

Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA)

Open Meeting

Minutes of the Open Meeting held on Thursday 14th May 2009 at the Queen's Hotel, Dundee.

Present

Stan Flett (Chairperson) (Individual Member), John Ballantine (Individual), Chris Clark (Transport Scotland), John Clow (Council for Disability Stirling), Iain Cuthbertson (Quarriers), Terry Barlow (Stirling Area Access Panel), Arthur Cowie (Lochaber Access Panel), Paul Cross (Individual Member), Ian Cuthbertson (Quarriers), Bob Edwards (Highland Council), Douglas Gilroy (National Federation of the Blind), Sheila Fletcher (CTA), Eric Guthrie (TACTRAN), R. Forbes (Individual/DATAG), Jan Goodall DATAG/Dundee CT), Linda Haywood (Deafblind Scotland), Duncan Hearsom (Dial-a-Journey), Nan Heron (Individual), Stephen Joyce (Deafblind Scotland), Maggie Killin (Individual), Lillian Lawson (SCoD), Mina MacDonald (Individual), Pat McGuigan (Glasgow Access Panel), Jim McKay (National Federation of the Blind), Ryan McQuigg (Leonard Cheshire Disability), Brian Masson (Angus Transport Forum), Trevor Meadows (Individual), John Moore (Lothian Community Transport Services), Patrick Nyamurandira (First ScotRail), Tom Patullo (Individual/DATAG), Alan Rees (Individual), Jim Ritchie (Individual), Terry Robinson (Individual/Describe on Line), Dorothy Rollo (Individual), Liz Rowlett (SDEF), Jean Sanderson (Arthritis Care in Scotland), Jean Searle (DATAG), Pauline Topham (National Federation of the Blind), Carol Wilson (SPT).

Two interpreters, Linda Duncan and Amy Cheskin, were in attendance.

1. Opening remarks

Stanley Flett opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to this first SATA meeting in Dundee and asked them to identify themselves.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Donald Anderson (Glasgow CIL), Fiona Anderson (NorthLink Ferries), Caroline Barr (Individual), Arthur Cowie (Lochaber Council on Disability), Phil Dawson (National Express East Coast), Neill Gellatly (Dundee City Council), Margaret Gilroy (Individual), David Griffiths (ECAS), Maggie Lawson (Badenoch & Strathspey CT), John MacDonald (CTA), Jackie Maceira (West Dunbartonshire Access Panel), Roddy MacTaggart (Aberdeen Council), John Mitchell (Dundee Disability Issues Group), Moira Ogilvie (Dundee Disability Issues Group), Matt Short (National Express East Coast), Jim Thompson (Fair Deal), Caroline Tumath (Quarriers), Muriel Williams (Individual).

3. Minutes

The Minutes of Open Meeting held at The Forth Valley Sensory Centre, Camelon, on 12th February 2009 were approved on a proposal from Pat McGuigan seconded by Lillian Lawson and subject to the following amendment made at the request of MACS and proposed by Alan Rees, seconded by John Ballantine:

Minute 4(a). The fourth sentence to read 'Last time 49 application packs had been submitted, 19 selected and 18 people interviewed after one candidate withdrew.'

4. Matters arising

(a) Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)

The new committee had met in January and April with further meetings scheduled for August and October. A further recruitment round for additional members was about to be held.

The Convener, Anne MacLean, had accepted an invitation to address the SATA meeting on 17th September and in response to her request she had been sent a list of issues which SATA members considered to be of priority importance.

(b) Scotland-wide National Concessionary Bus Scheme review

The report from the Scottish Government had been expected in February/March but had not yet been issued. When it was, it would be circulated to members for comment.

5. Information exchange

(a) From Patrick Nyamurandira of First ScotRail

Patrick said a viewing of the new Class 380 train mock-up at Glasgow Central station by representatives of disability groups, including SATA, had been hosted on 7th May. It would remain open to the public there until 20th May and then transferred to the Glasgow Transport Museum.

A new BSL video to provide information for deaf customers had been produced and funded through the Access for All - Small Schemes in association with Sign-Now, a Grangemouth organisation run by deaf people. It can be viewed on the website <http://www.scotrail.co.uk/content/deafcommunity.html> and feedback would be welcome.

A tactile map had been installed at Linlithgow station and another was due for Camelon this month. Again, comments would be welcomed. Those with fobs for the RNIB REACT devices are being asked how they rate the system. Wide Aisle Gates have been installed at Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street.

Under Access for All, applications for 2010/11 projects under the Small Schemes programme are invited before 30th September 2009. Work under the first phase of the Main Schemes programme has been completed at Barrhead, Mount Florida, Kirkaldy and Rutherglen, and is due for completion at Dalmuir this August. Solutions at Stirling have yet to be established. Options for further assessment and analysis have been agreed at Montrose and Easterhouse but remain to be tabled at Linlthgow, Hyndland and Perth.

Terry Robinson added that Describe Online now covers Dundee, Glasgow Queen Street, Inverness and Stirling stations.

(b) From Carol Wilson of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)

Carol reported that the SPT was about to undertake a modernisation programme for the Glasgow Subway including improved access for disabled people. It would be launching a consultation process at Consort House, Glasgow on 29th May.

Pat McGuigan drew Carol's attention to a dangerous escalator and Alan Rees referred to the Department for Transport's current consultation on *Improving Access to Light Rail* to which responses were invited by 3rd July.

(c) From Brian Masson of Angus Transport Forum

Brian reported on a number of projects at Aberdeen University's Centre for Transport Research (CTR):

- The Institute of Rural Research 5 year £12.4 million UK-funded project for a Rural Digital Economy Research Hub (one of three such centres in the UK) to investigate how digital technologies can transform rural communities and services such as transport.
- The WISETRIP project looking at personalised journey planner information to mobile devices, linking international journey planners to provide multi-modal door-to-door information.
- The FLIPPER project to transfer experiences, knowledge and good practices on Flexible Transport Services through different European Regions in order to increase the social inclusion of disadvantaged citizen groups and/or areas, to reduce energy consumption and environmental impacts, thus encouraging sustainable social/economic growth
- The ICMA (Improving Connectivity and Mobility Access) 3 year project focusing on the creation of effective alternatives to private car use.

Futher details of these projects can be found on the CTR website:

www.abnd.ac.uk/ctr/

(d) From Alan Rees on behalf of the SATA Management Committee

Alan reported on matters in which SATA had been involved since the last meeting, including:

- the policy of Lothian Buses regarding unfolding prams occupying wheelchair spaces on low floor vehicles

- responses to consultations on the *Regulation of Bus Services* (Charlie Gordon MSP), *Designing Streets* (Scottish Government) and *Improving Access to Taxis* (Department for Transport) - all posted on the SATA website: www.scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk
- the current DfT consultation on *Improving Access to Light Rail*

From the Chair, Stan Flett thanked Patrick, Carol, Brian and Alan for their reports.

6. Presentation on Regional Accessibility Issues and Priorities by Eric Guthrie, Partnership Director, TACTRAN

Eric gave an illustrated power-point presentation (copies circulated separately) on the work of the Tayside & Central Scotland Transport Partnership (TACTRAN). He said it covered the local authority areas of Angus, Dundee City, Perth & Kinross and Stirling and was one of seven statutory Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) in Scotland. It had its headquarters in Perth with a small staff of 6 and its Board of 15 members met every 3 months. There were 6 internal Management Groups and 6 external Forums including one on Equalities and one on Buses & CT/DRT.

Like other RTPs, TACTRAN has a duty to prepare and coordinate the delivery of a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). This was originally produced in March 2007 but after the election that year had to be revised in line with the new Scottish Government's requirements, although its key aspects were unchanged. It was finally approved in June 2008. A separate RTS Delivery Plan is being developed which currently sets a £211 million delivery plan of some 62 specified interventions over the 15 years to 2023.

TACTRAN's vision is:

"A transport system shaped by engagement with its citizens which helps to deliver prosperity and connect communities across the region and beyond, which is socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable and which promotes the health and wellbeing of all."

There were 6 high level RTS objectives, one of which was to 'improve accessibility for all, particularly those suffering from social exclusion'. The RTS is based on 3 key strategic Themes/Issues: economic prosperity, connecting communities and environmental sustainability.

Underpinning the RTS, TACTRAN has recently developed Sub Strategies covering Travel Information, Buses (including CT & DRT), Walking and Cycling, Park and Ride. For each of these there are Action Plans which contribute to the overall RTS Delivery Plan. On CT & DRT, the aim was to maximise their role and contribution to improving accessibility and social inclusion. A regional feasibility study was to be presented to the TACTRAN Board on 23rd June after which

there would be stakeholder consultation.

Details of the RTS and other information about TACTRAN can be found on the website www.tactran.gov.uk

Answering questions, Eric said the needs of deaf people in relation to catching buses in rural areas was an issue that could be taken up by the Equalities Forum and through the Travel Information Strategy. Likewise the difficulties blind and partially sighted people had gaining information at bus stops. The industry had its statutory and commercial responsibilities for introducing low-floor vehicles and for driver training. Some areas were better served than others. The importance of both these aspects were reflected in TACTRAN's Buses and Travel Information strategies and TACTRAN was keen to work in partnership with transport providers on improving these areas of service delivery through Quality Partnerships.

Stan Flett thanked Eric very much for his presentation and replies to questions.

7. Comments on the presentation

(a) Duncan Hearsom of Dial-a-Journey, Stirling

Duncan picked up the subject of driver training and said that by 2013 all bus drivers should have a Certificate of Professional Competence which included disability awareness. His own organisation straddled two RTP areas and had a regional coordination role as well as one delivering services. Like others in community transport, it put a lot of time and resources into driver training.

(b) Jan Goodall of DATAG and Dundee Community Transport

Jan spoke about the campaign since 1992 for Dundee to have a dial-a-ride service like Dial-a-Journey and Handicabs (Lothian). She felt there was still a lack of understanding in official circles about the need for such a service, and where the need was recognised, the reason given for not having it was the unavailability of funding.

She concluded by thanking SATA for holding this meeting in Dundee.

On behalf of the meeting Stanley Flett warmly thanked both Duncan and Jan for their comments.

8. Other business

No matters of other business were raised.

9. Date of next meeting

(a) AGM at 1.30 pm and (b) Full Meeting at 2.30 pm, both on Thursday 17th September 2009 at RNIB, 12-14 Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh

10. Close

The Chairman closed the meeting at 3.15 pm.

ATR 28.05.09