

SATA
Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance

Scottish Charity SC027600

Full Meeting

Minutes of the Full Meeting of members held at 2.15 pm on 16th September 2010 at the Blackfriars Development Centre, Perth

Present: Stanley Flett (Chairman & Individual Member), John Berry (Dundee City Council), John Ballantine (Treasurer & Individual Member), Kate Cross (Individual), Paul Cross (Individual), Douglas Gilroy (Individual), Jan Goodall (Individual), Lynda Harwood (Deafblind Scotland), Douglas Hush (Individual), Stephen Joyce (Deafblind Scotland), Lilian Lawson (SCOD), Jim McKay (Individual), Trevor Meadows (Individual), Rod Merchison (Individual), John Moore (LCTS), Patrick Nyamurandira (ScotRail), Alan Rees, (Secretary & Individual Member), Terry Robinson (Individual), Kate Sanford (Quarriers).

In attendance: Chris Clark (Transport Scotland), Dean Cowper (Transport Scotland), John Strachan (Perth & Kinross Council PTU)

Interpreters: Grace Bannan & Linda Thomson

Apologies: Donald Anderson (GCIL), Fiona Anderson (North Link Ferries), Caroline Barr (Individual), Arthur Cowie (Lochaber Disability Access Panel), Derek Dewar (Individual), Margaret Gilroy (Individual), David Griffiths (Ecas), Jane Horsburgh (Blind Dogs Scotland), Jacq Kelly (Leonard Cheshire Disability), Roddy MacTaggart (Aberdeen City Council), Ryan McQuigg (Leonard Cheshire Disability), Bill MacIntosh (Scottish Taxi Federation), Angela Marshall (Inclusion Scotland)

Brian Masson (Angus Transport Forum), June Morrison (Independent Examiner), Wayne Pearson (HcL), Tom Porter (Individual), Matt Short (East Coast Trains), Frank Smith (Dumfries & Galloway CDP), Jean Smith (Cumnock & Doon Valley Access Panel), Muriel Williams (Hon Life Member), Linda Wright (Prestonfield Neighbourhood Project), Ann Young (SEAG)

1. Welcome

Stanley Flett welcomed members to the meeting following on from the AGM.

2. Apologies for absence

The apologies were accepted.

3. Minutes of the Open Meeting on 6th May 2010

The Minutes had been circulated. Their adoption was proposed by Paul Cross, seconded by Terry Robinson and approved.

4. Matters arising.

No matters were raised by members present.

5. Information exchange

(a) First ScotRail

Patrick Nyamurandira said he had prepared a report and this had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The only other matter he wished to warn SATA members about was the advent of the new trains on the South West Scotland routes which would be longer than some platforms. ScotRail was working with Transport Scotland and full information would be issued. But disabled people were advised always to board the front 5 of the 8 coaches. If a station was missed, emergency transport would be provided back to the destination.

In reply to a question from Stephen Joyce, he said the doors on the coaches not at the platforms would not open. There would also be audio and visual announcements.

6. Presentation

John Berry, Sustainable Transport Team Leader, Dundee City Council and Chair of ATCO's sub-committee on community, social and health transport, spoke on the subject 'The Journey to Health Care - Whose Responsibility?'

John started by highlighting the extent of the problems in providing health-related transport. It was the third biggest generator of journeys after work and education - journeys to hospital, GPs, visits to patients, day care units and clinics. The key players were NHS Boards, the Scottish Ambulance Service, Regional Transport Partnerships, Local Authorities, voluntary sector community transport, private sector operators and of course friends and families. There were particular problems of health care in rural areas as emphasised by the 'Kerr Report' in 2005 and 'Better Health, Better Care' in 2007. Community engagement consistently identifies the journey to and from hospital as central to public concerns about changing healthcare delivery.

The seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) were required to produce strategies on health transport as part of their overall Regional Transport Strategies and Health Boards as well as local authorities were represented on the RTP Boards. However they were struggling to implement the strategies. The Healthcare Transport Framework was published in November 2009 as the Scottish Government's action plan to develop a national approach to travel management. NHS Boards are required to publish operational transport plans. The concentration was on clinical services as the Boards' primary concern but at

the same time there was a growing acceptance that they must look at the whole patient experience. John suggested that SATA might comment on the Framework (as well as its delivery), although the document was not easily found!

Turning to the Scottish Ambulance Service, John said emergency 'Blue Light' transport was its priority and non-emergency, patient transport was recognised as being inefficient with long waits and long journeys. Efforts were being made to tighten the eligibility criteria around 'medical need' so reducing the number of passengers carried - a third were currently meeting 'social and geographical' needs. However this threw responsibility back on local authorities which had the power to provide socially necessary services (bus, taxi and DRT) but were financially stretched and facing further cuts. Commercial operators had a key role, providing bus services to and from hospitals.

Voluntary sector community transport provided a patchwork of provision across Scotland but had lost central government ring-fenced funding and were now easy targets for local authority cuts. It had difficulty in establishing the 'social returns' for the services it provided and resisted too much public sector interference.

The answer to the question 'whose responsibility was it to provide the journey to healthcare?' clearly lay in good partnership working between all these sectors and agencies. He concluded by giving examples of successful partnership schemes in Perth, Forth Valley, Glasgow and Dundee.

7. Questions and discussion

Lilian Lawson stressed the importance of services for the homebound without which their health would suffer. Alan Rees quoted initial co-operative working in Lothian to set up the Handicabs (HcL) dial-a-ride service. Trevor Meadows stressed the need for a flexible, integrated transport system which also included services to meet social and leisure needs which represented 60% of overall demand. This required new thinking and new skills to meet the many complex issues

Finally Stan Flett warmly thanked John Berry for his presentation.

8. AOCB

No other business was raised by members.

9. Close and Next Meeting

Stanley Flett closed the meeting and looked forward to the Open Meeting at 1.30 pm on Thursday 11th November 2010 at the RNIB Offices, 12-14 Hillside Place, Edinburgh EH7 5EA.

