

# **CPG on Rail in the Scottish Parliament - Minutes**

**Holyrood 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018**

## **Sederunt**

Peter Chapman MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP, Jenny Gilruth MSP, Cameron Little (Alloa Community Council), Donald Campbell (Kincaroire Community Council), Cameron Little (Alloa Community Council), Cllr Jim Sharkey (Renfrewshire Council), Ian Budd (Friends of Far North Line), Rosemary Blumfield (WCR250), Karen Freel (Perspectiva Consultants), Iain MacDonald (Light Rail UK), Vic MacKinlay (Light Rail Transit Association), Simon Walton (Campaign for Borders Rail), Niamh Hegarty (ScotRail Alliance), Sue Evans (ScotRail Alliance), Alex Hynes (ScotRail Alliance), Roderick McDougall (Rail Futures Scotland), Stewart Leighton (Rail Future Scotland), Don Barclay (LMRC), David Johnstone (Grayling), Cameron Buchanan (Former MSP), John Finnie MSP

Co-Convener: John Mason MSP

## **Apologies**

Dita Stanis-Traken, Pauline McNeil MSP

## **Welcome & Minutes**

Co-Convenor, John Mason MSP, welcomed members to the meeting. Thanked ScotRail for providing a tea and coffee, and gave a rundown of the programme for the meeting.

Corrections to the minutes were suggested:

- Rosemary Blumfield, added to Apologies

Subject to the discussed changes, the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

## **Presentation**

Alex Hynes, Managing Director of ScotRail Alliance gave a general update on the work of ScotRail.

The presentation covered:

- An overview of the scope and activity of the ScotRail Alliance
- An overview of current operating performance
- Major infrastructure projects update
  - Spending £2bn in five year period, £500m on trains, £1.5bn on infrastructure
  - Queen Street redevelopment

- The vision for Scotland's railway
  - By the start of 2020, Scotland's railways will look very different to now
  - It's already a success story, but we want to make it better
  - Delivering more services
  - 800 carriages in fleet will grow to 1,000 by the end of next year
  - Both Network Rail and ScotRail have journey time targets, and want to cut these times
  - Intercity trains will deliver faster journey times
  - Number of seats will go up by 40%
- Benefits of the electrification of EGIP / SDA / AI / HML lines
  - Allows diesel trains to go to other parts of the network
  - Get rid of unreliable stock
  - More environmental trains
- Borders Railway
  - Patronage is exceeding expectations
  - House building has increased in the area
  - Need more trains on this line
- Rolling stock
  - Buying 70 new electric trains for Hitachi
  - Need 24 to run the line
  - High specification trains
  - Not yet in use
- High Speed Trains
  - Recreate an intercity network to link the 7 cities
  - Upgrade capacity between now and next year
  - Quick, comfortable, refurbished to very high standards
- Waverley Station
  - Master planning exercise has been started
  - Certain issues need to be addressed for the future

A question and answer session followed.

Topics raised included:

- Issues with the Far North Line
- The potential for the extension of the Borders railway
  - extension to Hawick vs extension to Carlisle
  - resilience in Scotland to England route
- Rail issues in Inverclyde
- Improvements on Aberdeen to Inverness line
  - Including refurbished trains
- Access issues at Waverley due to taxi rank
- Discussion on the Levenmouth rail campaign and the challenges

- Discussion of possible improvements to the existing network
  - improving line speed, cost efficiency, timetabling
- Procedures for compensation due to delays / skip-stopping
- Capacity on trains – overcrowding and space for luggage / bikes
- Encouraging more freight to be moved on the railways
- Discussion on the feasibility of a Glasgow airport link
- East Coast capacity issues
- Connectivity to train stations
  - Car parking, electric car charging, cycle spaces
- Pricing structure, with a focus on student pricing and cheaper prices to encourage passengers on to slower routes
- Issues with staff rotas

John Mason MSP thanked Alex Hynes for his presentation to the CPG, and for answering questions.

## **AOCB**

Meeting moved to general discussion of AOCB.

## **Next Meeting**

The group agreed that the next meeting would be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

John Mason MSP thanked the members for attending, closing the meeting.

John Mason asked for topics for future meetings

- Freight and modal shift were suggested as potential topics