

## TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

18 JUNE 2019

## GENERAL CONSULTATIONS

## REPORT BY STRATEGY OFFICER (STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY)

This report asks the Partnership: to note the joint RTP responses to the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland 'Initial Call for Evidence and Contributions' consultation and to the Williams Rail Review; to note the Tactran response to the Scottish Government's Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee on the proposed Workplace Parking Levy amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill; and to note and endorse the Tay Cities response to the Department for Transport's consultation 'Aviation 2050 – the future of UK aviation'.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1.1 That the Partnership:

- (i) notes the joint RTP response submitted to the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland 'Initial Call for Evidence and Contributions' consultation;
- (ii) notes the joint RTP response submitted to the Williams Rail Review;
- (iii) notes the response approved by the Executive Committee to the Scottish Government's Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee on the proposed workplace parking levy amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill; and
- (iv) notes and endorses the Tay Cities response to the Department for Transport's consultation 'Aviation 2050 – the future of UK aviation';

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 6 March, the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland issued an ['Initial Call for Evidence and Contributions'](#) requesting responses by 3 May 2019. At its meeting on 19 March 2019, the Partnership agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response (Report RTP/19/11 refers).
- 2.2 Subsequently, a joint response to the Infrastructure Commission was drafted in consultation with all other Regional Transport Partnerships and this was submitted on 16 May 2019.

- 2.3 The Williams Rail Review was established in September 2018 to look at the structure of the whole rail industry and the way passenger rail services are delivered. The review will make recommendations for reform that prioritise passengers' and taxpayers' interests. The review sought evidence with submission to be provided by 31 May 2019.
- 2.4 On 10 May 2019, the Scottish Government's Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee invited oral and written submissions on the proposed workplace parking levy amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill by 22 May 2019.
- 2.5 On 17 December 2018, Department of Transport issued consultation on '[Aviation 2050 – the future of aviation](#)', requesting responses by 20 June 2019. At its meeting on 19 March 2019, the Partnership agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response (Report RTP/19/11 refers).

### **3 DISCUSSION**

#### Infrastructure Commission for Scotland

- 3.1 On 6 March, the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland issued an '[Initial Call for Evidence and Contributions](#)' requesting responses by 3 May 2019.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 19 March 2019, the Partnership agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve the Tactran response to this consultation (Report RTP/19/11 refers).
- 3.3 However, since the Partnership meeting, Tactran has worked with the other Regional Transport Partnerships in having mutually supportive dialogue with a range of partners including constituent councils, City Region / Rural Growth deals, SOLACE, SCOTS, the Scottish Cities Alliance and CoSLA to formulate a joint RTP response, included as Appendix A to this report for noting.

#### Department for Transport – Williams Rail Review

- 3.4 The Williams Rail Review was established in September 2018 to look at the structure of the whole rail industry and the way passenger rail services are delivered. The review will make recommendations for reform that prioritise passengers' and taxpayers' interests.
- 3.5 The review's findings and recommendations will be published in a government white paper in autumn 2019 and reform will begin in 2020. It is led by independent chair, Keith Williams and is supported by a panel of experts from across the country with expertise in rail, freight, business and passenger interests.
- 3.6 The review was established to recommend the most appropriate organisational and commercial frameworks to support the delivery of the government's vision for the railway. In the previous phase of the call for evidence, views were sought on how the review can deliver:

- commercial models for the provision of rail services that prioritise the interests of passengers and taxpayers
- rail industry structures that promote clear accountability and effective joint-working for both passengers and the freight sector
- a system that is financially sustainable and able to address long-term cost pressures
- a railway that is able to offer good value fares for passengers, while keeping costs down for taxpayers
- improved industrial relations, to reduce disruption and improve reliability for passengers
- a rail sector with the agility to respond to future challenges and opportunities

3.7 The following topics are not being considered by the review and this call for evidence:

- public investment decisions made through existing franchise agreements
- railway funding 2019-2024 commitments (Control Period 6)
- High Speed 2 and other major projects
- spending decisions made through the Spending Review 2019

3.8 A joint RTP response has been submitted, a copy of which is included as Appendix B for noting.

Work Place Parking Levy

3.9 On 10 May 2019, the Scottish Government’s Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee invited oral and written submissions on the proposed workplace parking levy amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill by 22 May 2019. The response as approved by the Executive Committee is included as Appendix C for noting.

Department for Transport’s consultation ‘Aviation 2050 – the future of UK aviation

3.10 The Department for Transport sought feedback on its green paper which outlined proposals for a new aviation strategy. The strategy will set out the challenges and opportunities for aviation to 2050 and beyond and will emphasise the significance of aviation to the UK economy and regional growth.

3.11 The strategy will focus on:

- developing a partnership for sustainable growth which meets rising passenger demand, balanced with action to reduce environmental and community impacts
- improving the passenger experience, including through technology and innovation, a new passenger charter and action to reduce delays at the border

- building on the UK's success to establish new connections across the world and create greater choice for consumers
- 3.12 A final white paper version of the aviation strategy will be published later in 2019.
- 3.13 A Tay Cities response has been prepared and was informed by the work undertaken for the Tay Cities Aviation Study. The proposed response which the Partnership will be asked to note and endorse will be provided under separate cover.

## **4 CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 The draft and submitted responses detailed in the appendices to this report have been prepared in consultation with relevant officers from Regional Transport Partnerships and constituent Councils.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

## **6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment and no material issues have been identified.

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### **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:

Report to Tactran Partnership RTP/19/11, General Consultations, 19 March 2019

Infrastructure Commission for Scotland 'Initial Call for Evidence and Contributions', March 2019

The Williams Rail Review – call for evidence, December 2018

Report to Tactran Executive Committee, RTP/19/15, Submission to the Scottish Government's Rural Economy & Connectivity Committee on a Workplace Parking Levy Amendment to the Transport (Scotland) Bill, 14 May, 2019

Scottish Government's Rural Economy and Connectivity - proposed workplace parking levy amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill, May 2019

Department for Transport 'Aviation 2050 — the future of UK aviation', December 2018



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## Infrastructure Commission: Call for Evidence – RTP response

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### *About Regional Transport Partnerships*

Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) were established in 2006 following the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. RTPs have a range of planning and operational duties depending on what 'Model' has been adopted including the statutory Regional Transport Strategy, project development and delivery, supporting socially necessary bus services, (in the case of SPT) operating the Subway and bus stations, school transport, and others. Further information on RTPs is available at the respective web sites:

<https://hitrans.org.uk/>; <https://www.nestrans.org.uk/>; <https://www.sestran.gov.uk/>;  
[www.spt.co.uk](http://www.spt.co.uk/); <http://www.swestrans.org.uk/>; <https://www.tactran.gov.uk/>;  
<https://www.zettrans.org.uk/>.

### *Key Points*

The RTPs welcomes opportunity to contribute to the work of the Commission.

In developing our response, we have each had mutually supportive dialogue with a range of our partners and stakeholders, including our constituent councils, city region/growth deals, the RTPs, SOLACE, SCOTS, the Scottish Cities Alliance and COSLA.

The key points we wish to raise with the Commission at this stage are as follows:

- **Safety** - and the safe operation of any services it enables – must always take precedence in prioritising infrastructure investment.
- There should be greater recognition of the **importance of transport services and infrastructure in inclusive growth, social cohesion and environmental impacts**.
- **People and communities must be at the heart** of any significant decisions on infrastructure.
- **Making the best use of our existing assets** – and fixing and maintaining them – should on the whole be given greater priority than new infrastructure.
- A much wider, **more integrated and co-ordinated view of infrastructure** and its cross-sectoral impact needs to be taken – health, transport, economy etc.
- Investment should be prioritised in line with the Scottish Government's **National Infrastructure Mission** i.e. where it delivers a mix of economic, social and environmental impacts.
- Infrastructure projects in **rural, island, or small population areas must not be overlooked** in an assessment and prioritisation process.
- The **'whole life' costs of infrastructure** must be taken into consideration in decision-making.
- Prioritisation of investment must pay heed to **national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans** e.g. NTS, RTSs, SDPs, LTSs.

- There must be clarity on the role, status and interplay between the outcomes of the Infrastructure Commission and the second **Strategic Transport Projects Review**, which is currently underway.
- A **'scenario planning' approach must be taken** when looking at future impacts of infrastructure and changing demand patterns.
- The **current process of assessing and evaluating infrastructure projects must be updated** to reflect future requirements. In the current version of STAG, the emphasis on generating significant economic growth takes priority over social inclusion and environmental impacts.
- **Infrastructure's role in 'place' and 'place-making'** needs to be given greater recognition.
- **Revenue funding is just as important as capital** and a more balanced and fair approach to this is essential in future e.g. supporting socially-necessary bus services.
- The **timelines used in the Commission's document are too short to be truly meaningful**. We suggest a long term horizon of 60 years, with interim review points every 15-20 years.
- The **resilience of new and existing infrastructure** – for example, in relation to climate change adaptation – is a significant consideration in future decision-making on investment.
- The **pace of change in modern society** – digital connectivity, new technology, different demands and supply, changing demographics – must be catered for in future infrastructure.

The RTPs, individually and collectively, look forward to supporting and assisting the Commission as it takes its work forward, and following the meeting with RTP Lead Officers on 8 May would be happy to meet with the Commission in future as it continues its work.

### **RTP Response to the Issues Raised by the Williams Rail Review**

The railway is of huge importance to the people and businesses of Scotland. It provides links to the main economic centres in England and within Scotland as well as providing local connectivity. Given the degree of physical and economic separation between Scotland and other parts of the country, we cannot emphasize enough the need for the railway to contribute towards the achievement of our economic and social objectives, rather than to work against them as often seems to be the case.

Our view, in summary, is that the management of the UK and Scotland's railways needs to be much more closely aligned to the people who use and rely upon them: passengers, businesses and communities. At present decision-making structures are complex, have conflicting objectives, and are opaque to customers and taxpayers.

Our perception is that the Scotland network has a diminished role in the wider rail network. Infrequent services, slow journey times and old rolling stock are amongst the factors making it an asset which performs below potential, hindering and impeding economic growth. Added to this is the separation of infrastructure renewals and enhancement which are not devolved.

An approach is required which will give Scotland greater control over the specification of its inter-city and local train services and which makes the operator of those services and the infrastructure which supports them accountable to Government and stakeholders within Scotland. There should be a greater partnership approach between a devolved Rail industry, Transport Scotland and the Regional Transport Partnerships particularly on the development and monitoring of franchised services.

If this is not tackled directly, the perceived separation between the Scotland and the rest of the UK will only be exaggerated, with negative economic consequences as businesses locate away from the area in favour of places with better connections.

Along with partner authorities along the route, we have recently called upon HS2 Ltd, the UK Government, Network Rail and Transport for the North to all work together to produce credible, timely and properly funded plans to upgrade the East Coast Main Line (ECML) so that the Scotland can fully benefit from the introduction of high-speed rail to the North and Scotland.

We believe that a model should be developed for long distance services, in which transport authorities along the line of route can directly influence the specification of the railway in line with their economic growth plans. The train and infrastructure operator should be accountable to the local authorities within an appropriate governance framework.

Our view is that these approaches will allow local, regional and inter-city networks to be developed and managed in such a way that the railway supports the Place Principle and puts the needs of communities and their economies at its heart.

Finally, we warmly extend an invitation to Rail Review Team you to discuss these matters directly with the Chairs of the Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland. The RTP Chairs look forward to an opportunity to meet you and discuss these matters in person.

Examining each item of your enquiry's Terms of Reference, we draw the following conclusions which also summarise the points we have already made:

### **1. Commercial models for the provision of rail services that prioritise the interests of passengers and taxpayers**

The RTP's view is that local rail services within each region should be locally-specified and delivered by a locally accountable operator. Super-regional freight and passenger services such as those on the ECML should be provided in a way that overcomes the present fragmented structure within the rail industry. The partnership approach may be a way of overcoming the current fragmentation within the industry.

We believe that the RTP's should be formally involved in the railway development and delivery methods, for example, route studies and franchise processes.

### **2. Rail industry structures that promote clear accountability and effective joint-working for both passengers and the freight sector**

Within Scotland, the RTP's support the Scottish Government's view that there should be devolution of track and infrastructure services provided by Network Rail and full alignment with the rail services provided by ScotRail to provide for an integrated operational culture.

We also contend that structures need to be put in place in the rail industry that overcome the current perverse incentives which prevail within the present fragmented industry structure, and also promote unified accountability and simplify the industry for all its customers, whether passenger or freight, particularly when combined with effective and meaningful local representation.

### **3. A system that is financially sustainable and able to address long-term cost pressures.**

Government's current objective is to transfer more of the cost of the railway from the taxpayer to the passenger. Already in the UK, a much higher burden of cost is borne by the passenger than the taxpayer than is the case with many mainland European rail networks. We suggest that continued contributions from the public purse, particularly for large capital projects with a life many times longer than that of any franchise or concession, will remain necessary if the cost to passengers and freight users is not to become prohibitive.

On funding of the network, emphasis should be placed on the need for continued investment to encourage passengers. If the railway can grow business and become more efficient, such that it needs no revenue support, then that is surely a positive.

#### **4. A railway that is able to offer good value fares for passengers, while keeping costs down for taxpayers.**

The RTP's agree the need to deliver greater efficiency and, therefore, good value for both passengers and taxpayers. However, we would repeat the point made above that continued contributions from the public purse, particularly for large capital projects with a life many times longer than that of any franchise or concession, will remain necessary if the cost to passengers and freight users is not to become prohibitive.

#### **5. Improved industrial relations, to reduce disruption and improve reliability for passengers**

The RTP's have no comment to offer in this regard.

#### **6. A rail sector with the agility to respond to future challenges and opportunities**

For the rail sector to be agile enough to respond well to challenges and opportunities, it needs firstly integration and secondly investment. Integration will mean that the rail industry can speak and act with one mind while an adequate and assured flow of investment will mean there is sufficient money to provide the trains and infrastructure needed to provide modern, reliable services that attract customers and contribute to the economy. Simplified governance will also provide greater ability to react emerging circumstances both planned and unplanned.

#### **7. Increasing integration between track and train**

As set out above, the RTPs' welcome a solution that rectifies the present fragmentation within the industry, and also simplifies the industry for all its customers, whether passenger or freight, particularly when combined with effective and meaningful local representation.

#### **8. How to improve transport services across UK regions and devolved nations, including exploring options for devolution of rail powers**

Throughout this document we have set out how we believe devolution of rail powers can improve transport services and deliver better outcomes for local communities and business.

#### **9. Improving value for money for passengers and taxpayers**

We would refer to the comments already made under the headings "A system that is financially sustainable and able to address long-term cost pressures" and "A railway that is able to offer good value fares for passengers, while keeping costs down for taxpayers".

This review is an opportunity to reform the railway and create a fully integrated public transport network across Britain. This opportunity should not be missed. Our railway could be one of our most socially and economically valuable assets with untapped potential to make a larger contribution to people's lives, communities, environment and to our economy.

**RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORT (SCOTLAND) BILL – WORKPLACE PARKING LEVY  
AMENDMENTS**

**SUBMISSION FROM : Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership  
(Tactran)**

**Desirability of a workplace parking levy**

The workplace parking levy has been shown to be a useful tool for both (a) placing some emphasis on employers/operators to manage the demand for parking at their sites themselves, as well as (b) providing income to help improve alternatives for those that have their parking options decreased and/or parking costs increased as a result of a parking levy; as well as improving alternatives for the wider population to help reduce demand for parking (and hence the overall volumes of traffic).

**Proposed amendments to the Transport (Scotland) Bill**

Accordingly Tactran support the principle of providing powers (e.g. via the Transport (Scotland) Bill) which give authorities the option to apply for and introduce a workplace parking levy to help reduce car traffic in a town/city/city region if it is identified as an effective means of managing parking demand (and traffic) in that area. Nonetheless, whilst Tactran support the principle of giving authorities the option of introducing a parking levy, we acknowledge that the appropriateness of implementing a parking levy will vary from location to location.

Whilst there are many implications of introducing a parking levy which need to be carefully considered, we would like to draw attention to a small number of the issues referenced directly in the proposed amendments:

- Need for a parking levy scheme to be ‘supported by’ the Local Transport Strategy for the area
  - Given the variety of areas for which a parking levy might be considered, including for example across local authority boundaries such as City Regions, it is noted that that the amendments make provision for joint schemes (18(1)(a)), provided they support the policies of the respective local transport plans.
  - The references to transport strategies serve two purposes, firstly ensuring that a parking levy proposal fits with and helps achieve the objectives of the transport strategy; but also that monies arising from the levy are spent on projects which support the appropriate elements of the transport strategy for the area. Indeed, as a workplace parking levy would be a major demand management tool in any area in which it is introduced, it would seem appropriate that any monies raised should be focused on positive measures (the ‘carrots’) to mitigate against any constraints created by the parking levy and improve alternatives to single occupancy car use. Such measures may be included within an regional transport strategy (NB in considering this issue, attention should also be paid to the potential for regional management of any infrastructure levy as considered in the Planning Bill)

- It should be noted that regional transport strategies are the statutory transport strategy that cover cross boundary transport issues, and hence consideration should be given to their inclusion in the amendments.
- NHS Exemptions
  - The amendments propose an exemption for 'persons who provide services for the health service'. The ability of shift staff working unsociable hours to have realistic choices of travel is recognised as an issue, as is the need for workers in essential or emergency services to have reliable access to work. However:
    - the major NHS sites have as big a job in encouraging staff to travel by means other than driving alone as any town centre. The provisions (15(2)) enable an authority to agree the number of parking spaces applicable at any site. It is therefore possible to identify the number of spaces required to be exempt at a NHS site based on the volume of staff required to travel at unsociable hours.
    - If there is an argument for NHS staff to have 'reliable' access to work, is there an argument for other essential services to have some level of exemption? (to pick a 'non' emergency service for argument: ambulances would struggle to respond in winter without gritting and snow clearance by council staff working unsociable hours)
  - Accordingly, for the above reasons, it is suggested that further consideration be given to a blanket exemption for staff providing health services at NHS sites, especially in terms of consistency with staff providing other 'essential' services. Albeit, a consistent approach will mean consideration of the parameters necessary to consider exemptions and targeted assistance for those services where the burden of a workplace parking levy may affect the ability to provide the service.
  - In considering exemptions, it may also be useful to take account of:
    - Public acceptability of a parking levy scheme will require monies to be directed towards schemes which directly mitigate against the decreased parking levels or increased costs experienced. This will require some clear link between where the monies are collected and where monies are spent.
    - If no parking levies are being collected from a large site (e.g. an NHS site), are there issues of either legality or public acceptance of monies being spent for the benefit of that site.
- Assessment
  - The amendments propose (10(4)) requiring authorities to assess the impacts of the proposal in terms of (a) the person who may have to pay charges (and (b) the environment. The principle of requiring assessments in the appropriate legislation is supported. However, given that a Parking Level Scheme involves both introducing a levy and also spending that levy, it is suggested that the assessments should consider the impact of the proposal on both those directly affected by the charge, as well as those that may benefit from the use of monies collated.