

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**16 MARCH 2010****CONSULTATIONS****REPORT BY STRATEGY MANAGER**

This report seeks the Partnership's endorsement of an officer response to consultation by East Coast Main Line on its proposed train timetable. The report also seeks approval for proposed responses to Nestrans consultation on their Rail Action Plan, the Department for Transport consultation on the InterCity East Coast Franchise and the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Inquiry into Facing up to Climate Change.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Partnership:-

- (i) endorses the officer submission to East Coast Main Line consultation, as detailed in Appendix A;
- (ii) approves the proposed response to Nestrans consultation on their Rail Action Plan, as detailed in Appendix B;
- (iii) approves the proposed response to the Department for Transport's consultation on the InterCity East Coast Franchise, as detailed in Appendix C;
- (iv) approves the proposed response to the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Inquiry into Facing up to Climate Change, as detailed in Appendix D; and
- (v) agrees to delegate authority to the director to respond to Angus Council's Public Transport Policy Statement and Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park's Finalised Draft local Plan.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 East Coast Main Line (trains) has published information on a new timetable for East Main Line train services from 22 May 2011. Consultation comments were sought by the end of February 2010. The timetable information is available for inspection at: <http://www.eastcoast.co.uk/travel-information/Eureka/>.
- 2.2 Nestrans has published a First Discussion Draft of a Rail Action Plan 2010-2021. Consultation responses are to be submitted by 31 March 2010. The consultation document is available for inspection at: http://www.nestrans.org.uk/db_docs/docs/Rail%20Action%20Plan%20draft.pdf
- 2.3 The Department for Transport (DfT) has published a consultation document on the InterCity East Coast (ICEC) Franchise. Consultation responses are to be submitted by 19 April 2010. The consultation document is available for inspection at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/2010-08/consultation.pdf>

- 2.4 The Royal Society of Edinburgh is undertaking an inquiry into “Facing up to Climate Change”. Submissions are requested by 1 May 2010. Further information is available at:
http://www.rse.org.uk/enquiries/climate_change/index.htm.

3 DISCUSSION

Proposed East Coast Main Line train timetable

- 3.1 East Coast Main Line has published proposed timetable changes from 22 May 2011 (given Eureka branding). These are subject to final industry approval later in the year.
- 3.2 Services between Edinburgh and London will move to a clockface timetable with slightly improved travel times, generally 5-6 minutes faster. These will give better connections at Edinburgh from the south into the fast Edinburgh - Dundee and Highland Main Line services.
- 3.3 Direct services north of Edinburgh to and from Inverness and Aberdeen will not be changed though a new direct journey will be introduced at 06.32 from Dundee to London Kings Cross. This will replace an existing 06.32 Cross Country service from Dundee to Plymouth which will start from Edinburgh instead. The proposed timings will not guarantee a connection at Edinburgh from the Dundee – London service to the Edinburgh – Plymouth train.
- 3.4 A further area of concern is that the last daytime travel opportunities from Dundee and Perth to London will be at least one hour earlier than currently which may impact particularly on business travel.
- 3.5 A copy of the submitted officer response, which was compiled in consultation with the Public Transport Officers Liaison Group, is included at Appendix A, which the Partnership is asked to endorse.

Nestrans Rail Action Plan 2010-2021

- 3.6 Nestrans has produced a first Discussion Draft of a Rail Action Plan for their region for the period 2010 - 2021. The Draft Plan addresses a number of issues comprising rail information; establishment of a North East Scotland Rail Forum; access to stations; car parking and facilities at stations; integration; passenger safety; ticketing; fares; stopping patterns and frequencies; freight; and infrastructure improvements.
- 3.7 The actions are principally concerned with services, facilities, etc within the Nestrans region. Some, for example, improvements to Aberdeen Station, would be of benefit to passengers travelling to/from the Tactran region. There are actions where it is suggested that Nestrans should act jointly with Tactran, particularly with regard to additional stops at Stonehaven and a recast of the Aberdeen-Glasgow service, to ensure that passengers within the Tactran region are not adversely affected.
- 3.8 A proposed response is included at Appendix B, which the Partnership is asked to approve for submission by 31 March 2010.

InterCity East Coast Franchise

- 3.9 The Department for Transport has published a consultation document on the InterCity East Coast Franchise. Services on the East Coast Main Line are currently being operated directly by the Department. These services are being re-cast and a proposed timetable is out for consultation, as outlined in paragraphs 3.1 – 3.5 above. The consultation document is concerned with a new franchise that is intended to commence in autumn 2011.
- 3.10 The Department has started the detailed specification stage of the re-franchise process. This will be informed by stakeholder comments and will consider a range of options based on stakeholders' views to increase or reduce aspects of their initial view of the base case specification. The options will be evaluated to identify changes that would improve value for money for the taxpayer or address other franchise objectives within the Department's affordability constraints. The base case specification will be the May 2011 timetable.
- 3.11 DfT has outlined its objectives for the franchise which are:
- to achieve sustainable value for money
 - improve operational performance
 - seek to accommodate current and anticipated growth in passenger demand
 - improve alignment with stakeholder and passenger aspirations
 - improve robustness of the franchise to external events
 - Improve overall customer satisfaction
 - improve accessibility to ICEC services and stations
 - benchmark and improve environmental performance
 - realise the benefits to passengers of investment in infrastructure, rolling stock and stations on the East Coast Main line.
- 3.12 A key aspect of the new franchise will be the introduction of new Super Express Trains. These will have better acceleration and higher seating capacity than existing trains. They will replace the IC125 (HST) trains used on services north of Edinburgh in 2014/15. The replacement units will have bi-mode operation being self powered as well as being able to draw power from the overhead electricity supply south of Edinburgh. The introduction of the trains provides the opportunity to make further improvements to the timetable, probably in December 2016, including offering improved journey times and service frequencies.
- 3.13 The consultation document poses a number of questions. These are considered in the proposed response, included at Appendix C, which the Partnership is asked to approve for submission by 19 April 2010.

Royal Society of Edinburgh's Inquiry into Facing up to Climate Change

- 3.14 The Royal Society of Edinburgh is holding an inquiry into how best to respond to climate change in Scotland. The Inquiry is aiming to engage with various stakeholders to help develop and respond to proposed Government climate change policies; and to identify barriers to change and to recommend measures for current and future policies in these areas and the timescale on which actions need to be developed.
- 3.15 A proposed response is included at Appendix D, which the Partnership is asked to approve for submission by 1 May 2010.

**Angus Council – Public Transport Policy Statement
Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Finalised Draft Local Plan**

- 3.16 Angus Council has submitted a Draft Public Transport Policy Statement for consultation with responses sought by 19 March 2010. Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park has published a Finalised Draft Local Plan for consultation, with a closing date for replies of 6 April 2010.
- 3.17 Both of these consultations were received too late to prepare responses for inclusion in this report. Therefore, it is recommended that the Partnership delegate authority for the Director to respond.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 The various responses addressed in this report have been prepared in consultation with partner Councils and other stakeholders through the relevant Officer Liaison Groups.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

**Michael Cairns
Strategy Manager**

For further information e-mail michaelcairns@tactran.gov.uk or tel 01738 475774.

NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:

InterCity East Coast Franchise Consultation. Department for Transport January 2010

Nestrans Rail Action Plan First Discussion Draft 2010-2021 February 2010

New East Coast Timetable Consultation
East Coast Main Line Co Ltd
East Coast House
25 Skeldergate
York
YO1 6DH

24th February 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

Consultation, New East Coast Timetable

I refer to the above consultation. The response from *Tactran*, which has been prepared in consultation with and has the agreement of our four partner Councils, Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Perth & Kinross Council and Stirling Council, is as follows:

Tactran welcomes the timetable changes in general, particularly the faster journey times between Edinburgh and Kings Cross. It is noted that the arrival times in Edinburgh from London will provide better connections to Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose and Perth, and consequently shorter overall journey times for those passengers changing at Edinburgh.

There are areas of concern to Tactran regarding the 06.32 journey from Dundee to Kings Cross, the apparent loss of the 21.32 Aberdeen – Edinburgh service and the last departure from Edinburgh to Kings Cross. It is noted that the 0632 Dundee departure will give an earlier arrival time in London by direct train than currently. However, the 25 minute stand at Edinburgh will detract from this advantage. Also by changing this journey from a Cross Country Plymouth service to an East Coast one there is considerable detriment to longer distance passengers as it will arrive at Edinburgh with insufficient time to make a connection into the Cross Country journey that it currently operates (0811 Edinburgh – Plymouth which would leave at 0810). Arrival times at major centres on the East Coast Main Line would also be later than currently – Newcastle 12 minutes later, Darlington by 11 minutes and York by 9 minutes. Tactran requests that this journey be re-examined to establish whether the Dundee departure could be brought forward by 5 – 10 minutes to connect with the 0810 Edinburgh Cross Country service and to link through to London using the 0800 Edinburgh path.

It is unclear from the draft timetable whether the 2132 Aberdeen – Dundee – Edinburgh will continue to operate. This provides a last link from Aberdeen and stations in the Tactran region (Montrose, Arbroath and Dundee) to Edinburgh. If this service is not to continue the last train will operate 30 minutes earlier to the detriment of evening visitors to the Tactran towns.

With regard to the last departure from Edinburgh to Kings Cross, currently this is at 1900 which allows connections from trains departing Dundee at 1726, Perth at 1700 and Stirling at 1736. The earlier time of 1830 will result in a last day time connection from Perth to London at 1559, from Stirling to London at 17.06 and at 1604 from Dundee by direct train. The timings at Perth and Dundee in particular would disadvantage afternoon business meetings in the two cities.

I trust that the above comments are of assistance. If you require any further information, or clarification of any aspect in this response, please contact Michael Cairns, Strategy Manager on 01738 475774 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric Guthrie', written in a cursive style.

Eric Guthrie
Director

Rab Dickson
Transport Strategy Manager
Nestrans
Archibald Simpson House
27-29 King Street
Aberdeen
AB24 5AA

16th March 2010

Dear Rab,

Rail Action Plan 2010-2021

I refer to the above consultation.

In general Tactran supports the actions contained within the Plan as these will benefit passengers travelling between the two regions.

It is noted that it is intended to increase the number of trains stopping at Stonehaven. Tactran would support this proposal so long as it does not affect the stopping pattern of trains in the Tactran region. In terms of this, the proposed recast of the Aberdeen-Glasgow service and finding a solution to the line constraints at Usan it is suggested that the two Partnerships act together to ensure consistency of approach and to maximise benefits for the travelling public in both regions. These actions can also be considered in the context of the longer term aspirations for TERS (Tay Estuary Rail Study) for enhanced frequency of services between Arbroath and Glasgow. To this end Tactran will be pleased to ensure officer attendance at the proposed North East Scotland Rail Forum.

On the issue of High Speed Rail Tactran, Nestrans and Hitrans have worked together and it is suggested that this continue to ensure that the benefits of faster train services are achieved whether through an extension of the High Speed Line to Aberdeen or ensuring that through trains from the three regions to London make effective use of the proposed line in conjunction with STPR improvements.

I trust that the above comments are of assistance. If you require any further information, or clarification of any aspect in this response, please contact Michael Cairns, Strategy Manager on 01738 475774 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Guthrie
Director

Geoff Appleby
Franchise Sponsor, Rail Specification
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

16th March 2010

Dear Sir,

InterCity East Coast Franchise Consultation

The Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership considered the above consultation at its meeting on 16 March 2010 and agreed to submit the following comments.

Process and timescales

Consultees are encouraged to consider the length of franchise and comment as to whether the proposed length is appropriate

Tactran notes that the core franchise term of at least ten years is being considered and would agree that a longer term is appropriate. This will encourage more investment in the franchise with a longer period to repay the investment costs.

The base case specification

Consultees are invited to identify any specific local factors that they believe might influence the future level of passenger demand on the ECML

ECML services are of considerable importance to the Tactran region. The lack of regional air links between the region and southern England means the region is heavily dependent on fast and frequent train services to provide essential links to London and other major destinations along the East Coast corridor.

There is a major regeneration scheme under way in Dundee in the waterfront area adjacent to Dundee railway station. A key aspect of this is the first offshoot of the Victoria and Albert Museum outside London. This is forecast to attract 200,000 visitors per annum by 2015, of which 100,000 would be tourists in the summer months.

The Department would welcome views on how the fares structure in this franchise could be made easier to understand and whether there are any changes that would give passengers greater confidence in the fares system. Consultees are also invited to comment on opportunities to make better use of new technology.

Tactran has concerns on a range of fares issues. There are issues of the level of fares relative to the cost of travel by competing modes, air travel and the perceived cost of motoring. Fares need to be attractive to encourage modal shift from air and car to trains. Also, headline fares should be readily available. Many headline fares offered by other franchises, notably the West

Coast franchise operator, sell out quickly leaving the default as standard off-peak tickets which are considerably higher than the equivalent motoring costs, thereby doing little to encourage optional travel by train.

There are opportunities for tickets to be purchased via the internet and printed at home or via mobile phones. These methods should become the standard for off-station ticket purchase and increasingly replace the posting out of advance purchase tickets.

Cross ticketing should be re-introduced with ScotRail's Caledonian Sleeper services to enable passengers to travel in one direction by East Coast Trains and the other by sleeper service. Sleeper trains should also be included in East Coast timetables and other publicity.

In addition, Transport Scotland is investigating opportunities for integrated smart ticketing which should involve all train operators.

Consultees are invited to comment on whether the Department should require any specific revenue protection measures to be implemented by the new franchisee.

The issue of revenue protection is important. However, the installation of further ticket gates should be resisted. These present difficulties particularly for "meeters and greeters" at stations. "Visit friends and relatives" is an important segment of the long distance travel market and the operation of ticket gates severely restricts opportunities for meeting or setting off train passengers.

The Department would welcome views on the priorities for additional services and any other train service issues that consultees believe should be addressed in the early years of the new franchise, including any specific aspirations for earlier or later trains in the evening or at weekends.

Tactran would welcome the provision of more direct services operating between London and destinations north of Edinburgh. There are large gaps in services that should be plugged, for example, from Dundee to London currently there are no direct trains between the 1106 and 1504 departures on Mondays to Fridays and northbound on the East Coast with no arrivals in Dundee between 1143 and 1619.

Consideration must be given to later trains particularly for business travellers. There should be a later direct train to Dundee than the current 1600 departure from Kings Cross. Similarly there should be later daytime travel opportunities from major centres in the region to London. The proposed timetable for May 2011 would allow last departures by connecting trains from Perth to London at 1559, from Stirling to London at 1706 and at 1604 from Dundee by direct train. It is considered that a last departure should be provided no earlier than 1700 from all three locations.

The last though train from Dundee to London on a Sunday currently is 1504. It is considered that this should be later to cater for weekend visitors to the region.

Efforts should be made to reduce the wait time at Edinburgh for trains travelling between Inverness/Aberdeen and London. This can be up to 14 minutes currently (for the 0755 Inverness – Kings Cross train) while the 0632 Dundee – London in the proposed May 2011 timetable is scheduled to sit at Edinburgh for 25 minutes. It is suggested that the sit time should be no more than 5 minutes. Excessive wait times at Edinburgh will undermine the benefits of faster journeys between Edinburgh and London for passengers travelling between destinations north of Edinburgh and major centres along the East Coast Main Line.

Consultees are invited to comment on the opportunities presented by the introduction of Super Express Trains and to identify their priorities for improving the train services offered by the ICEC franchise.

The Department also seeks views on the extent to which it should secure aspects of the longer term train service pattern through the franchise specification.

The introduction of Super Express Trains will enhance opportunities to operate more through services from north of Edinburgh to London. These are identified in the answer to the previous question. The priorities should be to address the wait times at Edinburgh for through services to and from London and to ensure later daytime departures from the region to London for business travellers.

It is believed that all the enhancements identified through the consultation process should be included in the franchise specification. This will still leave franchisees free to suggest further enhancements should they wish.

The Department would welcome views on how it might protect an acceptable level of catering provision on trains whilst allowing the franchisee flexibility to meet emerging demands.

Tactran considers that a range of hot and cold food and drinks should be available on all trains operating from/to Scotland on the East Coast Main Line in view of the length of time passengers will be travelling. These should be available throughout the journey and not withdrawn north of Edinburgh as happens on some services currently. This should be specified as a minimum level of service in the franchise.

The Department would welcome views on the priorities for improvements to stations within the ICEC franchise area, including any particular accessibility and security issues.

None of the stations in the franchise area is located in the Tactran region and therefore we are not in a position to comment.

Consultees are asked to consider what environmental key performance indicators should be set within the franchise specification and whether it is appropriate to set particular targets to require bidders to set their own binding targets within their bids.

It should be a requirement that key performance indicators and appropriate targets are set by the Department based on its knowledge of the railway industry and to allow for comparison of franchise bids. These should ensure that the successful franchisee reflects the need to contribute to climate change objectives and targets.

Consultees are invited to identify any other matters (than the 2012 Olympic Games) that they believe should be included within the Department's base case specification.

Major international golf tournaments are held at two of the region's golf courses, Carnoustie and Gleneagles. The franchise should ensure that account is taken of the need to cater for travel to and from the Ryder Cup at Gleneagles in 2014. Improvements to Gleneagles Station, which forms part of the ScotRail franchise, would assist in promoting train travel to the tournament.

Variations from the DfT's base case specification

The Department would welcome comments on the types and levels of investment or other commitments that might provide justification for a longer franchise to be awarded.

Local authorities and any other potential funders are invited to submit their proposals for any increments or decrements to the Department's base case that they would wish to see included in the specification for the new franchisee.

Tactran has identified enhancements to the May 2011 base case timetable in previous answers. It is believed that these should form part of the base case specification. Any further enhancement of through services between the region and East Coast Main Line destinations would be welcomed.

In addition to the points above it is suggested that franchise bidders should be required to consult with key stakeholders including RTPs as part of the bidding process.

I trust that the above comments are of assistance. If you require any further information, or clarification of any aspect in this response, please contact Michael Cairns, Strategy Manager on 01738 475774 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Guthrie
Director