

Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA)

Open Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6th May 2010 at the Millennium Hotel, George Square, Glasgow, starting at 1.30 pm.

Present: Stan Flett (in the Chair), John Ballantine (Individual), John Binning (SPT), Arthur Cowie (Lochaber Disability Access Panel), Dean Cowper (Transport Scotland), Kate Cross (Individual), Paul Cross (Individual), Iain Cuthbertson (Quarriers), Robert Dunabir (Scottish Taxi Federation), Rose Forbes (DATAG), Jan Goodall (DATAG/Dundee CT), Ruth Hart (Deafblind Scotland), Douglas Hush (Individual), Elizabeth Hush (Visitor), Paul Keisey (LTI), Bruce Kiloh (SPT), Lilian Lawson (Scottish Council on Deafness), John MacDonald (CTA), Pat McGuigan (Glasgow Access Panel), Elizabeth MacKay (SPT), Jim McKay (Individual), Caroline Tumath (Quarriers), Robert Merchison (Individual), John Moore (LCTS), Patrick Nyamurandira (ScotRail), Andrew Overton (LTI), Thomas Patullo (DATAG), Tom Porter (Individual), Garry Ranson (LTI), Alan Rees (Individual), Jim Ritchie (Individual), Terry Robinson (Individual), Liz Rowlett (SDEF), Kate Sanford (Quarriers), Ivor Souter (Highland Council), Anny Young (SEAG)

In attendance: Andrew Dewey and Agnes McIver (Interpreters)

1. Chairperson's opening remarks:

Stan Flett welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited introductions.

He and Jan Goodall paid tribute to the Mina MacDonald who had died recently of a stroke. She was a founder member of DATAG, an individual member of SATA and an enthusiastic supporter.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from the following were accepted:

Donald Anderson (Glasgow CIL), Fiona Anderson (NorthLink Ferries), Valery Beck (Visibility), Jean Campbell (Individual), Chris Clark (Transport Scotland), Lena Gillies (Enable), Douglas Gilroy (Individual), David Griffiths (Ecas), Jane Horsburgh (Guide Dogs Scotland), Maggie Killin (Individual), Mac Logan (Individual), Maggie Lawson (Badenoch & Strathspey CT), Jim McKay (Individual), Ryan McQuigg (Leonard Cheshire Disability), Roddy MacTaggart (Aberdeen City Council), Jean Sanderson (Arthritis Care), Matt Short (East Coast), Jean Smith (Cumnock & Doon Valley Access Panel), Karl Vanters (Midlothian Council), Muriel Williams (Individual), Linda Wright (Prestonfield Neighbourhood Project)

3. Minutes of Full Meeting, 11th February 2010.

These were adopted on the motion of Arthur Cowie and seconded by Paul Cross. Thanks were expressed to Douglas Gilroy who took the Minutes.

4. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda

4.1 Taxi access regulation

Andrew Overton drew attention to the passing of the Equality Act 2010 by the Westminster Government with its provision for taxi regulation in Chapter 1 of Part 12. But no start or end date had been declared.

There were no other matters arising.

5. Reports from the Management Committee

5.1 Secretary's report

Alan Rees reported as follows:

Website

The Committee was looking into how the SATA website could be developed to provide more information, attract more visits and raise the organisation's profile and membership. A news page was suggested to which members could contribute. Reciprocal links with members' websites would be encouraged.

Matters received, circulated and considered by the Management Committee and its Sub Groups:

- An invitation from MVA Consultancy, commissioned by Transport Scotland and Passenger Focus, to comment on train passenger needs and priorities for future rolling stock design.
- Audit Scotland was conducting an Evaluation of National Concessionary Travel in Scotland for Older and Disabled People and responses were invited by 15th May. SATA would stress both positive and negative aspects.
- The Department for Transport was consulting on Changes to Laws Governing Powered Mobility Vehicles and it closes on 28th May.
- The Department for Transport was also consulting on Improving Bus Passenger Services Through the Regulatory Framework (in England and Wales) and this closes on 1st June.
- Transport Scotland had been informed that the budget for the Access for All Small Scheme Fund was being cut and Scotland was included, its share being £390,000.
- An invitation to attend Transport Scotland's 'Roads for All' Conference in Glasgow on 8th June.

Events attended by members:

- TACTRAN Focus Group meetings on the Regional Bus Information Strategy in February
- The SCVO Gathering in Edinburgh on 19th February
- The Cross Party Group on Disability meeting on transport on 3rd March
- The Scottish Rail Accessibility Forum (SRAF) meeting on 19th March.
- The SDEF networking meeting in Edinburgh on 26th April.

5.2 Treasurer's report

John Ballantine reported that end of year balance at 31st March was just over £2,000, split between £1,000 with Standard Life Bank on deposit, the remainder in the Bank of Scotland. The end-of-year statement would be independently examined and presented to the AGM in September.

Alan and John were thanked for their reports.

6. Information exchange:

6.1. The Chairman

Stan Flett drew attention to an incident in Aberdeen which highlighted the need for well-publicised and understood evacuation procedures at both rail and bus stations. Patrick Nyamurandira for First ScotRail said there were co-ordinated procedures at both places and for the emergency services. The public should not worry.

6.2 ScotRail

Patrick Nyamurandira reported the following:

- **REACT:** the RNIB system was now operational at Dumfries station and the local Access Panel was handed complementary fobs on 30th April.
- **Access for All - Small Schemes:** the provision of a ramp at Rosyth had been dropped from the scheme on cost grounds following a feasibility study and budget cuts.
- **Access for All - Main Scheme:**
 - Phase 1**
Work to provide a ramp on the Edinburgh-bound platform at Cupar station remained the only work from Phase 1 still to be done.
 - Phase 2**
Work at Easterhouse would be substantially complete by December for the re-opening of the Airdrie-Bathgate line; a feasibility study was being carried out by Network Rail on the construction of lifts and a footbridge at Hyndland station; variable height ticket office counters had been installed at Dumfries, Lanark, Kilwinning and Paisley Gilmour Street, with installation at Ayr and Johnstone to be completed by mid June; other work completed included at 329 space car park at Carluke with funding from SPT, accessible toilets at Airdrie and Westerton, automatic doors at Huntly, Arbroath, Montrose, Dumfries, Motherwell, Kilwinning and Dunfermline Town; CCTV had been installed at Perth Station.

On-going work to provide an accessible toilet at Dumbarton Central should be completed by the end of May and variable height ticket counters at Ayr, Helensburgh Central, Johnstone and Inverkeithing were due for completion by July.

At Inverness Station ScotRail has converted a former shop unit into a new waiting room which provides customers with a sheltered heated area on the main concourse, whilst the toilets and left-luggage areas have been upgraded.

Planned works funded by Transport Scotland include Customer Information Screens (CIS) at Langside, Pollockshaws East, Stewarton and Dunlop; SPT was planning extra parking spaces at Bellshill (260), Coatbridge Sunnyside (83) and Stewarton (70), and had let a contract for a new 705 space car park at Croy to begin this summer; Gourock Station will have a new building as the first phase of a £5M Network Rail station enhancement programme, including a ticket office and waiting facility, to be completed by November 2010.

ScotRail had announced the ending of services at Drumgelloch from 9th May due to relocation, the closure of Airdrie Station between 17th and 25th July, and the closure and relocation of Bathgate Station in October.

Patrick concluded his report by asking for views on proposals to trial a **3-D Visual Train Demonstration** which will show the facilities onboard the wheelchair accessible Class 170 coaches in Strathclyde. It is hoped by making such a video available, disabled people will become more confident about travelling on the network. It will compliment the 'Station Made Easy' service for stations. Video clips can be viewed on www.3dvsl.com/clients/Scotrail/proto6 and he asked for feedback by 21st May.

Patrick answered questions from Arthur Cowie about the impact of industrial action, from Lilian Lawson on safe access procedure and information for deaf people, and from Ruth Hart on behalf of Stephen Joyce on tactile paving on platform edges. He said he could give no information on industrial action, staff were trained to provide assistance for deaf people, and Network Rail was responsible for maintaining existing paving and installing new paving where there was new platform work in accordance with its Code of Practice.

6.2. Transport Scotland

Dean Cowper reported further on the Access for All Small Scheme Fund administered by Transport Scotland on behalf of the Department for Transport. He said the budget for Scotland for this year had been cut by 51% from £796,000 to £390,000 as part of the Department's reduction in its overall budget. There was still a possibility for further funds becoming available later in the year and most expenditure for station improvements was from the £41M Main Scheme budget.

It was noted that the Scottish Transport Minister, Stewart Stephenson, had written to the DfT calling for a re-think.

6.3 'Roads for All' Conference

Liz Rowlett of SDEF drew attention to this conference organised by Transport Scotland which was due to take place on 8th June at the Thistle Hotel, Glasgow.

7. Presentation: by John Binning, Team Leader, Policy and Strategy, Scottish Partnership for Transport (SPT)

John said SPT was one of 7 Regional Transport Partnerships established in April 2006 by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. The SPT area in the west of Scotland contained 2.14 million people - 42% of the Scottish population - and they undertook 50% of all public transport journeys, made up of 223 million bus journeys, 52 million rail journeys, over 4 million ferry journeys, 13.3 million subway journeys a year and accounting for 35% of Scottish road traffic.

SPT had a key role in transport planning and delivering projects. It operated the Glasgow subway, supported bus services, park and ride and provided bus infrastructure. It delivered demand responsive services and school transport. It promoted sustainable travel, provided information for the public, connected freight, developed integrated ticketing, addressed transport affordability, safer journeys and equality issues through its equality scheme and action plan. It was involved with many other agencies such as the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, local councils and public transport operators.

He went on to talk about the Dial a Bus service for those who had difficulty accessing standard buses and could be used for a wide range of purposes - except hospital appointments. As well as the national concessionary travel scheme, there was the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme for subway, ferry and rail journeys (see www.spt.co.uk/concessionarytravel).

The Glasgow subway was an old system that had limited facilities for customers with disabilities on its trains and at its 15 stations. But there was now a programme for modernisation which would improve access, including the introduction of 'trailer cars' with wheelchair spaces. There would be continued consultation with stakeholders including SATA.

Regarding bus stations and stops, access had been improved with better stances, shelters and stops, signage, lighting and passenger information - he mentioned Buchanan Street, East Kilbride, Greenock and Partick. SPT had invested in new low-floor and fuel-efficient buses able to carry up to four wheelchair passengers and small enough to navigate narrow streets.

He then mentioned the Renfrew ferries now operated by Silver Marine which were 'fully DDA compliant' with a capacity for 12 passengers including 2 in wheelchairs. Turning to rail, he said Dalmarnock Station was a key station for the

2014 Commonwealth Games and had attracted £2.8 million of European Funding to develop and would be fully accessible. There were improvements at other stations and to rolling stock. Further information could be found on the SPT website www.spt.co.uk.

Answering questions, John Binning said there would be no increase in the number of stations on the Glasgow subway, unless national funding could be found. The present system was nearing its workable end but was a vital part of the network with links to key transport hubs. There was a proposal for driverless trains but safety was paramount and there would be a staff presence. Smart card technology would allow integrated ticketing but there were problems when you had a system of multiple operators wanting to protect their revenues. Access to subway stations included the need to access by taxi and they were willing to discuss the need for taxi stands and fare concessions although funding a taxicard scheme was a big undertaking. Real-time information at bus stops was happening in Glasgow and would be extended beyond the city: he was happy to discuss issues with groups like SATA.

The Chairman thanked John Binning and Elizabeth MacKay for the presentation and the hospitality afforded by SPT.

8. AOCB

8.1 AGM elections

Members were reminded that the SATA Annual General Meeting would take place in Perth on 16th September 2010 when the business would include the election of Office Bearers and members of the Management Committee. They were asked to consider making nominations so that those elected would fully represent the wide variety of interests and experience amongst the membership.

9. Date of next Meeting:

The AGM and Full Meeting of members will take place from 1.15 pm on Thursday 16th September 2010 at the Blackfriars Development Centre, Perth.