

Consultation Response on Behalf of Scottish Borders Council

Q1 Which of the Priced Options do you think best support the delivery of Scotland's Railways?

We see the initiative which provides additional services between Dunbar and Edinburgh as the best priced option from the list of selected initiatives noted in Annex A. However, Scottish Borders Council (SBC) would expect the broader study that is due to look at additional options in this corridor to include a detailed analysis of a new local rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed, including new station provision at East Linton and Reston as part of this proposal.

Q2 Is our schedule for new service introduction right?

The schedule for new service introduction appears to be ambitious but none the less achievable.

Q3 Which future Priced Options would you wish to see Transport Scotland develop?

The scheme that SBC would wish to see would be the introduction of a local service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed, including the reintroduction of a new station facility at Reston in Berwickshire.

Q4 Where should we concentrate our efforts on improving services, in particular journey times?

We would like to see enhanced journey time improvements on commuter related trips within the SEStran area and primarily on services to and from Edinburgh.

Q5 How can buying a ticket be made easier?

It is our opinion that the further refinement of the internet system i.e. making it simpler and further reducing the number of ticket options would benefit the user.

Q6 To make the best use of available space at stations, how should we balance the use between commercial outlets and other facilities that offer further passenger benefits?

The balance between commercial outlets and other facilities will be dependent on the location of the station. Commercial opportunities within rural locations will be significantly different to station facilities in central locations for instance.

Q7 How could the station environment be improved?

A greater staff presence along with cleaner station facilities would be beneficial.

Q8 How could signage be improved at stations?

Each station should have a signing strategy that is co-ordinated with the Local Authority and sympathetic to the local area.

Q9 How can we improve assisted travel at stations?

The availability of dedicated staff at the busier stations seems to make sense. Appropriately trained staff at other locations could make a difference.

Q10 Do you have any ideas for further 'RailLinks'?

None at this particular time, but there may be potential in the future to consider new RailLinks in Midlothian and the Scottish Borders following completion of the Borders Rail Project.

Q11 Which pilot scheme changes to fares should we make to encourage modal shift?

We consider that reduced fares for selected groups would be beneficial, noting however, that certain services are currently approaching capacity.

Q12 When travelling on the train, how could passengers' experiences be improved?

An improved experience encompasses the whole package and should not just be restricted to one aspect of the service. People require easy access to tickets either via web-sites or on-site provision, the rolling stock needs to be modern and have a good balance of seating and luggage space, staff need to be well trained and helpful and improvements to the catering (price, quality and choice) needs to be carried out on a regular basis.

Q13 Where should we concentrate our efforts in improving the Anglo-Scottish sleeper services?

The punctuality of the service needs to be improved, along with improved on-board facilities.

Q14 How could we improve the travel interchange at stations? Please consider this in terms of:

- Ticketing
 - Service connections
 - Infrastructure (waiting rooms)
 - Facilities for cyclists (cycle racks, National Cycle Route interchange signage)
 - Car parking
 - Walking routes
 - Accessibility for disabled passengers .
 - Many businesses are offering wireless internet (WiFi) technology to clients.
- For reasons of geography and geology, there are cost issues in delivery of this on the Scottish rail network as well as in the delivery of wider issues of connectivity.

All of the above.

Q15 What should our communications connectivity priorities be?

We have no relevant comments to make regarding this question

Q16 Would wireless internet technology significantly benefit passengers?

It would certainly be an improvement that would be welcomed by the majority of travellers.

Q17 Would you pay for this service?

No

Q18 Where should the Edinburgh-Glasgow SmartCard pilot project take us? Please consider:

We have no relevant comments to make regarding this question.

Q19 How best can we focus the franchisee on the options for delivering better sustainability?

The Environmental Improvement Works option is designed to carry out smallscale physical alterations or additions which will help to reduce the use of natural resources, reduce carbon and other harmful emissions, or reduce waste from stations, depots, or rolling stock.

We agree with the suggestions noted above.

Q20 How should the Environmental Improvement Works budget be used to further improve our carbon footprint on the railways? Please consider:

We believe that further electrification work would be the most beneficial improvement in terms of environmental improvement.

Q21 What should we consider in station and community regeneration?

This scheme should be extended to look at the potential for regeneration that new stations such as Reston in Berwickshire may bring to a local community.

Q22 Where should we concentrate our efforts on the Station Community Regeneration Fund?

The 2014 Commonwealth Games hosted by Glasgow will showcase Scotland and transport is an important part of the overall package. A dedicated Games route network is a reasonable idea, but we are not sure how practical free travel for anyone holding tickets for that day's games would be.

Q23 What additional services or projects in furtherance of the Commonwealth Games Bid commitments do you feel would most benefit the city during the Games period?

We have no relevant comments to make regarding this question.

Q24 What aspects of the Project Manager's role are priorities to ensure the successful delivery of the projects?

- The Priced Options are intended to provide a number of service enhancements from which all rail passengers should benefit.

We agree with the suggestions provided above.

Q25 Do you think that any of the improvements and enhancements proposed above will have either a positive or adverse impact on equality groups.

Again, the impact on equality groups is dictated by improvements to the overall service and not just the priced options.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the details below and return it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name: Graeme Johnstone

Postal Address: Technical Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA

1. Are you responding: (please tick one box)
- (a) as an individual
- (b) on behalf of a group/organisation **X**

INDIVIDUALS

2a. Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government website)?

Yes (go to 2b below) ☐

No, not at all ☐ We will treat your response as confidential

2b. Where *confidentiality is not requested*, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (please tick one of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available ☐

Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address ☐

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address ☐

ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

3. The name and address of your organisation *will be* made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Transport Scotland website). Are you also content for your response to be made available?

Yes

No

SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

4. 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 the Scottish Government to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes

No

Graeme Johnstone

Senior Engineer

Strategic Transport Planning

Technical Services

Scottish Borders Council

01835 825138

gjohnstone@scotborders.gov.uk