

Cross-Party Group on Cycling, Walking And Buses

5th Meeting

Wednesday 24 January 2018, 18:00-19:30

Committee Room 2, Scottish Parliament

MINUTES

Present: Graham Simpson MSP (Deputy Convenor, chairing), Alison Johnstone MSP (Co-convenor), Jeremy Balfour MSP; Colin Howden (Transform Scotland, group secretariat); Robert Samson (Transport Focus), Mark James (Transform Scotland), Michaela Jackson (Spokes & Gorebridge Community Development Trust), James Scott (Cycling UK), Simon Pilpel (South Lanarkshire Council), Ken Haig (Levenmouth Rail Campaign & CLEAR), John Russell (Living Streets Edinburgh), Helen Todd (Ramblers Scotland), Tom Rye (Edinburgh Napier University Transport Research Institute), Keith Irving (Cycling Scotland), Ruth Mendel (Citizens Advice Scotland), Chris Day (Transform Scotland), David Giles (Scottish Association for Public Transport), Arthur Homan-Elsy (Scottish Association for Public Transport), Alex Quayle (Sustrans Scotland), Mike Harrison (Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance), Wendy Graham (The Bike Station), George Mair (CPT Scotland), Ruairidh MacGlone (The Bike Station), Kim Harding (Pedal on Parliament), Suzanne Forup (Cycling UK)

Apologies: Claudia Beamish MSP (Co-convenor), Gail Ross MSP; Adrian Davis (Edinburgh Napier University Transport Research Institute), Dave du Feu (Spokes), Brenda Mitchell (Cycle Law Scotland), Chris Slade (Bikeplus), Dave Brennan (Go Bike!), David Cannon (David MacBrayne Group), Douglas Clark (Elgin Community Council), Iona Shepherd (Go Bike!), Isobel Leckie (Causey Development Group), Mike Robinson (Royal Scottish Geographical Society), Paul White (CPT Scotland), Rona Gibb (Paths for All), Robert Andrew (Stagecoach Group), Rod Mitchell (Cycle Law Scotland), Stuart Hay (Living Streets Scotland), Inspector Vincent Fisher (Police Scotland).

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1. Graham Simpson MSP [GS] opened the meeting at 18:12 and welcomed those present.

2. Apologies

2.1. These are noted above.

3. Confirmation of agenda

3.1. It was agreed that a further eight applications for membership would also be considered at item 6.

4. Approval of minutes of previous meeting

4.1. **DECISION:** The minutes of the meeting held on 07/11/17 were approved as a good record.

5. Matters arising from previous meeting

5.1. Colin Howden [CH] reviewed the matters arising from the previous meeting, noting the following:

- Action at item 4.1 (South West Community Cycles) had been completed.
- Action at item 5.2 (Annual Return) had been completed.

- Action at item 6.1 (road safety ideas) can be assumed to have been completed.
- Action at items 6.3-6.5 (Operation Close Pass letters) is still a work-in-progress. The content of a letter had been drafted for the group (by Cycling Scotland) but had yet to go to the convenors for agreement & dissemination. **ACTION: CH** to confirm letters with Co-convenors.
- Action at item 7.2 (proposal for Street Audit Project) had been taken forward by means of a letter & supporting paper which Stuart Hay (Living Streets Scotland) has asked to be reported to the meeting. **DECISION:** It was agreed to proceed with the Street Audit Project. **ACTION: Stuart Hay** to seek a meeting with the Co-convenors to agree a work programme for the Street Audit Project.
- Action at item 10.1 (date of next meeting) had been completed.
- Action at item 10.3 (invite to Transport Scotland to provide speaker on topic of STPR2) had been completed. The response received indicated that it would be prepared to provide a speaker for a date after March 2018.
- Action at item 10.4 (invite to CPT to provide speaker) had been completed.

6. Membership applications

6.1. CH reported that 11 applications for membership of the group had been received.

6.2. **DECISION:** The following individuals were approved for membership:

- Inspector Vincent Fisher
- Mike Harrison

6.3. **DECISION:** The following organisations were approved for membership:

- Citizens Advice Scotland
- Gorebridge Community Development Trust
- CalMac Ferries Ltd.
- Community-Led Environmental Action for Regeneration (CLEAR)
- Levenmouth Rail Campaign
- Friends of the Earth Scotland
- Royal Scottish Geographical Society
- Scottish Association for Public Transport

6.4. **DECISION:** It was decided to defer decision on the following membership application until the next meeting:

- Elgin Community Council

7. Presentation from George Mair (Director, CPT Scotland) on the theme 'Trends in Scottish bus patronage'

7.1. George Mair [GM] made a presentation, highlighting information in the report by KPMG for CPT published in November 2017. The report is available at <https://getonboardwithbus.scot>

- 7.2. GM's presentation featured (i) statistics on recent trends in bus patronage; (ii) information on drivers of patronage in recent years; (iii) factors that the sector will face in the future; (iv) policy recommendations. GM concluded by reminding those present of the 'true value' of buses.
- 7.3. GS thanked GM for his presentation.

8. Q&A

- 8.1. Arthur Homan-Elsy asked GM whether the data in the KPMG report had been disaggregated by operator. GM indicated that that had been outwith the scope of the research, although future work could look at this disaggregation or, for example, a regional disaggregation.
- 8.2. Keith Irving asked GM what the CPG could do to promote buses alongside a shared agenda for walking & cycling. GM felt that this was already happening to a degree, working in tandem with active travel members of the group, as well as with others e.g. Citizens Advice Scotland. CPT were happy to work with any parties who might be able to promote greater bus use.
- 8.3. GS asked when a universally-available stored-value smart ticket would be available (as this would be of particular use to occasional users). GM advised that a great deal of work had been undertaken with Transport Scotland looking at the potential introduction of an e-purse across Scotland. However, this work had clearly identified that technology had moved on and increasingly contactless payment was seen as a preferred option going forward.
- 8.4. Alison Johnstone MSP asked whether there was international comparative data on congestion suffered by buses. GM indicated that he was not aware of any international comparative data on congestion suffered by buses. However, there had been some recent work completed by Greener Journey's providing information on the comparative delays to buses in a number of UK cities, including both Edinburgh and Glasgow.
- 8.5. Chris Day [CD] referred to recent DfT research on car use by young people, and asked whether this trend could increase bus patronage. GM felt that this issue could be important, and that the bus industry has already responded to this.
- 8.6. CD also asked whether the forthcoming SG Transport Bill would affect trends in bus use if it focusses only on bus ownership structures. GM reiterated that the trend for decline in bus patronage was already in place before bus deregulation, with a far higher level of journeys being lost in the 30 years prior to deregulation than the 30 years following, where there had been a clear levelling off of journeys lost. Changing ownership alone was unlikely to drive bus use back up; looking at the range of issues in the KPMG report impacting on bus use, it was clear that a review of wider government policies was necessary.
- 8.7. Ken Haig raised examples of bus service withdrawals with poor consultation beforehand, in particular in the Levenmouth area. GM indicated that, whilst CPT promotes as good practice operators consulting with bus users, it is for operators to decide how they deal with this. He also pointed out that, following requests from the local authorities, the registration process in Scotland was recently changed to build in a 28 day consultation period, whereby local authorities can review a registration and decide what action may be required, in advance of the registration being lodged with the traffic commissioner's office. This requirement only prevails in Scotland and currently does not operate anywhere else in the UK.
- 8.8. Ruth Mendel asked what could be done to make things easier for commuters. GM noted the challenges faced by operators when travelling into urban centres meeting edge of city traffic congestion and how priorities to circumnavigate these congestion points would help speed up commuting journeys and make the bus a more attractive option.
- 8.9. David Giles asked why decline in bus patronage was less in some other European countries. GM did not have specific information on this to hand but felt that how other European countries help and support bus use could make a substantial difference.

8.10. Wendy Graham asked for fares comparisons with other countries. GM indicated that governments in other European countries take a somewhat different approach to how they support and invest in supporting bus use, and, as such, it was therefore difficult to make any real comparison.

9. Proposals for date & theme for next meeting

- 9.1. GS suggested that the CPG might want to ask individual bus operators to address future meetings of the group.
- 9.2. The meeting returned to the suggestion that we should have a speaker on the topic of STPR2 (see agenda item 5.1 above). **DECISION:** It was decided to invite Transport Scotland to present to the next meeting on the topic of STPR2. **ACTION: CH** to invite Transport Scotland to speak at the next meeting.
- 9.3. Alex Quayle suggested that it might be appropriate to have an update on the Active Travel Task Force, reminding the CPG that Daisy Narayanan had spoken on this topic to the June 2017 meeting of the CPG. **DECISION:** It was decided to invite Sustrans Scotland to present to the next meeting on the topic of the Active Travel Task Force. **ACTION: CH** to invite Sustrans Scotland to speak at the next meeting.
- 9.4. Helen Todd suggested that a speaker on recreational walking & cycling would be appropriate.
- 9.5. The following suggestions for topics were also raised:
 - Transport & climate change
 - Trunk roads policy on cycling
 - Petition heard by the Parliament's Petitions Committee on active travel on trunk roads
 - New housing developments & widths for multi-modal paths.
- 9.6. A date for the next meeting was discussed, and April/May was settled upon for this. **DECISION:** The next meeting of the group should be held in April/May 2018. **ACTION: CH** to confirm date for next meetings & advise the Parliament and group members.

CB closed the meeting at 19:35.

Minutes: CH, 05/02/18.