

Revised CPG on Rail in the Scottish Parliament

Meeting at Holyrood 11 November 2015

Including AGM

Apologies for absence received from John Finnie MSP. Robert Drysdale, Phil McGarry, Ken Sutherland, Robert Sampson, SPT representatives, Rosemary Blumfield, Stephanie Tobin, Vic Mackinlay, Nikki Anderson, Ian Macdonald.

The meeting began with the **AGM** prior to ordinary business.

AGM: Neil Bibby MSP in the Chair.

John Mason MSP, the other co-convenor, was among the **sederunt**.

Previous minutes were approved. Moved by Roderick McDougall. Seconded by Allison Cosgrove.

Unanimous approval was given for **office-bearers** to continue:

Neil Bibby MSP and John Mason MSP as co-convenors. Proposed by Allison Cosgrove, seconded by Stephen Young.

Allan McLean as Secretary. Proposed by Barrie Forrest, seconded by Stephen Young.

John Mason MSP then took the Chair for the ordinary business:

Minutes of previous ordinary meeting approved. Moved by Roderick McDougall. Seconded by Allison Cosgrove.

The CPG held a silence in tribute to a member, Ian Richard, a pro-rail campaigner whose death had just been reported.

Russell Imrie, chair of ECMA, the East Coast Main Line consortium of local authorities, delivered a presentation on the wider economic benefits and further potential of the East Coast Main Line between Scotland and London, supported by Alex Macaulay of ECMA and SEStran, the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership.

They also told the CPG about the case for more railway electrification in Scotland and the need for Scotland to benefit from high-speed rail.

They answered questions from CPG members.

Colin Howden of the campaign group Transform Scotland spoke of aspirations for improvement of Scottish inter-city rail routes.

Russell Imrie said that the Regulator, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), would have the final say on proposals for open-access operators to compete with the franchised operator between Edinburgh and London Kings Cross.

Next meeting: John Mason MSP said that Wednesday had not proved ideal as a meeting day and so future meetings should be on Tuesdays, as before.

Allan McLean reported that there were proposals to open or reopen railways in several parts of Scotland. It was hoped that a speaker from the Levenmouth Rail Campaign in Fife would speak at the next meeting of the CPG.

Dates of next meetings to be arranged, but John Mason MSP said there would probably be two in 2016 before the Scottish Parliament rose for the election.