



Rail2014
Transport Scotland
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27 February 2012

Dear Sir or Madam

Rail 2014 - Public Consultation

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the champion of planning and the planning profession. We work to promote the art and science of planning for the public benefit. We have around 2,200 members in Scotland and a worldwide membership of nearly 23,000. We:

- support policy development to improve approaches to planning for the benefit of the public
- maintain the professional standards of our members
- support our members, and therefore the majority of the planning workforce, to have the skills and knowledge they need to deliver planning effectively
- maintain high standards of planning education
- develop and promote new thinking, ideas and approaches which can improve planning
- support our membership to work with others who have a role in developing places in Scotland
- improve the understanding of planning and the planning system to policy makers, politicians, practitioners and the general public.

The RTPi in Scotland comments below on the questions posed by the Consultation Paper, but in general terms would like to make two key points.

Firstly, the Institute considers that economic, social and environmental factors are all relevant, but as currently set out it does appear as if environmental factors are less well reflected in the Consultation Paper. This should be addressed, not least so as to support Scottish Government's transition to a low-carbon economy.

Secondly, as the key ambition of any rail strategy, the Institute would like to see significant modal shifts to rail from private car and domestic flights being targeted. It will also be important for any modern rail system to be properly integrated with the other low-carbon public transport modes of bus and ferry.

The Institute believes that the statutory planning system should have a significant role in supporting the development of Scotland's modern rail network and its operation. If you would like to discuss any part of this submission, or would find clarification helpful, please contact me on (0131) 229 9628, on 07850 926 881, or by email at scotland@rtpi.org.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Craig McLaren', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Craig McLaren
National Director, RTPi Scotland

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

Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland

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

☒

- (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:

The Institute takes the view that there are economic, social **and environmental** factors which should all be taken into account in the planning of rail passenger services, and these should be capable of consideration in the context of the National Planning Framework, Strategic and Local Development Plans, and the Climate Change Act. A key factor in that last will be the reduction to a low carbon economy and under such circumstances modal shift from private car and domestic air travel to rail will be essential: this should be spelled out, with targets, in any rail strategy. It is a matter of concern that, in general, environmental and planning matters are under-represented in the consultation paper, and it may well be that it would be helpful for any draft strategy to be prepared at the same time as a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Rail services' role in supporting the Scottish Government's transition to a low carbon economy should also be recognised more explicitly within the document.

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

Q2 comments:

The length of contract should be determined once the targets for the strategy, including the economic, environmental and social matters referred to in the response to Q1, are made clear. It seems unlikely that anything less than a decade will be an effective period for planning for significant change. It should be noted that the National Planning Framework (NPF) has a 10-year time frame, reviewed generally every five years, Strategic Development Plans have a 20 year strategy, reviewed every five years, and Local Development Plans a

five-year strategy, reviewed every five years.

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:

Incentives should exist for carbon emission reduction, achieving modal shift from private car and domestic air to railways; for integration with bus, ferry, cycle and pedestrian transport modes; and, more generally, to support the transition towards a low carbon economy.

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

Q5 comments:

Arrangements seem complicated enough but should avoid the possibility of 'cherry-picking' or one-off deals, unless they are clearly identified as part of the agreed strategy.

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

Q6 comments:

Incentives should exist for carbon emission reduction, achieving modal shift from private car and domestic air to railways; for integration with bus, ferry, cycle and pedestrian transport modes; and, more generally, to support the transition towards a low carbon economy.

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:

Both might be required.

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:

There should be one system for the whole of Scotland, considered as part of the National Planning Framework, and the system should be able to be broken down so that impacts can be assessed and managed at Strategic and Local Development Plan scales.

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

Q11 comments:

A greater emphasis on the needs of passengers will be required if the objectives of modal shift towards the railways from private car and domestic air travel are to be attained.

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

Q12 comments:

There should be no lengthening of journey times. Where feasible, there should be **reduction** in journey times, so that the objectives of modal shift towards the railways from private car and domestic air travel can be attained within the context of supporting the transition towards a low carbon economy.

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:

There should be a Service Regime which 'celebrates' the passenger and ensures that there is modal shift towards the railways from private car and domestic air travel within the context of supporting the transition towards a low carbon economy. This may require both incentives and penalties.

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

Q14 comments:

There should be Station Management Plans which would include provision for planned preventative maintenance and passenger cherishing, especially those who are less able to travel or who otherwise require to be drawn from other less environmentally sound modes of travel. It should be clearer and easier to know about travel compensation and claim it: something printed on the back of tickets might be appropriate.

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:

Nothing should be done which would lengthen journey times. The object of the exercise is to make the railways more attractive to achieve the modal shifts mentioned above.

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:

Direct travel should be achieved wherever possible in order to encourage modal shifts. However, interchange stations which allow for a smooth movement between rail and other modes have an important role to play in making public transport more attractive to the public and business.

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:

There should be plans with targets to achieve modal shifts nationally, and within Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plan areas. These should form part of the franchise agreements.

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

Q18 comments:

The levels of contract specification should be determined once the targets for the strategy, including the economic, environmental and social matters referred to in the response to Q1, are made clear.

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

Q19 comments:

The incentives should be determined once the targets for the strategy, including the economic, environmental and social matters referred to in the response to Q1, are made clear.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

The fares policy should be to achieve the modal shifts identified above. This means that environmental costs should be taken into account, and fares should encourage rail travel, especially at peak times, within the context of a supporting a transition to a low carbon economy. Smartcard ticketing should be introduced where possible.

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:

The fares policy should be to achieve the modal shifts identified above. This means that environmental costs should be taken into account, and fares should encourage rail travel, especially at peak times, within the context of a supporting a transition to a low carbon economy. Smartcard ticketing should be introduced where possible.

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:

Modal shifts will not happen if fares are not competitive. It will be necessary to recognise the continuing need for subsidy to achieve modal shifts: these can be made more transparent by looking at the strategies within NPF, SDPs and LDPs.

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:

Passengers should be encouraged to choose rail, at whatever time of day, to achieve modal shifts: a flat(ter) pricing structure that is understandable, and a capacity strategy that minimises standing (and certainly does not attempt to

increase its use as part of a strategy) should be designed.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

The Strategic and Local Development Plans, and perhaps some elements of the National Planning Framework, should provide contexts for such decisions to be properly evaluated against national objectives, including the need to support the transition to a low carbon economy.

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:

Whoever is responsible for stations should ensure that they have responsibility for planned, preventative maintenance, and for any improvements. There should be 5-year property management plans for all stations. There are essential facilities that should be present at all stations: these include lavatories and somewhere to wait in relative comfort. Facilities should not be reduced or abandoned because of some arbitrary station classification system. Passengers must be encouraged to travel by rail as part of the essential modal shifts described above. This means that stations should be places of celebration of departure and arrival and, if such a thing is possible, of waiting also.

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:

Network Rail should have an oversight and be responsible for setting standards for stations, for agreeing their planned, preventative maintenance, and for any improvements. There should be 5-year property management plans for all stations. Improvements to stations should be recognised in some way at the end of the franchising period: there may be parallels with tenant

farming that have relevance here.

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

Q27 comments:

Stations must be sufficiently attractive to encourage greater use of the train, and promoting an understanding of the importance of modal shifts in transport at the local level, especially through the Local Development Plan, will be required. Public engagement will be key in the Development Plan process

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

Q28 comments:

Network Rail should have an oversight and be responsible for setting standards for stations, and agreeing their planned, preventative maintenance, and any improvements. There should be 5-year property management plans for all stations. There are essential facilities that should be present at all stations: these include lavatories and somewhere to wait in relative comfort. Facilities should not be reduced or abandoned because of some arbitrary station classification system. Passengers must be encouraged to travel by rail as part of the essential modal shifts described above. Consideration of any changes to facilities could usefully be promoted through the Development Plan process.

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:

Yes. This is essential if modal shifts are to be achieved, especially from domestic flights.

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:

No. Through trains should be encouraged to connect better the home nations.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

The objective should not be a reduction in cost, but rather the attainment of the objectives of modal shifts and the transition to a low carbon economy.

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

Q32 comments:

Whatever is necessary to attract passengers and deliver the planned modal shifts.

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:

If they are available in coffee houses and on buses, and it is government policy to roll them out elsewhere in the country, then they will be essential components of any successful efforts to achieve modal shifts to rail from private cars and domestic air.

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 service must be attractive to prospective passengers, and thus additional seating capacity must be provided where required, and it must be of an appropriate quality. As long as modal shifts are achieved such decisions are probably best left up to the operators, although it could be said that first-class

services are every passenger's right, and having a single class throughout the train and indeed franchise might simplify operational considerations. Here again, to compete and achieve modal shifts it will be necessary to raise standards of provision, not reduce them to the lowest common denominator (as sometimes happens with the use of school buses for public transport more generally).

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

Q35 comments:

No comment.

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

Q36 comments:

Passengers (and those who might become passengers) should be asked what they require. Wherever possible, simple and straightforward information should be readily available to passengers. The fare systems might be one place to start the simplification process.

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 must continue, as they are key elements in the drive towards modal shift from air to rail.

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:

Sleeper services must continue, as they are key elements in the drive towards modal shift from air to rail. On balance it may be preferable for a separate

service to be provided.

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:

No comment.

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:

- Modal shift from private car to rail
- Modal shift from domestic air to rail
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Emission reductions
- Factors/impacts considered in any SEA of the eventual Rail Strategy document
- Integration with ferry (rail/sail) and bus services to provide integrated public transport networks
- Property Management Plans for Stations, incorporating planned preventive maintenance
- High design standards for any new buildings or other architectural or engineering works
- Participation in the Development Planning Process, nationally and locally, from NPF to LDP.