

POLICY AND RESEARCH WORKING GROUP MINUTES
23 MAY 2007
DUNFERMLINE BUSINESS CENTRE

PRWG Members: John Moore, Chair
Trevor Meadows
Roderick McLeod
Fiona McCall
Mairi O'Keefe

Also present: Ruth White – Secretariat

1. CPT guidance on the carriage of wheelchairs and scooters on Buses.

The full MACS committee met at 10:15 for a discussion on the carriage of wheelchairs and scooters on buses with Marjory Rodger from CPT. A full note of that discussion is included with the Services Working Group Minutes which will be circulated to all members.

2. Welcome and Apologises

All members attended and the Chair welcomed Mairi O'Keefe back to MACS and the Policy and Research Working Group.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was agreed that, in future, the minutes should have page numbers.

It was agreed that item 5 should be titled Guidance on DRT services.

The minutes of the meeting on 11 April were then accepted.

4. Matters Arising
 - a. Audit Scotland

The meeting with Audit Scotland on 16 May was a useful opportunity to explore areas of mutual interest in the area of public performance reporting.

Audit Scotland will consult with MACS on any future Transport Audits that will be carried out including the study on the management of Scotrail franchise and the Rail and Integrated Transport Audit in 2008.

5. Guidance on DRT Services
a. Paper 1: Content

It was agreed that Section 3 of Paul Beecham's paper gave an excellent outline of the issues that should be included in any comprehensive guidance on DRT services. It was, however, felt that the section should be edited to show what issues "should" be included in the guidance, rather than what "will" be included. Members also felt that, where possible, the paper should be edited in accordance with Plain English guidance.

It was agreed that a revised Section 3, together with a covering letter containing an Executive Summary, should be part of a MACS Ministerial briefing on Demand Responsive Transport.

b. Paper 2: Strategic Context

It was agreed that Paul Beecham's paper would benefit from a clearer linkage to policy objectives from the Scottish Executive. Key words should be highlighted in bold font. The paper should also have an Executive Summary to introduce people who may not have a lot of knowledge of DRT.

It is intended that this paper will form the annex to a letter to the newly appointed RTP Directors to highlight the areas to be considered when setting up and running DRT.

c. Next Steps

Paper 1:

Action: Secretariat to contact look at Paper 1 and reorganise as discussed by the group.

Action: Paper 1 to be checked for reading age and circulated to all members.

Action: Secretariat to draft a letter to Alistair Wilson SE outlining the concerns that MACS have with the current guidance on DRT and the problems with the concepts from the Finnish model.

Action: Secretariat to circulate draft letter to PRWG for input prior to gaining full committee approval.

Paper 2:

Action: Secretariat to contact Paul Beecham to provide feedback and clarify if an Executive Summary comes under his current remit. Ensure that the language can be strengthened and discuss with Paul about the use of current policy objectives.

Action: Secretariat to draft a letter to the RTP Directors highlighting the importance of DRT and include the Strategic Context paper once it has been revised.

6. Actions required to bring about change and improve the mobility of disabled people in Scotland

Members discussed the Secretariat's paper that summarised previous PRWG comments on the DHC/TAS report.

It was agreed that the paper should be developed into a Ministerial briefing note. There should be an Executive Summary that:

- a) Identifies the relevant SE research covered by the DHC/TAS report.
- b) Acknowledges some of the positive outcomes of the research (e.g. the need for transport services for disabled people to be planned in a strategic context, and the need for enhanced DRT services across Scotland).
- c) Poses the question as to whether the research provides a basis for achieving the first stage on the MACS routemap.
- d) Includes the five conclusions of the DHC/TAS report.
- e) Explains the MACS decision to undertake a survey, and what this hopes to achieve.

Members agreed to recommend to the Main Committee that the MACS routemap be amended to include a fifth stage concerning the need to develop the skills of those involved in the planning and delivering of transport services for disabled people.

It was agreed that the final paper could form part of the business case for the MACS Survey.

Action: Secretariat to pull together the existing papers into a business case which recommends that there is a requirement for a MACS Survey.

7. MACS Survey

Following on from the previous agenda point there was a discussion on how the MACS Survey could be rolled out. There is a need to speak to the people who do not normally travel and explore the reason why rather than the normal questionnaires.

Action: Secretariat to circulate base information to the group from the National Household Survey.

Action: Fiona McCall to provide statistics from Queen Margaret University on disability and the arts.

Action: All PRWG members to provide any information they can find on sample questions or any available research carried out in a social setting.

8. Alternative methods of Assessing Eligibility for Concessionary Fares

Following a discussion it was agreed that this objective was the result of the Concessionary Fares National Travel card scheme in 2005. MACS had highlighted issues about the original scheme and they agreed that the scheme would go ahead only if there was agreement that alternative methods be looked at the Scottish Executive at a later date.

The feeling is that this should be an area that the Scottish Executive takes forward with MACS sitting on the project broad.

Action: Mairi and John to draft a letter to Basil Haddad in the SE highlighting that the Scottish Executive gave a commitment to running a pilot.

9. Strategic Policy Links a. Regional Transport Partnership (RTP)

Eric Guthrie has still not responded to the letter that Trevor sent to him in February. It was agreed that Eric should be invited to attend a PRWG meeting to discuss his thoughts on DRT. It would be useful for George Davidson from the SE to attend too.

b. Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO)

The recent meeting of ACTO highlighted that they are very interested in alternative methods of assessing eligibility for concessionary fares and would to be kept informed of MACS progress.

c. Community Transport Association (CTA)

At their Annual Scottish Members meeting on 9 May, the Community Transport Association expressed concerns about the future funding of community transport projects currently delivering DRT services in Scotland.

d. Integrated Transport with Care (ITWC)

Members felt that they should seek Main Committee approval for MACS advising Scottish Ministers that the ITWC initiative should not proceed in its present format.

Members considered that the reasons for such advice are:

- a) RTPs now have the lead responsibility for developing DRT, which is something that MACS supports.
- b) ITWC has a narrow focus on health and social care trips, whereas the SE expects RTPs to develop TDCs which will have a much wider focus for DRT trips (e.g. social activities) in order to help realise the SE's policy objectives on social inclusion.
- c) SE officials have already indicated that ITWC will be subsumed into the RTP DRT development, which MACS supports.
- d) It will be a mistake to develop two different structures for delivering enhanced DRT in Scotland.

Members felt that the MACS advice should be that the development of DRT within the RTP structure is more likely than

the ITWC initiative to make a major contribution to realising the MACS vision.

e. Strategic Transport Projects Review

Emma provided an update to the PRWG and it was agreed that she would circulate the review to the members.

10. Any Other Business

No additional agenda points were raised.