



Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Operations Committee

23 August 2024

held in person at 131 St Vincent Street and via Video Conference

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Minute of the meeting of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Operations Committee held at 131 St Vincent Street and via Video Conference* on 23 August 2024

- Present** Councillors David Wilson (Chair), Alex Allison, Ken Andrew*, Maureen Devlin*, Stephen Dornan, Helen Loughran*, Alan Moir, Donald Reid*, Roza Salih*, Adam Smith* and Andy Steel* and appointed members Greg Beecroft and Jenna Dickson*.
- Attending** Valerie Davidson, Chief Executive*; Lesley Aird, Director of Finance & Corporate Support; Richard Robinson, Director of Transport Operations; Bruce Kiloh, Head of Policy & Planning, Gordon Dickson, Head of Bus Strategy & Delivery; Andrea Thompson, Head of Corporate Communications; Jim Griffin, Senior Solicitor; Solicitor, Ewan Tait and Olivia Carson of ScotRail (for Agenda Item 4) and David Kelly, Director for Scotland, Community Transport Association (for Agenda Item 5)

The Partnership agreed at its meeting of 12 March 2021, following consideration of Standing Order No 14, for the recording of Committee and Partnership meetings.

The Chair welcomed Ewan Tait and Olivia Carson of Scotrail and David Kelly of the Community Transport Association to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were submitted from appointed member Kirsty Orr.

2. Declaration of interest in terms of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000

Cllr Moir declared an interest in Agenda Item 4, citing his employment with Scotrail and as a member of ASLEF, the trade union.

Jenna Dickson declared her employment with Scotrail Holdings Ltd.

3. Minute of previous meeting

[Click here to view the minute](#)

The minute of the meeting of 26 April 2024, having been considered and agreed at the Partnership meeting of 28 June 2024 as a correct record, was duly noted.

Following agreement of the Minute and in response to Members' questions, Mr Dickson confirmed that following extension of contracts for subsidised bus services on the Isle of Arran, dialogue continues with regard to the anticipated revised ferry timetable and the impact this will have on bus services.

4. Monitoring Report on public transport services and facilities in the SPT area

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14 August 2024 by the Director of Transport Operations reporting on the operational performance of public transport services and facilities which are delivered directly by the Partnership or others on behalf of the Partnership and the provision of public transport services and facilities in the Partnership area more generally.

After extensive discussion and hearing from Mr Robinson and Mr Dickson in response to members' questions, specifically relating to:

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- (i) Who is responsible for carrying out ongoing works on the new Subway trains;
- (ii) If the World Cycling Championships in 2023 resulted in a particularly increased Subway patronage at that time; and
- (iii) What is being done by SPT and councils following service warnings being given to home to school transport operators?

and having heard from Mr Tait in relation to ScotRail services, specifically highlighting:

- (a) a pay offer had been offered to the trades unions which, if accepted by the members would result in the reinstatement of the full timetable, although no date can be given at this time;
- (b) increased capacity on trains was being provided where possible whilst the restricted timetable remains in operation;
- (c) there was a recruitment campaign for maintenance personnel; and
- (d) The current trial to remove peak fares will cease at the end of September as it has not been sufficiently successful to be self-funding.

the Committee noted the contents of the report and the Operations Chair thanked Mr Tait and Ms Carson for attending.

5. Presentation by David Kelly, Director for Scotland, Community Transport Association

Mr Kelly, Director for Scotland, Community Transport Association (CTA), gave a presentation to the Committee, detailing the work of the CTA and the diverse activities of its members.

After hearing from Mr Kelly in response to members' questions, specifically noting:

- (i) The importance of continued funding by SPT of community transport operators;
- (ii) The value of the West of Scotland Community Transport Forum;
- (iii) The engagement of the CTA in responding to the development of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy;
- (iv) That early engagement of the CTA and its members may assist in providing local solutions in the event of retraction of bus services; and
- (v) In common with other transport providers, community transport operators are also facing a funding crisis and experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining both paid employees and volunteers

The Committee thanked Mr Kelly for his attendance and his interesting and informative presentation.

6. Subsidised bus service contract recommendations: financial implications

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 30 July 2024 by the Director of Finance & Corporate Support reporting on the financial implications of the subsidised bus contract recommendations being considered at the meeting.

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After hearing from Mrs Aird, the Committee noted:

- (a) the financial implications of the recommendations relating to the subsidised bus services budget in the following papers and agreed to give due consideration to this in the course of the decision making, the impact of individual decisions being reported in each paper for consideration;
- (b) the projected overspend reported, which removes the scope SPT has to support the regional and local network in the remainder of the financial year; and
- (c) the impact of the current financial pressures on the subsidised bus budget in the short to medium term, including in the current and future financial years. The ongoing assessment of the current supported bus service provision is aimed at delivering potential options to reduce the current overspend in 2024/2025 and future financial costs will be reported to a future committee.

7. The future of home to school transport

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 7 August 2024 by the Head of Bus Strategy & Delivery reporting on the draft Home to School Transport (HST) study commissioned by SPT.

After extensive discussion and hearing from Mr Dickson in response to members' questions, specifically:

- (i) That the responsibility for setting walking distances and the assessment of the safety of routes is the responsibility of local authorities;
- (ii) SPT holds the budget for subsidised local services and local authorities are responsible for paying for home to school transport; and
- (iii) Difficulties continue with regard to the recruitment and retention of drivers and other staff across a range of operators in this sector;

The Committee noted the outcomes for the HST study and the future action proposed by SPT to take the recommendations forward.

8. Amendments to subsidised local bus service contracts

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 29 July 2024 by the Head of Bus Strategy & Delivery reporting on amendments to subsidised local bus service contracts since the last Operations Committee on 26 April 2024.

After hearing from Mr Dickson, the Committee noted the amendments to subsidised local bus service contracts in accordance with established corporate governance, financial regulations and contract standing orders.

9. Contracts awarded under delegated powers

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31 July 2024 by the Head of Bus Strategy & Delivery reporting on subsidised local bus service contracts awarded utilising delegated powers.

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After hearing from Mr Dickson, the Committee noted the subsidised local bus service contracts awarded utilising delegated powers, in accordance with established corporate governance, financial regulations and contract standing orders.

10. Workforce Systems Transformation – award of contract

[Click here to view the report](#)

There was submitted a report (issued) of 13 August 2024 by the Director of Finance & Corporate Support recommending the Committee approve the direct award of the following new workforce systems contracts:

- HR/Payroll System to Midland HR through the NHS Digital Workplace Solutions Framework, (contract ref SBS/19/AB/WAD/9411); and
- Rostering and Scheduling System to UKG through the Scottish Value-Added Reseller (SVAR) Framework (contract ref SP-21-034).

After hearing from Mrs Aird in response to members' questions, specifically confirming that it is not anticipated that the award of the two contracts will result in a cost saving at this time, although this will remain under review; the Committee approved the direct award of the following new workforce systems for an initial term of five years with the option to extend for a further five years.

- (a) HR/Payroll System through the NHS Digital Workplace Solutions Framework (contract ref SBS/19/AB/WAD/9411) to Midland HR for an annual fee of £35,507, implementation fee of £111,240, total cost over 10 years up to £466,314, and
 - (b) Rostering and Scheduling System through the SVAR Framework (contract ref SP-21-034) to UKG for an annual fee of up to £36,180, implementation fee of £5,564, total cost over 10 years up to £367,364.
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