

NOTE

Meeting at Holyrood on 5 November 2013 to establish a Cross-Party Group on Rail

John Mason MSP (SNP) in the chair.

MSPs present:

John Mason (SNP), Neil Bibby (Labour), Patrick Harvie (Green), Maureen Watt (SNP), Mark Griffin (Labour), John Finnie (Independent), Margaret McDougall (Labour), Mary Fee (Labour), Hugh Henry (Labour), Graeme Dey (SNP).

Apologies for absence were received from these MSPs: James Kelly (Labour), Liz Smith (Conservative), Bob Doris (SNP), Willie Coffey (SNP), Richard Lyle (SNP).

These MSPs had advised of their interest: Richard Lyle (SNP), Jamie Hepburn (SNP), Kenneth Gibson (SNP), Patricia Ferguson (Labour).

All of the above MSPs indicated a wish to be members of the Cross-Party Group on Rail.

Other attendees at the meeting, who all expressed a wish to be members of the CPG, except for the two marked with * :

Niamh Hegarty, Network Rail; Callum Chomzkuck, Pagoda PR; Ross Williams, Pagoda PR; Norrie Innes*, Rock DCM; Phil McGarry, RMT union; Jim Gray, RMT; Garry Clark, Scottish Chambers of Commerce; Iain Wilson, First ScotRail; Sean Duffy, First ScotRail; Ian Richard, RailQwest; Ken Sutherland, RailQwest; Bill Forbes, RailQwest; Lawrence Marshall, Transform Scotland; Roderick McDougall, Rail Future Scotland; Geoffrey Evison, Campaign for Borders Rail; Alison Cosgrove*, Rail Action Group East of Scotland (RAGES), Jim Sharkey, Renfrewshire Council; Allan McLean, Consult McLean.

1. Introduction

John Mason outlined the case for establishing a CPG on Rail and how it would function.

2. Membership

A sederunt sheet was circulated for attendees to confirm their presence and interest. This list, including expressions of support from MSPs who were unable to be present, is as set out above.

3. Purpose of CPG

John Mason suggested how the purpose of the group could be set out, recognising the importance of the railway industry to Scotland. He incorporated the views of the meeting.

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Aims as outlined:

- To encourage the development and extension of quality rail services for the people and economy of Scotland.
- To ensure that rail has a high profile in the Scottish Parliament.
- To influence Scottish Government policy on rail, including on connectivity.
- To liaise with Transport Scotland, Network Rail, franchise holders, trades unions, rail interest groups and other such organisations to ensure that MSPs are kept up to date on matters pertaining to rail in Scotland.

4. Election of Office-bearers

Unanimous approval was given to John Mason MSP and Neil Bibby MSP being co-conveners.

5. Secretarial support

Allan McLean agreed to be secretary and this was unanimously approved.

6. General Discussion

John Mason invited all attendees to contribute to discussion. Almost all made comments round the table. All who spoke were in favour of establishing the CPG.

7. Next meeting

John Mason said he would issue an email with potential dates. He suggested quarterly meetings. Phil McGarry recommended more frequent meetings and suggested to general approval that timings could alternate between lunch time and evening.

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