-Fi then all trains should do so too

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 Use longer trains. The existing First Class provision on our line is not even adequate

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

Q35 We considered the banning of alcohol but thought a compromise could be that only alcohol bought on the train could be consumed. In this way it would be hoped that the resulting consequences of beer carry outs would be ameliorated

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

Q36 Better technology to give up to date information on-board on arrival times and consider keeping the website updated minute by minute

Caledonian Sleeper

37. Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

Q37 The sleeper service is vital for this area as so many of our communities are hours away from an airport and with our emissions policy it will become harder and harder to justify car or air travel. It therefore must be specified.

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 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 1. You can spend a complete day in England or Scotland and therefore no time is lost in travel. For example arrive in Blair Atholl early morning and hire your bikes from the Base Camp offices, travel around Highland Perthshire and get back on the train in the late evening and back to London for the next day

2. The sleepers to Inverness and Aberdeen are vital but we know little of usage on the Fort William line

3. The sleeping cars and the lounge cars should be of a good standard and consideration be given to dimmed lighting and a reasonable temperature throughout the train. Wi-Fi is essential

Environmental issues

40. What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

Q40 Greater use of electric trains. Use of recycling bags to collect rubbish on the train as opposed to the present black bags for all rubbish

Suggestions the Pitlochry Station Liaison Group wish to be considered

1. 170s could be replaced by Voyager Trains

Suggestions the Pitlochry Station Liaison Group wish to be considered

(cont'd)

2. Although we are extremely grateful for the two extra trains each way seven days a week we hope consideration should be given to an hourly service with alternate trains stopping at every station. The last train from Edinburgh to get to Pitlochry in the evening leaves at 1936 !
3. The 0713 from Blair Atholl to Edinburgh is very unreliable and therefore folk are not using it. It is thought it would improve if it became the 0555 from Inverness
4. The iron Victorian footbridge over the line at Pitlochry station is in a disgraceful state of repair and gives an appalling impression for those arriving to Pitlochry. No-one will take any responsibility for the required refurbishment
5. The said bridge has very steep steps and those with heavy luggage or disabled have great difficulty using it. We have been informed that because of elderly signalling equipment trains cannot cross over to

different platforms. If this was rectified it would certainly overcome this problem