

CONSULTATION ON INITIATIVES RELATED TO SCOTRAIL FRANCHISE

Response by Willie Coffey MSP

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

- The operation of Kilmarnock half-hourly service and recast of Ayr-Girvan and
- Stranraer-Glasgow services are important initiatives to improve connectivity between Ayrshire/South West Scotland and the rest of the network.
- This provides an opportunity for Kilmarnock to develop as a focal point for journeys from the south and west to Glasgow and beyond. The further investment needed to enhance this role should be identified and assessed.

Rolling stock procurement .

Q2 Is our schedule for new service introduction right?

- The introduction of the half-hour service between Kilmarnock and Glasgow is a long-awaited and welcome initiative.

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

- Modern Rolling Stock.
- Stations Community Regeneration Fund
- Projects to enhance public transport to the Commonwealth Games
- Environmental Improvement Works
- Provision of a wireless technology service to passengers on the Kilmarnock-
- Glasgow service

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

- Journey times are reasonable at the moment. More weight should be given to enhancing other aspects of the service; new stock, station upgrades etc.

Q5 How can buying a ticket be made easier?

- More 'over-the-counter' services
- 'Customer service' staff to offer assistance and advice when buying a ticket

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- Internet purchase facilities
- Customer Service and ticket sales should be separated. Often, queues form at the ticket booth because ticket sales staff are occupied giving customer advice.

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?

- Where possible, stations should be vibrant, welcoming and safe places from which journeys can be made, but which are also attractive for those who, for timetabling and other reasons, need to spend time in them.
- The features that are appropriate to each station will depend on location, adjacent facilities, frequency of usage etc., but should be assessed and planned in consultation with passengers, local agencies and the community.

Q7 How could the station environment be improved?

- New enclosed and modernised platform areas, as at Inverness Station.
- Café, snack and retail outlets
- Tourist and local history information
- Stations regularly painted and cleaned, and particular effort made to keep underpasses in good order, safe, clean and secure. (e.g. Kilmarnock underpass, which is currently in very poor condition)
- Bringing into use the many small office/retail spaces within stations

Q8 How could signage be improved at stations?

- Modern timetable electronic signage
- More 'signposting' of facilities/attractions that can be accessed from stations
- Signage that shows actual time to next train

Q9 How can we improve assisted travel at stations?

- Wheelchair access
- Facilities for passengers with assistance dogs
- Availability of dedicated staff

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Q10 Do you have any ideas for further 'RailLinks'? Please consider the accessibility of:

- Investment to support 'no-change' access from Kilmarnock to Edinburgh

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

- For regular travellers, pricing has to be significantly cheaper than the cost of driving
- Park and ride needs to improve and be reflected in total cost of journey for commuters

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

- Modern, clean and attractive rolling stock
- Catering/snacks
- Entertainment access – perhaps through 'plug in' or blue tooth
- Internet access

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

- The number of locations served

Q14 How could we improve the travel interchange at stations?

- Car parking

Q15 What should our communications connectivity priorities be?

- Internet

Q16 Would wireless internet technology significantly benefit passengers?

- For business use

Q17 Would you pay for this service?

- That would conflict with making it easiest to use

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

- N/A

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

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

- Improve the energy efficiency of the stations – use of solar/wind etc.

Q21 What should we consider in station and community regeneration?

- Across the network, many station, including Kilmarnock, have underused/vacant commercial/administrative facilities. A sustained effort should be made to bring these back into use. In their current condition, many of them detract from the security and environmental quality of stations. If brought into use, they could add life and interest to the stations and, in some cases, provide much-needed facilities/services for travellers.
- Railway heritage centre showing Kilmarnock's importance in the development of rail in Scotland.

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

- See Q21

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?

- Crossrail connection of south and northern networks around Glasgow, which could also bring benefits to Kilmarnock and Loudoun through enhanced direct links to Edinburgh

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

- N/A

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

- Improving access and security arrangements and the presence of other groups of users around the rail network would have benefits for many equalities groups. The least attractive environment for equalities groups is a dark, dirty and deserted station concourse, accessible only by unsupervised stairs or underpass. The fewer of these in the network, the better for all equalities groups.