

Passengers' View Scotland

Passengers View Scotland

(Public Transport Users' Committee for Scotland)

PVS Secretariat

Area 2D-N Victoria Quay

Edinburgh

EH6 6QQ

These brief comments are made by Passengers' View Scotland (PVS) in response to the consultation document on the above subject in relation to railways. PVS is the working name of the Public Transport Users' Committee for Scotland, a statutory advisory body established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 to consider and make recommendations to the Scottish Ministers about any matter relating to public transport services in, from or to Scotland.

Passengers are more concerned with the outcome of the process through which services are provided than with the precise procedure that is adopted to achieve this, so long as the needs and interests of passengers are taken into account during that process. In general, though, within the current franchising structure, a tendering process will be favoured since this allows for greater transparency, providing more opportunity to check before the final award of the franchise that passengers are properly considered in the service specification etc. and to raise concerns before any deal is finalised. Nevertheless it is recognised that there may be circumstances where the efficient and effective maintenance of services to passengers requires a different approach. In such circumstances, though, there should be transparency in other forms to reassure passengers that a result giving appropriate weight to their interests has been reached.

We note that passengers' needs do eventually get a mention in the very last paragraph of the document, in relation to the Franchise Contract Model. This can be seen as a positive sign, but we would expect meeting passengers' needs to be a fundamental element of any contract, rather than something to be incentivised as if it were an optional extra.