APPENDIX C

Aberdeenshire Council

Scotrail Franchise Consultation Document response

Question 1: Which of the Priced Options do you think best support the delivery of Scotland's Railways?

Answer: Within the context of the National Transport Strategy there are three main aims:

- Improving journey times
- Reducing Emissions
- Improving quality, accessibility and affordability.

The Priced Options should be chosen to best align with these aims.

From a North East Scotland viewpoint, there still remains an overriding concern that the relative peripherality of the region is not fully addressed by the current rail franchise.

Improvements to the connections with the Central Belt, and beyond, are seen as a key plank within Aberdeenshire Council's Local Transport Strategy and proposals to enhance this service, through timetable recasting is welcomed.

As well as enhancements to the service schedule to Edinburgh and Glasgow, it is essential that services from North East Scotland achieve efficient connections to services continuing south, ultimately to London. It is, therefore, encouraging to see that early morning connections to London are to be improved, however, it is essential that the impact of any changes be fully considered in relation to connections from the north east.

As well as long distance travel, one of the stated aims of Scotland's Railways is to move people quickly and reliably within the city regions. Through a recasting of the Aberdeen – Edinburgh, and Aberdeen – Inverness services. it is hoped that a fast, efficient, reliable service can be created to move people along the Stonehaven – Inverurie Corridor.

Finally, the reopening of Laurencekirk Station is fully supported and will provide a significant improvement in local service provision in the Aberdeenshire area. Success of services from this station will depend on the stopping patterns achieved in the Winter 2008 timetable recasting. However, it is anticipated that this service enhancement will add significant users numbers and is hugely welcomed.

Question 2: Is our schedule for new service introduction right?

Answer: From the information provided in the consultation document it is difficult to comment on the schedule for new service introduction.

From a general viewpoint, it is encouraging to see that the need to improve the speed and reliability of journeys is high on the improvement agenda. There is a balance, however, to be struck between fast long distance services and those which provide greater accessibility to the network for more rural areas.

Care must be taken in the design of service improvements to ensure that this balance can be maintained, and improved. The way in which the inclusion of Laurencekirk Station is handled in the recasting of the timetable is very important, so that the new facility can achieve passenger growth, while not having a disproportionate affect on the Aberdeen – Edinburgh journey time.

Question 3: Which future Priced Options would you wish to see Transport Scotland develop?

Answer: The introduction of an hourly service from Inverness to Aberdeen would assist in the development of that corridor for local commuter traffic, as well as improving the accessibility to Inverness.

Coupled with improvements to that service would be the reopening of Kintore Station. The draft Development Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire highlights substantial development opportunities along that particular transport corridor. Reopening of the station at Kintore would provide modal choice for an area that is expected to grow substantially over the coming decade.

Improvements to the bottleneck sections of the infrastructure, such as Kittybrewster, should be included in future Priced Options. Removal of such restrictions would allow greater flexibility of timetabling and for future enhancements to services.

Connected to that improvement, would be consideration of the provision of an Aberdeen Crossrail service, providing enhanced local services on the Stonehaven to Inverurie corridor, potentially extending to, the about to be reopened, Laurencekirk Station. The scale of potential development along this corridor, as highlighted in the Draft Development Plan, is such there is a need to provide a local service that can augment that already provided. Without such augmentation, the full potential of the rail infrastructure in this area cannot be realised, and true modal choice cannot be offered.

Connectivity to stations is an issue for rural areas such as Aberdeenshire. Facilities at stations that allow multi modal journeys, such as car and cycle parking, should feature highly on future Priced Options. Linked to this is connectivity across public transport modes. Integrated ticketing and timetable alignment are essential to improve the public transport product, and initiatives to drive this forward would be welcomed in future Priced Options.

In the longer term, further consideration should be given to the electrification of the line south from Aberdeen. Scotland has set challenging carbon reduction targets, and it is essential that the transport sector plays its full role in the realisation of these reductions. In addition, electrification of the line south from Aberdeen would provide substantial opportunity for large-scale renewable generation to be established to meet the required demand.

Question 4: Where should we concentrate our efforts on improving services, in particular journey times?

Answer: From the perspective of North East Scotland, connections to Edinburgh/Glasgow and Inverness are the main corridors where improvements to overall journey time would have the greatest impact. Aberdeenshire is relatively peripheral in nature and linkages to the main population centres in the central belt of Scotland are essential to the development of our business sectors.

It is important, however, that service improvement is not just focused on journey time. The frequency of the service is also vitally important.

In addition, the stopping pattern of services have to be carefully designed to ensure that a balance is struck between reducing long distance travel times, and improving rural accessibility.

Question 5: How can buying a ticket be made easier?

- **More 'over-the counter' services**
- **More 'ticket vending machines'**
- **'Customer service' staff to offer assistance and advice when buying a ticket**
- **Internet purchase facilities**
- **Telesales**
- **Through mobile phones**
- **Smart cards.**

Answer: At the present time, one of the main issues with purchasing a ticket is the wide range of pricing options available. For the occasional passengers, this is extremely confusing, and leads to a lack of confidence that the correct option is being chosen. Clarity is required across all service providers to ensure the customers have confidence that they are being given the correct information and are purchasing the most appropriate ticket.

Putting that issue to one side, it is important that a range of options is made available to customers. This is not an element where "one size fits all". For regular commuters options to pre-purchase tickets, is one are that could be improved. The option to check in online, and print boarding cards, has become extremely popular in the air industry and a similar arrangement would be a significant improvement to the current arrangement for rail. It is fully accepted that a change such as this will

require investment in station infrastructure, however, “ease of use” continually rates highly in customer survey results.

At busier stations, improvements to the number of automatic ticket vending machines would be beneficial. As well as increasing the number of machines, new infrastructure should fully integrate alternative payments methods, such as smart cards, mobile phones, and advances in “touch less” credit card technology.

However, for the less experienced rail users over the counter services should also be available. Assistance from well-trained staff is essential in creating a sense of confidence for customers who are unfamiliar with the rail network.

The needs of all users have to be taken forward and improved. There are a range of users who require additional assistance to make full use of the railway network. Improvements to ticket sales procedures must take account of their needs, through the provision of specialist information and advice, along with appropriately trained staff on telephone helps lines and on site.

Question 6: 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? Please consider:

- **The size of station based on passenger numbers and demand**
- **Type of facilities (e.g. food outlets, news-stands, pharmacies, etc.)**
- **Community-based initiatives supported by the Stations community regeneration Fund.**

Answer: At main interchange stations, passengers are likely to have some time between connections to take advantage of commercial retail outlets on the station site. However, the business model of a railway station is different to that of say an airport, and most passengers have a limited time at the station. Retail space should be provided that gives the opportunity for passengers to quickly purchase small items that they may require for their journey, such as fast food outlets and newsagents.

However, the main role of the station is to provide facilities that help and encourage customers who chose to travel by rail. Space must be available to comfortably purchase tickets and seek advice and guidance on travel planning. Space should be retained to allow travel information, such as maps and timetables to be conveniently located. Allowing for future advances in technology and roll out of technology based travel planning infrastructure will be an essential aspect of station planning.

As most rail journeys are multi modal, it is essential that facilities are provided to accommodate this, such as high quality car parking provision, and secure motorcycle parking. As initiatives continue to encourage Active Travel modes, stations should provide the required facilities, such as secure cycle storage and personal locker space.

While some passengers will see having a range of commercial outlets available at railway stations as a positive aspect, it is important that the primary role of the station is not compromised in an attempt to release space for retail. Stations in the first instance must provide attractive, convenient, comfortable facilities for travellers, with retail opportunities being a secondary feature.

Development of major retail space around the railway station is a method that has been used to deliver both these aspects. Numerous examples are available highlighting the opportunity to redevelop these areas to create an attractive traveller environment while also bringing rail connectivity to a major retail development.

Question 7: How could the station environment be improved? Please consider:

- **lighting**
- **availability of seating/ furniture**
- **safety (e.g. through technology such as CCTV, 'Help-Points')**
- **a visible staff presence.**

Answer: Information available from a number of sources appears to indicate that safety, or perceived safety at stations is a major concern for particular groups of travellers. Through improved design of stations, both externally and internally, the perception of safety could be improved. Initiatives such as "Secured by Design" and "Park Mark" may provide useful information and guidance to improve stations. In addition, both these initiatives include an approvals scheme that allows their logos to be used once a certain standard has been achieved. The inclusion of stations in these schemes would also improve the traveller's perception of safety. In the North East of Scotland, there are specific issues regarding the staffing and full DDA access at Inverurie and Dyce Stations.

Simple additions such as improved lighting and the provision of CCTV would provide a substantial improvement, and are features that regularly score highly in user satisfaction surveys.

As most journeys involve an element of waiting at the station, it is essential that passengers can do so in a comfortable environment. The provision of waiting facilities that are open during the times of operation require to be provided at all stations.

Question 8: How could signage be improved at stations?

- **Directions within stations to ticket office. Platforms, toilets, etc**
- **Direction to facilities nearby e.g. hospitals.**

Answer: It is important that signage in, and around, stations is accessible to all sectors of the community. Sign location and design should take account of the needs of all users, and cater for those with particular needs. This includes issues such as lettering and background design, location, as well as signage that is Braille

and pictogram based. Further roll out of the RNIB REACT system would also be welcomed.

Signage should also take account of the fact that railway stations play a strong role in Scotland's tourism sector and information should be available to cater for the need of visitors.

To aid the integration of rail into multi modal journeys, information regarding connections with nearby facilities is essential, as well as information on how to change to alternate modes such as buses and taxis.

Question 9: How can we improve assisted travel at stations? In particular, please consider:

- **station access (such as wheelchair ramps, facilities for light scooters, facilities for passengers with assistance dogs)**
- **assistance for people with hearing or learning difficulties**
- **increased training for existing staff**
- **the availability of dedicated staff.**

Answer: Rail travel provides a convenient method of travel across Scotland, however, access to facilities for those requiring additional support is not as good as it should be.

Infrastructure improvements are required at stations, particularly the smaller ones, to ensure that access arrangements are as easy as possible. Every effort should be made to allow disabled passengers to have the same level of service as other passenger, preserving their travel independence as much as possible.

Where this is not possible, staff must be available at stations to assist travellers when they are needed. For most cases, it is not felt appropriate that this assistance should be given by "dedicated staff", and should be part of the role of all station staff. However, the provision of staff with specialist skills, such as sign language, at larger stations would also be beneficial.

Training of staff plays an essential role in giving confidence to passengers who require additional support they will be treated with respect and dignity. This level of care must be available at all stations, as the fear of assistance not being available at journeys end is a significant inhibitor to travel.

Question 10: Do you have any ideas for further 'Rail Links?' Please consider the accessibility of:

- **Hospitals**
- **Bus station interchange**
- **Car parking**
- **Park and ride**
- **Travelwise**

– **Walking routes.**

Answer: As outlined earlier, the majority of rail journeys are truly multi modal. The provision of high quality links to the main onward destinations is essential for the continued increase in rail patronage. Dedicated links to hospital and transport interchanges should be a priority, with the cost and ticketing arrangements for these services being part of the original fare.

As well as links to these destinations, further consideration should be given to creating links with the other main transport modes, namely airports and ferry ports. Where these dedicated links already exist, such as Luton Airport, they appear to be successful and well patronised. Consideration should be given to the funding of such links, so that the operators of the facilities are encouraged to support services that provide the intermodal linkages.

It is encouraging to see that Active Travel has been considered in this section. The ease by which facilities can be reached by cycling or walking before, or after, a rail journey plays an important role in passenger choice. Further expansion of the information available to plan and coordinate these journeys is to be welcomed. Consideration should be given to active participation in initiatives such as Walkit.com, providing augmented information for Active Travel.

Question 11: Which pilot scheme changes to fares should we make to encourage modal shift? Please consider:

– **Reduced fares for (disabled passengers, families, students, low-income groups, ex-servicemen)**
– **Reduced fares at targeted times of day/year**
– **Annual season tickets**
– **Geographical tickets, i.e. tickets for a particular region**
– **Other rail cards.**

Answer: At the present time, there are a number of fare options available, and reference to the First ScotRail web pages highlights the number of different options. Unfortunately, the choice of the best ticket is complicated by the nature of the options available and the restrictions that apply to them. These restrictions are not just based on travel time, but also on location and route. The application of ticket choices uniformly across the network would assist in simplifying the customer's choice.

Trials to address the concerns of specific users groups are to be welcomed, however, care has to be taken to ensure that pilots are well advertised and promoted. Their terms and conditions must also be as simple and clear as possible, to ensure that the target group can easily access them.

Trials that extend the through ticketing options available should be considered. The ease by which customers can transfer from one mode to another is a significant factor in travel choice. Co-operation across rail and bus/coach based modes on a single ticket would be beneficial. This would be assisted by augmented route

planning software allowing a multi modal journey to be planned, and one ticket purchased in a single transaction. At present, solutions such as Traveline Scotland allow a multi modal journey to be planned, but do not allow a ticket to be purchased, where the First ScotRail site allows a rail journey to be planned, but not a multi modal trip. Integration of the two systems would be beneficial.

Within the airline industry, the use of loyalty reward schemes appears to be prevalent, and anecdotal evidence would suggest well received by customers. At present, the loyalty programme operated by First ScotRail is restricted to certain classes of traveller, and it is not clear what the actual benefits of the scheme are. The potential for revisions to this scheme, to make it open to a wider range of customer, with defined benefits should be investigated to determine if this may provide an additional benefit to encourage modal shift.

Question 12: When travelling on the train, how could passengers' experiences be improved? In particular, please consider:

- **the balance between the provision of seating (including tables) and the availability of storage space (for luggage, cycles etc.)**
- **(Up-to-date) information**
- **Helpfulness of staff**
- **Catering.**

Answer: Travelling by train provides a different function for individual passengers and some of their demands, and expectations, will be directly opposing.

However, no matter what type of traveller you happen to be, up to date, high quality information is an essential element of a successful journey.

Likewise, the cleanliness of the train, and the station facilities, are important to all rail passengers. When standards fall below those expected this is remembered, and unfortunately taints the image of the rail industry, irrespective of how many acceptable journeys have been made. Achieving a high standard of cleanliness on all services, and at all stations, is an area where passengers experience could be improved.

Depending of the route and the time of day, the facilities offered on a service may well have to alter. For example, short distance commuter services require to provide as much seating capacity as possible, so removal of tables and reduction in luggage space to increase seating capacity may well be acceptable. However, this style of carriage arrangement would not be applicable for long distance services, where higher quality seating, additional luggage space and more passenger tables would suit the needs of passenger more fully.

The same is true for catering services, which may be considered as unimportant for a commuter shuttle journey, but absolutely essential for a longer journey through Scotland.

There is no one answer to this particular issue, however, by understanding the demographics of the customer on certain routes at certain times, it may be possible to improve carriage design. The issue of flexibility in the layout of a carriage is potentially the best compromise solution. For example, designs where additional seating can be created from luggage space when required at commuter times, but "packed away" again for the remainder of the day may be a solution. Some limited solutions are available on current rolling stock by further consideration should be give to improved designs to allow greater flexibility of the available space.

The ability to carry bikes on trains should be considered to discourage people using the car to get to and from the station and assist with the promotion of leisure based tourism. Integrating rail services with this kind of sustainable transport should be encouraged. Through consultation for our Cycling and Walking Strategy, the issue of enhanced bike carriage on trains was raised several times.

Question 13: Where should we concentrate our efforts in improving the Anglo-Scottish sleeper service? In particular please consider:

- **the number of locations served**
- **facilities on trains or at stations**
- **arrival and departure times**
- **the provision of airline-style overnight seats**
- **catering**
- **staffing.**

Answer: When concentrating on improving the Anglo-Scottish sleeper service, the main criteria must be the directness of the route and the departure and arrival times.

Currently, scheduling from North East Scotland ensures arrival at London, or Aberdeen, at a reasonable time to allow for morning onward connections. However, reductions in the overall time of the journey would be beneficial and allow departure times to be later, reducing the impact on the departure day's routine.
Anecdotal evidence would suggest that catering services are sometimes limited, or non existent, on certain legs of the journey from/to Aberdeen. This is a matter that should be investigated further and processes put in place to ensure that catering on this long distance service is not compromised for other operational reasons.

Wi-fi provision throughout the entire train, included in the ticket price, would add significantly to the facilities on offer to travellers. One of the main advantages of using such a service is to be able to stay in contact and undertake business activity.

The inclusion of modern aircraft style seating in the Sleeper Seated carriages would also add to the comfort of passengers. In addition, these seats could also include modern "seat back" entertainments systems, currently available on aircraft, creating a more modern user experience.

Improvements at destination stations to provide travellers with more opportunity to shower and change clothes may be a useful improvement. This is a facility that is expanding within the airport business and may transfer well to the rail sector.

Question 14: 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.**

Answer: Improving the integration between rail services and other modes of transport should be addressed through ticketing. Having a multi-modal ticketing system in place would encourage passenger growth, through increased convenience and possible cost savings for passengers.

Service connections need to be considered, not only in terms of train to train services, but also between train and bus services. Better integration of timetables across these modes would reduce connection delays and reduce the overall journey time, allowing public transport to more effectively compete with the private car.

As stated previously, the facility to plan and purchase a multi modal journey via one transaction would also improve travel interchange. This facility could be provided off site, via the web based solution or the telephone ticket line, or alternatively via travel kiosks at the station.

Facilities for cyclists should be considered with appropriate cycle storage and possible signage/ links to cycling networks, as well as signage for walking routes. At busier stations, consideration should be given to the establishment of commuter hire bike schemes, similar to those in operation in Paris and Rome.

Promotion of walking and cycling routes would also assist modal transfer. Involvement with initiatives such as Walkit.com could provide a convenient way of demonstrating the accessibility of stations.

Accessibility for disabled passengers needs to be considered at all stations to increase confidence levels that passengers will be able to access the rail services as easily and conveniently as other passengers. Roll out of access to all stations is essential to create this confidence no matter what route is travelled.

The fact that the car is still by far the most common method of transport in Scotland can not be forgotten. As has been highlighted many times, train journeys usually form part of a multi modal trip. It is quite likely that one leg of that trip may be carried out by car. It is, therefore, essential that the needs of passengers who arrive at stations by car be fully catered for. This is more crucial at rural stations, where car parking facilities require to be ample, and conveniently located. Any failure in this regard is likely to further encourage the driver to complete the whole journey by car.

Often the development and management of car parking at rail stations is complicated by the ownership/leasing arrangements via Network Rail, First ScotRail and the

relevant Local Authority. This should be reviewed on a partnership basis, to ensure the greatest flexibility to cater for passenger needs.

By its very nature travel by rail usually involves connections, either to other rail services, or to alternative public transport modes. This usually requires a period of time where no travel is actually undertaken. Facilities at stations should allow passenger to carry out another function while they wait for that connection. The provision of Wi-fi at stations is one useful tool to achieve this. It allows business users to undertaken work related tasks, while allowing leisure travellers to access the Internet and social networking activity. Coupled with the roll out of such technology on board trains the whole journey can be undertaken while "connected" which, for certain customer groups, would be seen as a major advantage.

Question 15: What should our communications connectivity priorities be?

Answer: A major attraction of travel on the rail network is to "let the train take the strain". This releases the traveller from an active role, as required by taking the car, or the technological isolation enforced by the airline industry.

The leisure sector and business traveller alike now demands constant communication and Internet connectivity. The train already benefits from the ability to use mobile phone technology through the journey, or at least most of it.

The extension of this to the every expending wi-fi network would be a another beneficial feature associated with rail travel.

Question 16: Would wireless internet technology significantly benefit passengers? Please comment on:

- **for leisure use**
- **for business use**
- **short ' commuter' journeys**
- **longer distance journeys.**

Answer: Wi-fi would significantly benefit passengers in terms of providing an additional "bonus" that may encourage them to take the train in the first instance. When driving or flying the actual journey travel time is "dead time" in terms of connectivity. This is a significant advantage that rail has and can be used more effectively as a unique selling point.

The appeal of constant connectivity is wide spread and is no longer the reserve of the laptop enabled businessman. Through advances in mobile technology ever expanding sections of society are using wi-fi at home, in coffee shops, and on some trains, to add "productivity" to their day – or simply to read the online newspaper!

It would be fair to say that there is potentially more opportunity to access wi-fi on longer journeys, on less busy trains, where there is room to use a laptop. However,

access via wi-fi is now common place on mobile phone type devices, only taking seconds to download email, music, or social networking sites.

Given the broad nature of use, it is probably as important to deploy such technology on short commuter routes as well as long distance services, and the Sleeper.

Question 17: Would you pay for this service

Answer: The most successful deployment of Wi-fi across other business sectors appears to have been where it is free at the point of use. Certainly where it is provided "free" such as in cafes, fast food restaurants, and hotels, it is used as a successful marketing tool to differentiate them from competitors who charge.

There is no doubt that some travellers would be more than happy to pay an appropriate fee, particularly on longer journeys. However, this would significantly limit the appeal of the service, and it is considered that the cost of provision should be accommodated within the headline ticket price.

Question 18: Where should the Edinburgh-Glasgow Smart Card pilot project take us? Please consider:

– **the outcomes which would determine whether the pilot was successful.**

Answer: The Smart Card pilot should provide a useful tool to demonstrate "proof of concept" for the application of smart card technology to the Scottish market place. Successful deployment of a similar technology has already been achieved by Transport for London, with the Oyster Card, however, this is in a fully regulated market place.

As the proposal is understood at the present time the trial will only look at how the system can be deployed on the rail network. The real value added benefit of such a system would be to allow its use on other public transport modes.

As with all pilots, it is important that any results take account of the fact that the Edinburgh – Glasgow corridor provides a very particular travel solution, and that other routes within Scotland have a different passenger demographic.

Question 19: How best can we focus the franchisee on the options for delivering better sustainability?

Answer: The franchise is already controlled through a series of service specific indicators. Since sustainability can best be delivered through integration into day-to-day operations it may not be appropriate to create additional indicators specifically to address this issue.

Question 20: How should the Environmental improvement works budget be used to further improve our carbon footprint on the railways? Please consider:

- **electrification**
- **waste recycling**
- **time switch lighting**
- **'eco' driving trialing**
- **LED light installation**
- **Non-traction energy improvements**
- **Other**

Answer: The intention of the Environmental Improvement Works budget would appear to be to deliver small-scale environmental improvements. As such it would seem unrealistic for that particular budget to delivery electrification on any meaningful scale. While electrification of the network is an important ambition, it should be delivered via an alternative financing mechanism and not this budget.

In relation to traction, the biggest impact that can be delivered is likely to come through an extensive programme of driver training. In other sectors, Eco Driving training has demonstrated the potential to deliver significant fuel savings.

In relation to non-traction adoption of best practice building management regimes would have the potential to realise considerable savings across the entire network. The use of modern technology in relation to building lighting, and exterior lighting, would help to reduce environmental impacts. Management of demand, and subsequent reduction of consumption is likely to demonstrate the largest potential.

However, consideration could also be given to the installation of appropriate renewable technologies at stations to provide power for heat and light. Larger stations may be suitable of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems, while smaller stations may afford opportunities for micro generation, or community generation schemes.

Question 21: What should we consider in station and community regeneration? Please think about:

- **the size of station**
- **facilities which reflect the needs of each community.**

Answer: Stations form an important hub for smaller communities. Each station provides a very specific role within that community, however, no one type of regeneration suits all sites. By its very nature, community regeneration must be developed from "the bottom up" in a way that fully involves the surrounding community.

Question 22: Where should we concentrate our efforts on the station community regeneration fund?

Answer: The development of smaller rural stations is likely to have a larger impact on communities. Efforts should be directed to engaging with these communities and ensuring that the station community regeneration fund can be used to lever in additional community funding.

Question 23: What additional service or projects in furtherance of the Commonwealth Games Bid commitments do you feel would most benefit the city during the Games period?

Answer: Integrated public transport ticketing across the city would have a substantial benefit for the city during the Games period. The deployment of integrated smart ticketing should strive to ensure that the use of public transport is as easy as possible for users. It is likely that the city will see a large influx of visitors during the Games. For visitors the ability to purchase one card to cover all travel for the duration of their stay would be hugely beneficial.

Improved linkages for visitors travelling from further a field would also be beneficial. Linkages to Glasgow and Edinburgh Airports will be required to ensure that foreign visitors can access the city by public transport from their first destination in Scotland.

Provisions of an extended range of information in relation to public transport routes to/from venues would assist travellers to feel confident about using public transport. This information should also include details relating to Active Travel modes, and how these can be built into the public transport provision, clear signage to venues when leaving the stations would help in this regard.

Question 24: What aspects of the Project Manager's role are priorities to ensure the successful delivery of the projects?

Answer: When prioritising the projects, it is considered that those elements which directly benefit passengers should be top priority. Partnership working should be encouraged with the public and private sector.

Question 25: Do you think that any of the improvements and enhancements proposed above will have either a positive or adverse impact on equality groups in terms of:

- **age**
- **disability**
- **gender**
- **LGBT**
- **Race**
- **Religion and belief?**

Answer: The aspirations within this document are to create a more accessible service that is integrated across all transport modes. The proposals outlined in the document appear to be such that they would generally have a positive impact on all the groups listed. However, the franchise holder should ensure that the full range of equality impact assessments are undertaken in line with the relevant legislation. Care will be required in the design and implementation of improved signage and communication techniques to ensure there is no adverse effect on certain groups, such as the elderly or disabled, however, this should be achievable.