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

The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

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 ☐ 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

RAIL ISSUES FOR THE SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND

1   Background

1.1   The region is served by three railway lines:
- the Stranraer Line which connects the far west of the region into the Central Belt network at Ayr, and with services on to Kilmarnock. Apart from Stranraer itself there is no other station on this line within Dumfries and Galloway.
- The Glasgow and Southwestern Line (GSW) which runs down the Nith Valley. Stations in Dumfries and Galloway include Kirkconnel, Sanquhar, Dumfries, Annan, and Gretna;
- The West Coast Main Line (WCML) passing through the East of the region, with a station at Lockerbie.

1.2   Although outside the region, Carlisle Station has a pivotal role for services in South West Scotland. The station provides a vital access point for connection to services to destinations southwards, including Birmingham, Manchester and London.

1.3   Carlisle Station is a hub for five railway lines:
- West Coast Main Line;
- Glasgow and Southwestern Line;
- Tyne Valley Line;
- Cumbrian Coast Line (connecting back into the WCML at Lancaster);
- Settle to Carlisle Line.

2.4   Rail policy for the South West of Scotland has been developed in a number of key documents, including:
- Feasibility Study into the Introduction of a Local Passenger Rail Service on the West Coast Main Line Between Glasgow and Carlisle;
- Glasgow and Southwestern Line and Stranraer Line Railway Route Study;
- Ayr-Stranraer Rail Regeneration Study;
- Improved Transport Links for Thornhill and Eastriggs STAG Studies;
- The Regional Transport Strategy and RTS Delivery Plan;
- West Coast Main Line RUS Consultation Submission.

1.5   At various times Members of the Board have also considered and agreed responses to a number of consultations and emerging issues, including:
- Scotrail Timetable Consultations;

- West Coast Main Line Timetable Consultations
- Network Rail G1 Network Change Consultation;
- West Coast Main Line RUS Consultations;
- Scotland RUS2 Consultation;
- Rail Franchise Consultations: Department for Transport, and Transport Scotland;
- Stena Line Relocation;
- High Speed Rail.

1.6   A number of rail related Priority Interventions included in the Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan have been delivered, including:
- Re-doubling of the line between Annan and Gretna (with accessible footbridge at Gretna Station);
- Provision of an accessible footbridge at Lockerbie Station;
- Enhanced parking facilities at Dumfries Station.

1.7   At the meeting held on 22 May 2009 Members considered STAG Study reports on Improved Transport Links to the Thornhill and Eastriggs Areas. Members agreed that:
- the STAG 2 Studies on Improved Transport Links for the Thornhill and Eastriggs Areas be sent to Transport Scotland in the first instance;
- discussions be held with Transport Scotland on how Thornhill and Eastrigg station re-openings might be taken forward;
- the Board request a meeting with Transport Scotland to pursue these matters, and;
- a further Report be made to a future meeting of the Board.

1.8   Further to these STAG Studies being sent to Transport Scotland, a response was received from the Head of Rail Policy, Transport Scotland, which indicated that:
- Transport Scotland has no current plans to re-open these stations;
- Details provided in the STAG study reports will be considered as [Transport Scotland] prepare the next ScotRail franchise specification and the future High Level Output Study;
- The Head of Rail Policy would be happy to attend a meeting with the SWestrans board.

1.9   At the meeting on 21 May 2010 Members of the Board considered a report on Key Issues for Rail in South West Scotland, and discussed a wide range of rail related issues with the Head of Rail Policy, Transport Scotland, who attended the meeting.

2   Stranraer Line

2.1   The Regional Transport Strategy Delivery Plan includes aspirations for a new Public Transport Interchange (including a rail station) for Stranraer, and a station re-opening in Dunragit/Glenluce area.

2.2   At the meeting on 26 March 2010 Members agreed an up to date position on rail services to Stranraer as follows;

The Stranraer rail timetable should:

- serve the needs of the local population (possible connections with ferry times at Cairnryan should not be ignored, however this should be secondary to serving local needs);
- provide a good frequency of service with more consistent departure times and fill existing gaps;
- provide some fast direct services to/from Glasgow via Ayr/Paisley, particularly at commuter times;
- provide good connections with fast Glasgow services at Ayr, and to services on the Glasgow and south western line at Kilmarnock, particularly since services to Glasgow from both stations ran half-hourly;
- provide connectivity with Prestwick Airport from Stranraer and from stations on the Glasgow and south western line via Kilmarnock;
- provide appropriate opportunities for students to travel to educational facilities at Ayr and Kilmarnock; and
- provide opportunities for people to participate in cultural events in Glasgow with a late evening return train via Paisley.

2.3   Members have agreed that the December 2011 Timetable does not meet these aspirations.

2.4   A letter from the Franchise Contract Manager, Transport Scotland, indicating that the proposed morning service departure at 06:15 has been amended to depart Stranraer at 07:09, in response to the community's concern and correspondence with SWestrans, was reported to the meeting on 20 May 2011

2.5   The report to the Board indicated the implications of the alteration were:

- This addresses the issue raised in paragraph 2.8, with the first departure from Stranraer at 0715 which arrives into Ayr at 0835 instead of the original December 2011 timetable proposal of 0736;
- The first departure from Stranraer terminates at Ayr. This means that the after December 2011 the earliest arrival in Kilmarnock from Stranraer is 1034 (which includes a change of train at Ayr and an hour and a half wait in Ayr). At present the earliest arrival in Kilmarnock from Stranraer is 0904.
- In respect of travel to Glasgow, the timetable still allows a connection with the 0843 at Ayr and retains the existing earliest arrival time of 0936 into Glasgow Central. This earliest arrival into Glasgow is obviously not as good as the original December 2011 timetable proposal.
- There is a need for ongoing timetable development following the Stena relocation to better serve Stranraer (as set out in the SWestrans position) and communities along the line.

These implications were highlighted to both Transport Scotland and ScotRail.

2.6   The letter indicates that: "Monitoring and evaluation of the December 2011 timetable changes, including seeking feedback from local stakeholders will be undertaken to help identify where further enhancements can be delivered."

2.7   This would appear to give an opportunity for further consideration to be given to the timetable, including early morning arrivals into Kilmarnock.

2.8   At the meeting on 23 September 2011 Members of the Board considered an Impact Assessment on the Regional Transport Strategy of Stena Line Bussing Passengers to Ayr, as requested by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

2.9   SAYLSA have prepared a briefing note on their aspirations for rail services to Stranraer, including through services to Edinburgh. SAYLSA suggest that there could be a community/third party involvement along with ScotRail and RTPs on co-managed stations and partnership working.

3   Glasgow and Southwestern Line

3.1   The following key issues have been identified:
- Station re-openings at Thornhill and Eastriggs are a Priority Intervention in the RTS Delivery Plan. STAG Studies concluded that there is a case for new rail stations at Thornhill and Eastriggs, and that this can be made on opportunity, social inclusion, accessibility and travel choice grounds.
Transport Scotland has indicated that it has "no current plans to re-open these stations"; however "details provided in the STAG study reports will be considered as they prepare the next ScotRail franchise specification and the future High Level Output Study."
- Improved accessibility at Kirkconnel is a priority intervention in the RTS Delivery Plan.
- Infrastructure upgrades to the line, required to provide a diversionary route for WCML, would enhance local services;
- More equitable ticket pricing with SPT area;
- Potential for faster rolling stock to reduce journey times.
- Crowding on the Glasgow to Carlisle via Dumfries route (need for train lengthening, particularly on a Saturday);
- Improved Sunday services on the Glasgow to Carlisle via Dumfries route;
- Timetable gaps in the service to Glasgow, including a three hour gap from 0853 to 1153 going out, and a three hour gap from 1312 and 1612 returning;
- The opportunity for an hourly clockface service between Dumfries and Carlisle.

## 4	West Coast Main Line

4.1   Services at Lockerbie Station are provided as part of the InterCity West Coast and TransPennine franchises. These cross-border services are specified by the UK Department for Transport. The current ScotRail franchise does not include a cross border service on the WCML.

4.2   Although this is understood to be outwith the scope of the consultation, it is important to get Transport Scotland views, particularly on a possible extension of the ScotRail franchise to Carlisle on this route.

4.3   The following key issues have been identified:
- The urgent need for an improved stopping pattern at Lockerbie Station, for services to and from Glasgow and Edinburgh;
- The need for commuter services to and from Edinburgh and Glasgow, with arrivals before 9 am in the morning;
- The potential for re-opening Beattock Station (included as a Priority Intervention in the RTS Delivery Plan). The Regional Transport Strategy notes that the 48 mile stretch between Lockerbie and Carstairs is the longest section of railway line in Great Britain without an intermediate station;
- The development of a Dumfries to Lockerbie Quality Rail/Bus link to enhance connectivity of the region with the Central Belt (project being progressed by SWestrans through the GoSMART Dumfries Project);
- Rolling stock issues (including capacity/loading factors);
- Need to improve passenger experience;
- Need for ticket machine at Lockerbie Station;
- Need to upgrade shelter on southbound platform at Lockerbie Station.

## 5	High Speed Rail

5.1   Long distance cross-border services on the WCML between Glasgow and London, and between Glasgow/Edinburgh and Birmingham, are provided by the InterCity West Coast franchise.

5.2   Although this is understood to be outwith the scope of the consultation, it is important to get Transport Scotland views.

5.3   The UK Government has indicated an aspiration to develop a High Speed Rail network. The proposed strategy is to build a line initially from London to Birmingham, with extensions to Manchester and Leeds as part of a second phase.

5.4   At the meeting on 20 May 2011 the Board considered a Department for Transport Consultation on the future of High Speed Rail, and agreed a response. The response summarised the SWestrans position as follows:
- The benefits of High Speed Rail will only be realised for Scotland if a complete line between London and Scotland is constructed as a single project;

- Construction should take place simultaneously from both ends of the line to give real substance to this intention;
- The project must include an access hub at Carlisle, or the South of Scotland and North of England will be bypassed in the ensuing economic development.

5.5   The House of Commons Transport Committee of the UK Parliament has conducted an enquiry into High Speed Rail, and a report of its enquiry was published on 8 November 2011.

5.6   The report includes the following statements:
- "We support a high-speed rail network for Britain, developed as part of a comprehensive transport strategy also including the classic rail network, road, aviation and shipping."
- "The Scottish Government and other Scottish witnesses were keen that Scotland should be fully integrated into the high-speed rail network, with a line between England and Scotland. Under the current proposals, HS2 services would run, via the classic network, to Glasgow via the WCML on completion of Phase I and to Edinburgh via Birmingham, Leeds and the ECML on completion of Phase II. Mr Hammond confirmed that he made a commitment to Scottish Ministers to work with them on a dedicated high speed line to Scotland "once [he] had got the hybrid bill into Parliament". It was suggested by some witnesses the route should be built southwards from Scotland. Under the devolution settlement, it would be for the Scottish Government to fund any infrastructure costs within Scotland and for the UK Government to fund those in England."
- "For reasons of cost, financing and management, the HS2 network should be built in phases. Despite pleas from some in Scotland and the north of England to build southwards from the north, it seems clear that construction should start with the London–West Midlands phase as this is where capacity needs are greatest. There is no reason, in principle, however, why the Scottish Government should not start preparatory work on a Scottish high-speed line, if it so wishes."

5.7   The Transport Committee report is available at:
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmtran/1185/1185.pdf

Consultation Questions

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:
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> The opportunity to consider wider objectives than a pure cost/benefit analysis would be welcome, particularly for lines serving peripheral rural stations such as those existing and proposed in Dumfries and Galloway. Travel opportunity, social inclusion, accessibility and mode choice are important objectives too. However, there are risks in adopting an economic/social rail distinction. It is recognised in the consultation document that only six routes in Scotland cover their operating costs through passenger revenues, and this does not include direct payments from Scottish Ministers to Network Rail. No element of the rail system is free of public support, and in this sense the whole network is 'social'. Rail can also support local and regional economies in a way that is not captured by the two element distinction, and it may be desirable to identify Economic Importance as well as Commercial and Socially Necessary routes. Most railways in Scotland serve all three functions. At Stranraer in particular the railway can have a role in relation to area regeneration. The proposed distinction could be perceived as socially divisive, and create tension between the elements. While the distinction may be useful as an internal tool for prioritising scarce resources, it is probably undesirable that it should be reflected in the presentation of the franchise's 'offer' to the public.

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

> Q2 comments:
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> The aspirations of the industry for longer franchises are understandable, as are Scottish Ministers proposed mitigation of recognising residual asset value in franchisee investment. It is also desirable that the franchise could be reconfigured at critical points in the future. There is a high financial cost in re-franchising, and it is unsettling for the travelling public. It would be appropriate to let the ScotRail franchise for as long as is consistent with their requirement for future flexibility. It may be possible to invite tenders on several franchise length options in order to test the relative costs.

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

> Q3 comments:
>
> Experience from elsewhere has shown that franchise failure is costly for all parties. In some cases this has come about because of unrealistic bidding. Bids should be examined for the robustness of risk assessment, and not

merely selected on the basis of lowest price. Where there is a shared appreciation of growth forecast modelling it is easier for the public to accept risk support. The cost of risk support should be balanced against the cost of franchise failure and refranchising.

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

Q4 comments:

Excessive profiteering within a heavily subsidised industry is unlikely to be publicly acceptable. On the other hand, a flat cap on profits could disincentivise the operator. A graduated profit sharing regime might be appropriate.

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

Q5 comments:

There is existing opportunity for third parties to be involved in the operation of passenger rail service through open access arrangements. High demand levels are necessary for profitability. There is a role for Regional Transport Partnerships and Local Authorities in representing local interests in the development of services. There should be an opportunity for bodies to procure additional services where these deliver on local and regional transport strategies. There is potential for other parties to be involved in ancillary activities, such as the operation of stations and providing on-board services.

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

Q6 comments:

The specified minimum outputs should be taken as the norm. Penalty payments may undermine an operator's ability to respond to poor performance. Bonuses may encourage performance above the minimum required, but could be difficult to manage and have poor public perception. A balanced range of performance interventions is likely to be best.

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

Q7 comments:

Robust assessment of the realistic viability of bids should mitigate the need for a bond covering the full cost of refranchising. Some of the risk may be shared by ensuring due diligence in the tender selection process.

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

Q8 comments:

We have suggested using a balanced range of measures. It should be possible to terminate the franchise with a persistently poor performing operator, withholding any bond against the cost of refranchising.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments:

We have suggested using a balanced range of measures.

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 may be a case for considering different performance regimes for different types of service. For example, crowding on a peak time commuter train may be more acceptable than on a long-distance inter-city or tourist route. Further research of passenger expectations may be appropriate before configuring a performance regime.

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

Q11 comments:

Some issues will be more important to passengers than others. The performance regime should ensure that issues are addressed in a priority that reflects this hierarchy.

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

Q12 comments:

Relaxing journey times in order to enhance apparent performance would appear to be even more disingenuous than the current protocol whereby a train isn't considered 'late' if it arrives within 10 minutes of its scheduled arrival time. The current protocol seems reasonable. However, a consideration of the vocabulary used may help the travelling public to better understand what is meant when a train arrives after its scheduled time, but isn't yet considered to be 'late'.

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:
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> The high standards of Scottish stations are recognised in customer surveys, and recently by "Keep Scotland Beautiful". We therefore support the need for SQUIRE or something similar. We would welcome the extension of service quality standards monitoring to all aspects of station and service delivery, including issues such as accessibility. The boundary between franchisee and Network Rail responsibilities can lead to anomalies that are incomprehensible to the public, and an arrangement between the parties for overcoming these anomalies is needed.

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

> Q14 comments:
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> A customer comment procedure, perhaps using SMS technology, would allow ad hoc issues to be highlighted to managers.

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:
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> Crowding has been reported to SWestrans as an issue, although more on cross-border (DfT specified) routes than on the rural lines. User tolerance will be related to service type. For long distance InterCity services with few stops having no seat at departure inevitably means a long stand. Passengers may be more accepting of standing on busy commuter services, and there may be a case for extending the present limit.

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:
>
> This proposal has merit where there are significant differences in passenger numbers between different elements of a route, or where there are different traction options, but only where other consequential benefits can be demonstrated, such as a reduction in aggregate journey time, increase in service pattern, and improved connectivity. Could service frequency at Stranraer be increased by reducing duplication of the fast half-hourly electric service from Ayr to Glasgow? A direct diesel shuttle service between Stranraer and Kilmarnock would also connect with GSW line services, and improve the accessibility of Prestwick Airport from Dumfries. More services would also facilitate opportunities for rail-ferry connections with both Stena

Line and P&O operations, and allow Stranraer to continue to offer service facilities for through passengers. However, passengers value direct services, and for some (for example mobility impaired) they are critical to being able to make a journey. For this reason at least some direct services should be maintained on every route.

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:

How will passenger demand be known? There is a risk that the franchisee will tailor timetables to suit internal company objectives and cite customer demand as a justification. As the consultation implicitly recognises, the conventional concept of customer demand breaks down when specifying services on low-use, but lifeline, rural routes. As indicated in our response to Question 1, the Economic Importance of routes also needs to be considered. Business travellers from Dumfries and Galloway to Glasgow find limited return opportunities during the afternoon on all three lines serving the region. Demand for the more fully specified Dumfries/Carlisle Saturday service indicates the potential for extending this timetable to Monday to Friday services.

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

Q18 comments:

The concept of Targetted Specification appears to offer an appropriate balance between ensuring a minimum level of service and allowing the franchisee sufficient flexibility to innovate. In rural areas such as Dumfries and Galloway flexibility should not undermine efforts to coordinate local bus services with rail timetables. There is also a need to specify a minimum level of Sunday service of at least half the Monday to Saturday minimum.

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

Q19 comments:

Innovation involves a certain element of financial risk. Consideration might be given to an 'innovation fund' whereby the risk of innovation would be shared, with an opportunity for profit sharing where an innovation is successful.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

The purpose of the fares policy should be to optimise revenue, while allowing the opportunity to maximise the utilisation of rail capacity by offering lower off-peak fares to fill seats. Fares should be realistic, fair, and comparable to other transport modes. They should incentivise off-peak travel, but peak fares should not act as an incentive for mode shift to car.

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:

We would be concerned that any relaxation in the regulatory regime might lead to higher price increases on rural lines, where distances are longer but services are critical to local economies. There is a pricing anomaly between fares in the Strathclyde area and Dumfries and Galloway which appears unfair to the residents of the south west of Scotland. In some instances passengers from Dumfries and Galloway are encouraged by the price difference to drive further to access a station within the Strathclyde area.

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:

In the current economic climate a significant raising of the annual permitted increase in regulated fares is likely to have poor public acceptability. A local premium to reflect local enhancements does not seem appropriate.

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:

A greater differential between peak and off-peak fares would encourage greater utilisation of rail's capacity. However, the structure needs to take account of the fewer opportunities for travel in rural areas where the distinction between peak and off-peak becomes spurious. Consideration could also be given to a further discount on off-peak rail travel for holders of the National Entitlement Card.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

In rural areas such as Dumfries and Galloway the distance between stations can be significant. Our aspiration is to increase the number of stations, providing increased travel opportunity, social inclusion, accessibility and mode choice to some of our dispersed rural communities, as demonstrated by STAG studies undertaken by SWestrans for the reopening of stations for Eastriggs and Thornhill on the GSW Line. The current appraisal methodology which requires a 'high level of demand' to be demonstrated can be an impediment to delivering these wider social objectives. It is possible too that the methodology underestimates the distance people are willing to travel to access a rail head in a rural area.

Lockerbie Station on the West Coast Main Line, which is operated by ScotRail, is served only by InterCity services specified by the UK Government's Department for Transport, for whom the focus is on end-to-end journey times between London and Glasgow and Edinburgh. As a consequence the stopping pattern at Lockerbie provides poor frequency of services to and from the Central Belt. The new franchise provides an opportunity to consider how gaps in the InterCity stopping pattern at Lockerbie could be filled by ScotRail services. A feasibility Study into the introduction of a local passenger rail service on the West Coast Main Line between Glasgow and Carlisle undertaken by Dumfries and Galloway Council with SPT found the business case for such a proposal was enhanced by additional stations at Beattock and Symington.

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 ability to do this would be welcome. However, in the context of reducing budgets it may be difficult to identify or justify the revenue required. Consideration needs also to be given to what fallback arrangements would be needed if a third party were unable to fulfil their commitments. Capital investment may be easier to achieve, and consideration might be given to how this might be enabled. Potential investors may be discouraged by the high cost of rail in the UK compared with the rest of Europe, as reflected in the Realising the Potential of GB Rail Report.

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:

Station operation is largely a customer facing function. Who manages that is less important than customer service quality. If one organisation is to be made responsible the franchisee is likely to be most responsive to customer needs.

The principle of recognising the residual value of asset investment is welcome. The anomalous status of Prestwick Airport Station, which is owned by the airport operator, inhibits public or franchisee investment, and this should be addressed.

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

Q27 comments:

The Adopt a Station scheme has been successful where a willing local group has been identified, and its continuation should be encouraged in the next franchise. Community involvement is more likely to be forthcoming where there is an opportunity to influence services.

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

Q28 comments:

Catagorising stations may assist with defining appropriate facilities for different types. The recognition that some stations may fall within more than one category is welcome. Disputes may arise over the categorisation of individual stations where this is seen to affect the provision of facilities. The installation of automatic ticket machines is essential at stations like Lockerbie where the booking office is not always open.

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:

The cross-border services (via Edinburgh) under consideration do not have a direct impact on the South West of Scotland. We note that these services provide direct connectivity for areas north and west of Edinburgh not only to London but also to important destinations in the North of England. The rolling stock operated on these services provides significantly increased capacity during peak periods.

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:

Consideration may be needed of Waverley Station's capacity to handle a significant increase in passenger interchange.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

The new franchise presents an opportunity to reconfigure the rolling stock fleet profile. The fleet requirement (in numbers and classes) will depend on the details of the franchise specification and development strategy. Consideration should be given as to whether the most cost-effective classes of vehicle are currently being deployed on all routes. The future rolling stock strategy should be developed in consultation with the franchisee. On the long-distance rural lines to the South West of Scotland comfort is a more pressing issue than capacity, and this should be considered in any fleet refurbishment.

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

Q32 comments:

Passenger facilities are more important on long distance journeys than on local commuter trips. In particular, a toilet, luggage space, information, space for bicycles, information, on-board catering, and staffing should be standard. On rural routes consideration might be given to vending machines, or provision of services being franchised to third parties.

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:

Roaming network connectivity is an assumed precondition for contemporary working practices. Priority should be given to long-distance services where this is more critical than on local/commuter 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:

Constraining the franchisee's opportunity to generate revenue from first class ticket sales will have an impact on the public cost of the franchise. Nevertheless, on local/commuter services which experience the highest demand at peak times maximising capacity is a higher priority.

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

Q35 comments:

Inconsiderate and anti-social alcohol use on trains can be distressing for other passengers. However, some alcohol use is widely socially acceptable, such as a glass of wine along with a meal. A blanket ban may penalise responsible passengers more than problem passengers. Investigation should be undertaken into where problems actually occur, and targeted measures introduced. Consideration should be given to a clear passenger code of conduct for alcohol use on trains. On board staff should have powers and be trained to deal with incidents causing distress to other passengers. Allowing the consumption of alcohol only when it is purchased on the train, and designating 'alcohol-free' coaches and services could be considered.

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

Q36 comments:

The critical information gap for passengers occurs when there is any kind of service disruption. Every effort should be made to update passengers on the cause of any delay, and on the likely resolution time. New communications technology should play a key role, but for many passengers on-board staff will continue to be their main interface.

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 services should continue to offer a viable alternative to air travel to and from the south east of England, and should be specified by Scottish Ministers.

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:

Consideration might be given to treating the sleeper services as a separate franchise, but allowing prospective operators to bid for either franchise, or for both as a bundle. This will allow Scottish Minister most flexibility in selecting the most appropriate proposals. The opportunity for sleeper services to assist with local connectivity issues may be lost under a separate franchise. We would be keen to investigate the potential for the sleeper services to provide late evening and early morning connectivity between Lockerbie Station and Glasgow/Edinburgh.

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 services provide important connectivity with London and the south east of England for many Scottish communities, and this need should continue to be served. There is also an opportunity to develop the service as a travel experience in its own right for trips to Scotland from the south east of England market. This concept would require the provision of hotel class accommodation and facilities. A range of travel class options should be provided, including airline style reclining seats. Consideration should be given to future direct services to mainland Europe via the Channel Tunnel.

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:

The biggest environmental impact will come from the carbon footprint of rail traction. However, the extent of electrification and rolling stock strategy will be outwith the franchisee's day to day management to affect. The franchisee could be challenged to meet performance indicators in relation to waste, biodiversity (at stations), and environmental sustainability in the way its services are delivered.