

## MOBILITY AND ACCESS COMMITTEE FOR SCOTLAND

Tuesday 21 July 2020 - 11:00 to 13.00

Teleconference via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Present

Linda Bamford – Convener (Chair)  
Marsali Craig (MC)  
Naghat Ahmed (NM)  
Susan Fulton (SF)  
David Hunter (DH)  
Hillary Stubbs (HS)  
Audrey Burt (AB)  
Joanne Devitt (JD)  
Keith Robertson (KR)  
Hussein Patwa (HP)  
Lucy Logan – Secretariat  
Karen Armstrong – Deputy Sponsor

#### Apologies

Michael Tornow (MT)  
Fraser Sutherland (FS)

Agenda Item 1: Welcome, Apologies and team welfare check

1.1 The Convener took a moment to pay tribute to Sheila Fletcher who sadly passed away in May 2020. Sheila will be missed by the committee.

Sheila's knowledge and passion for accessible travel particularly in rural areas, was clear for all to see and she was always willing to take committee members under her wing and share her knowledge with others. Sheila is sorely missed, as she became not only a colleague but also a friend to many of us.

This year's Annual Report was dedicated to Sheila to acknowledge her contributions to MACS over the years.

1.2 The Convener also thanked John Whitfield for his contribution to MACS. John stood down from the committee in April 2020. John was a dedicated committee member for 4 years and the Convener thanked him for all of his work.

#### Agenda Item 2: Approval of minutes, matters arising and update on action points from previous meetings

2.1 There were two typos for correction in the April minutes:

- Page 4, Action Point 5, should read 'Traveline' not 'Treeline'
- Page 7, first paragraph, second line, should read 'working patterns' not 'patters.'

Other than the above, the minutes were agreed.

**Action Point 1:** The Secretariat to correct typos in previous minutes.

2.2 There are no outstanding previous action points; however, a few updates were given.

2.3 Action point from the 21 January committee meeting:

4.	Secretariat to check with the Ferries Team that accessibility is embedded in new ferry terminals infrastructure and whether an access consultant is included in the design team.	remain open
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**Update:** It was agreed that the ferries lead would take this forward. It was reported that the ferries team continue to be focused on COVID-19 priorities. This will remain open as an action to be updated at the October meeting.

**Action Point 2:** Secretariat to email the ferries team to gauge their capacity to reinstate engagement with the committee.

2.4 The Convener invited an update on progress made on Scotrail's website accessibility and Traveline app's accessibility.

2.5 The rail lead advised that Scotrail is currently redeveloping their website with an external consultant. This process is in the testing stage and has been delayed by COVID-19. The committee currently await updates on this progress and will feedback further, in October.

2.6 Concerns were raised about the lack of progress being made with the Traveline app. This issue was also highlighted in the 2019/20 Annual Report. Discussions have now taken place with SEStran in relation to the way-finding element of their app, which could address some of the issues with the Traveline app. The committee are concerned that the SEStran project will not come into effect until the end of 2021 and in the meantime, the Traveline app is still problematic for disabled people to use.

2.7 The committee feel that there are ways in which the app could be improved now, however Traveline have not made these changes because they are operating on an outdated platform. In the meantime, the committee have suggested that Traveline add a note to their app explaining that accessibility improvements are being worked on.

2.8 The Sponsor Team are in the process of setting up a meeting to discuss the Traveline app. Traveline, the committee and the sponsor team will all participate. There was some discussion about escalating this issue to a higher level, but the Convener agreed that in the first instance they would see if progress is made through the aforementioned meeting.

2.9 It was asked if the Traveline app issue was being included in the EqIA work being carried out by the Transport Transition Plan (TTP) Equality Network. The Convener confirmed that the network are now at the stage where evidence has been gathered and they are moving onto the mitigation stage. This will be raised at the Equality Network meetings where the Traveline app can be highlighted as an issue needing addressed.

2.10 The discussion moved to an update on action point 10 of the January meeting:

10.	Secretariat to ask taxi licensing team to share with the committee Bus, Taxis and Community Transport workstream lead proposed guidance for licensing authorities and ask for a deadline for response.	It was agreed to close this action and progress this ask through the scrutiny of the Accessible Travel Framework Annual Delivery Plan.
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The Department for Transport (DfT) have sent out an email regarding amended legislation, which has been shared with the Sponsor Team. The Sponsor Team would feedback to the full committee on any impact the DfT amendments would have in Scotland.

After note: The Deputy Sponsor confirmed that the amendments had no impact in Scotland.

### **Agenda Point 3: Update from Convener**

3.1 The Convener commented that the last few months have been very busy and thanked all members for their hard work, contributions and flexibility on short turnarounds. She also thanked HP for organising all Zoom meetings.

3.2 On the topic of recruitment selection, the Convener reminded everyone that an overview review of the plan was given on the 6 July.

She is aware the committee will be carrying three vacancies until April 2021 and thanked everyone for the extra work they are undertaking to fill these gaps.

3.3 The Convener stated that she would ask the Sponsor Team will move the plan forward by engaging with the Public Appointment Unit to get the vacancy adverts out for 4-6 weeks from November 2020. The Convener will contact the Deputy Sponsor after the meeting on the 4 August.

3.4 The Convener asked if everyone was happy to approve the recruitment plans; all members approved.

3.5 The Convener then moved onto the topic of recommendation 6 of the [2019/20 Annual Report](#). The committee would like their December 2020 scoping day to allow for discussion on the committee's high-level objectives. This was the planned annual schedule to review the objectives and consider the following years work plan to allow for submission to the Cabinet Secretary between February and March of each year with the new objectives and work plans in place for 1 April.

Members should think about progressing their scrutiny on the new starting point of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) 2 and an update would be sought from the Sponsor Team on progress before the Accessibility Framework had been paused and plans for moving forward.

<p><b>Action Point 3:</b> Secretariat to arrange for the Deputy Sponsor to meet DH to discuss the future of the Accessibility Framework.</p>
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3.6 Two Committee representatives attended the Accessibility Steering Group meeting that took place on 16 July. They would like to hear more from the Sponsor Team on their plans to restart the ATF Annual Delivery Plan at the next Steering Group meeting.

3.7 There was discussion around the Accessibility Framework being paused. The committee think that COVID-19 has shifted the bigger picture away from the work areas of the Accessible Framework Annual Delivery Plan and moved to the reducing inequalities pillar of National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2). The Convener agreed that focus should be on the TTP and the NTS2 Delivery Board, where more strategic discussions are taking place and accessibility issues are gaining traction through EqlAs. She also reaffirmed that the Committee had previously suggested (and had discussion with the Sponsor Team) that the ATF Annual Delivery Plan should align and feed into NTS2 and provide annual progress updates.

3.8 The Convener concluded this discussion by confirming the committees' approval that the focus of the December Scoping Day will be on identifying where the committee should concentrate the majority of their scrutiny going forward.

3.9 The Convener stated that the scoping day should be an open discussion behind closed doors and that the committee would like to invite relevant Ministers.

**Action Point 4:** Secretariat to discuss Minister invites with Deputy Sponsor and organise invitations to the event.

3.10 Moving to the topic of appraisals, the Convener would like the committee members due appraisals by Oct 2020 to submit their initial comments to her by 28 August. The Convener would also like members to indicate a suitable hour-long slot for their appraisal conversations for the week commencing 28 September or 5 October.

3.11 The supplementary section of the Super Report included a section on ministerial engagement. The Convener asked committee members to think about which Ministers, the committee should engage for the winter session of Ministerial meeting.

**Action Point 5:** All members let the Convener know which ministers they think, should be included in the winter session of engagement by 28 August.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Workstream Leads Update- Key Points**

4.1 The Convenor invited all leads to provide some quick key updates on their work areas.

#### **4.2 Planning and Strategy - David Hunter**

The committee have representation at the Transport Transition Plan Advisory Board meetings. At a recent meeting, there was consensus from various stakeholders that more positive messaging was needed about public transport as current messaging feels contradictory and people need to feel confident to return to using public transport.

4.3 At this meeting, the Convener also managed to interject a few of the concerns the committee had including the inability to use mobility scooters on buses and non-Edinburgh resident not being able to use their concessionary travel cards on the trams. The Convenor's approach had been that widening the eligibility to include the trams for concessionary travel, would offer more affordable opportunities (and choices) for disabled people, noting that the trams were more accessible than buses and had more wheelchair and scooter spaces. This would be particularly helpful during the TTP phases and with the need for physical distancing.

4.4 The committee stated that they would like to make sure that rural and island issues remain part of the discussion at TTP meetings, as well as the topic of community transport.

4.5 The new Bus and Community Transport Workstream Lead added that community transport is at risk of becoming a 'perfect storm' situation due to reduced funding from local authorities, reduced resource due to volunteers not being available and an increased requirement for their service due to less NHS, public and private transport.

The Convener said she raised this as a concern at the TTP Advisory Board level and the Community Transport Association (CTA) gave a presentation to the Advisory Board and Equality Network to highlight the breadth of work they do. The committee have also encouraged the CTA to put in a bold pitch for funding to the Bus Service Operator Grant.

Insert Action: AB/DH to discuss potential support for community transport with the CTA.

4.6 It was asked if the TTP was informing any enhancement of disability awareness training. The Convener confirmed that TS have had discussion with CTA around guidance for COVID-19 secure in relation to disability awareness training. It was also added that although disability training is important, the public need to have a common sense approach and there needs to be communication between disabled people and transport providers, as opposed to hard and fast rules.

4.7 Roads, infrastructure and active travel lead reminded everyone of the Safer Places for People guidance, which includes a section on EqIAs, and disability awareness training for service providers. He is disappointed that no local authorities have contacted him since the guidance was produced. He has seen images of roads/pavements, which he does not think promote equality and accessibility.

#### **4.8 Ferries and Aviation- Hilary Stubbs**

The committee has been in touch with the Civil Aviation Authority to see what guidance they have given to airports.

There has been no guidance given and are only stepping in if they are unhappy with a particular process.

4.9 The Ferries Team have been unable to engage with the committee due to COVID-19 priorities. Secretariat to complete Action Point 2.

#### **4.10 Rail – Marsali Craig and Hussein Patwa**

The rail workstream continue to have engagement with Scotrail in relation to how passenger assistance processes for disabled people will work in practice and how we move through the phases of the route-map as more people are accessing transport. The rail workstream are also in contact with TS rail policy officials.

**Action Point 6:** Secretariat to ask TS rail policy officials for the papers for the next rail workstream meeting.

4.11 The Office of Rail and Road have updated their accessible travel policies, which have now been approved. The National Assistance Travel Notice Period continues to be reduced; Scotrail's is currently two hours.

#### **4.12 Bus and Community Transport- Audrey Birt**

The committee have concerns about the future of community transport organisations. They spoke about how the **Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Steering Group** focused on transport to health in Aberdeen and how well they have worked with Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS to meet the needs of disabled people, including those suffering from COVID-19. The committee felt that funding for community transport is needed across the board to support and stabilise their service provision.

4.13 At the **HTAP Steering Group** it was noted that changes made to practice were working well, although the committee questioned if this feedback had come from patients, which it had not.

However, the general feedback was that command and control decision made through COVID-19 had worked well, although there is risk that bringing changes in quickly can result in a loss of collaborative working and omission of meaningful EqlA's.

4.14 The Convener agreed that this was a good example of command and control decision making working well in a crisis but the EqlA should always sit in front of all stages of the route map, thus informing the action that need to be taken.

#### **4.15 Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel- Keith**

The committee was in contact with DfT regarding inclusive mobility on tactile surfaces; however, they too are working on COVID-19 related priorities and things have been paused.

4.16 The Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel lead is giving a presentation at the Living Streets via webinar on the 29 July and 12 August. This will cover the topics of street maintenance, street clutter and street furniture. He also has an upcoming meeting with the Energy Saving Trust to discuss accessible streets and community transport.

## **Agenda Item 5: Sponsor Team Paper and Update**

5.1 The Deputy Sponsor thanked the committee for their hard work and flexibility before speaking about recent changes to staffing in the Sponsor Team who are working on Bus Restart and Recovery, now picking up and supporting Blue Badge work, and Bus and Active Travel hub mailbox. There are no dates yet for other members of the team to return.

5.2 The Sponsor Team had their first steering group meeting since January last week. This meeting was more of a chance for TS to confer with their accessibility stakeholders and provide an update on the wider transport strategy, rather than to provide an update on the Accessibility Framework, which is currently paused.

5.3 The Accessibility Team have been working closely with SEStran to ensure the Thistle Assistance Card can be adapted to include people who are exempt from wearing face coverings. The amendment of the card has increased uptake to between 500 and 1000 requests a week.

5.4 The Sponsor Team has been working closely with Disability Equality Scotland (DES) on a range of projects including their Hate Crime Working Group Charter, which ties into the Framework and DES grant conditions. The plan was to launch the charter publicly in January 2021. However, this is being reconsidered, as it may not get the attention required due to other current and important public messaging.

5.5 The Sponsor Team have plans to work with DES on a Webinar focused on engaging with disabled people, particularly those with sight loss, who are navigating the new normal on accessing public transport.

5.6 The Sponsor Team now have capacity to dedicate resource to Blue Badge policy. Several '4 Nations' calls have taken place, as well as close work with Social Security colleagues on the changes to PIP and devolved disability assistance benefits. Scoping work is also being carried out with local authorities on how they have found changes to Blue Badge guidance.

5.7 The Deputy Sponsor has also been involved in implementing the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport. There is daily contact with operators in relation to compliance and capacity issues. Face covering compliance is sitting at about 85%, with targeted interventions focused on areas where compliance has dropped. This has involved increasing Police visibility in some areas. The 10-15% who are not complying could account for people who are exempt.

5.8 New guidance has also been worked on, in relation to exceptions being given to the physical distancing rule in certain sectors including transport where, provided the necessary risk assessments and mitigations are put in place, physical distancing can be reduced to 1 meter. Most bus operators have introduced this change; it will not happen on rail until 27 July.



- 5.9 The Deputy Sponsor updated on several funding packages being devised or already launched, to support different areas of the bus industry.
- 5.10 The Active Travel team's key response to COVID-19 has been the Spaces for People project that the committee have provided advice on. The scheme has had huge uptake with all 32 local authorities applying for funding.
- 5.11 The committee has been involved in the Safer Public Spaces guidance, which was released on 29 June. The Deputy Sponsor then advised that work on the Inclusive Design research being undertaken by WSP consultants, focusing on inclusive street design, was still in progress and work on the report was continuing, all be it at a slower pace than expected.
- 5.12 The Deputy Sponsor team update finalised by reiterating that recent focus has been on the TTP and re-start and recovery work.
- 5.13 A Committee member asked if he could contact the Sponsor Team regarding the Deblur Blue Badge project. The Deputy Sponsor advised that they would be happy for him to do so however, there are a number of priority areas that they are currently working on, she also confirmed that the signs and wayfinding framework priority has been paused.
- 5.14 It was noted that Aberdeen Council have made positive changes in their Spaces for People project by widening pavements. The Deputy Sponsor agreed however, there had been issues with buses being re-routed to accommodate this move that are now being addressed. Similar issues have been noted in Elgin. The committee believe that these type of issues would not occur if the correct EqIA process is/was completed.
- 5.15 The committee asked if there is a plan to get the Accessibility Team work back up and running. The Deputy Sponsor advised that there is no plan at the minute to resurrect the Framework or work packages. The NTS is also paused although they are committed to producing their delivery plan to a later time schedule.
- 5.16 The Deputy Sponsor stated that new funds were being explored. She had been in touch with CTA to raise awareness, particularly in relation to school transport options.
- 5.17 AB stated that she was working hard to pick up on all the different aspects of bus, the Deputy Sponsor advised that she has been working on a range of different bus policy areas and would be happy to share any knowledge.

**Action Point 7:** Secretariat to set up a call for Deputy Sponsor to speak to AB on the topic of bus.

5.18 The Convener picked up on the point that TS are working on school transport. Although she welcomed more collaborative approach she asked why this was the case when, in the past the committee were aware that school transport was only dealt with by local authorities and Education colleagues.

The Deputy Sponsor stated that there were a range of areas that TS was working collaboratively across different priority areas to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and school transport was one of these areas. The Convener welcomed this and hopes this approach can be applied to the transport to health and social care work.

5.19 The Sponsor Team made the committee aware that there has been movement on a COVID-19 focused transport to health working group where there could be an opportunity for the committee to get involved.

**Action Point 8:** Secretariat to check in with health colleagues to see what progress has been made on the transport to health and social care working group.

5.20 The Convener questioned the possibility of the Sponsor Team being absorbed into Bus and Active Travel and raised her concerns about the Sponsor Team potentially losing their identify and focus and staff being pulled in different directions.

5.21 The Sponsor Team are not aware of any plans to change their structure or position although recognises that staff are involved in more 'crossover' working than ever before.

5.22 The Convener asked for assurance that despite any changes, accessibility would remain in the Programme for Government's (PfG) agenda. If accessibility is not treated as a priority we are at risk of moving forward without including the needs of disabled people, which equate to approximately 30% of the population.

5.23 The Deputy Sponsor has not yet been involved in this years' PfG submission and suggested the committee use their position on the TTP Advisory Board to ensure equality and accessibility stay on the agenda for change.

5.24 The discussion moved back to the topic of the reduced 1 metre physical distancing guidance amendment. The committee welcomed this change but stated they were not aware of this change and suggested communications need to be shared more widely.

5.25 It was confirmed that the announcement was made on the 9 July and that a robust communication plan is already in place covering transport, hospitality and retail through different mediums and platforms. Scotrail were cited as an example.

**Action Point 9:** The Deputy Sponsor agreed to send HP the 1 meter physical distancing guidance.

5.26 The Convener rounded off discussion by asking any members with ideas for Twitter topics to raise awareness of some of the discussion covered today. These should be sent direct to this week's twitter gatekeeper.

### **Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business**

6.1 The committee would like the option of dialing in via video, as well as audio for all meetings (i.e. hybrid meetings and as a reasonable adjustment for some members). The Convener suggested the Sponsor Team could contact the Scottish Parliament for advice, as they appeared to have adopted this approach successfully, including for committee meetings and First Minister's Questions.

6.2 The Sponsor Team explained that current internal security systems unfortunately block several platforms. However, we are now able to take part in Microsoft Teams video calls, providing an external device sets up the meeting.

**Action Point 10:** Secretariat to investigate moving to hybrid committee meetings in future.

6.3 The next Leads and Planning Strategy meeting will take place on 4 August where so far the topics for discussion are the December Scoping Day and finalising MACS Recruitment and Selection Strategy.

The next full committee meeting is on the 11 August.

**List of actions for Committee Meeting on the 21 July 2020:**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	2.1	Secretariat to correct typos in previous minutes.	<b>Complete</b>
2	2.3	Secretariat to email the ferries team to gauge their capacity to reinitiate engagement with the committee.	<b>Complete</b>
3	3.5	Secretariat to arrange for the Deputy Sponsor to meet DH to discuss the future of the Accessibility Framework.	<b>Deputy Sponsor will arrange in due course</b>
4	3.9	Secretariat to discuss Minister invites with Deputy Sponsor and organise invitations to the event.	<b>Complete</b>
5	3.11	All members let the Convener know which ministers they think, should be included in the winter session of engagement by 28 August.	
6	4.10	Secretariat to ask TS rail policy officials for the papers for the next rail workstream meeting.	<b>Complete</b>
7	5.17	Secretariat to set up a call for Deputy Sponsor to speak to AB on the topic of bus.	<b>Complete</b>
8	5.19	Secretariat to check in with health colleagues to see what progress has been made on the transport to health working group.	
9	5.25	Deputy Sponsor agreed to send HP the 1 meter physical distancing guidance.	<b>Complete</b>
10	6.2	Secretariat to investigate moving to hybrid committee meetings in future.	