

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

SPT

Consort House

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SPT would agree that, as per the Consultation Questions, the draft statement of policy does comply with the requirements of section 26 of the Railways Act 1993, and it does make clear Scottish Ministers' policy in relation to the matters which it is required by law to cover. However, we would suggest that the following clarifications could be incorporated within the Franchise Policy Statement.

The stated intention to let future franchises, in all but exceptional circumstances, through a competitive process using the criteria listed is supported. It is further recognised that there is a need for flexibility should the need occur to award short term franchises. The circumstances set out in the consultation are agreed as reasonable.

It is also accepted that, in circumstances where a franchisee fails and it is not possible or efficient to invite tenders for a short term replacement, it would be most appropriate for a company wholly owned by Scottish Ministers to run the franchise.

The references to "short term" in relation to franchise replacement and/or extension, perhaps requires to be more clearly defined. It is acknowledged that circumstances will vary, and that "short term" needs to be viewed against the overall term of the franchise, it is suggested that a maximum of 1 or 2 years should where possible be applied in place of "short term".

It is noted that the exercising of provisions for Franchise extension within any Franchise agreement does not apply to this statement of policy.

Franchise Policy Statement - Consultation Responses

SPT will continue to work with rail industry partners, and other relevant bodies, on the development of various regional and local rail service enhancements, which support its RTS and also the NTS/STPR. Any emerging rail related proposals put forward by SPT could also potentially be incorporated within Franchise remapping or extensions, therefore it is recommended that all franchise agreements should include the ability for consultation with SPT and other stakeholders.

It is acknowledged that consultation on the detailed service levels and specifications for the ScotRail Franchise post-2014 will be the subject of early and inclusive consultation, and will include the ability to consider incorporation of viable proposals for rail enhancement within the next franchise.

I hope you will find our contribution useful and would welcome any further input should Transport Scotland consider it appropriate.