

RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

TRANSPORT (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL

Low Emission Zones

Glasgow City Council supports the proposals which align with our own LEZ plans, however the following is noted -

- Any delay in the delivery of the Bill and associated regulations may impact on the ability to deliver our own LEZ within the previously notified timescale.
- It will be essential that suitable and sufficient financial support is provided for both establishing and continuing the LEZs together with support for public transport fleet improvements within the zones.

Bus Services

The Transport Bill covers a number of issues relating to the delivery of local bus services:-

Partnership Agreements with Bus Operators

The current legislation covering partnership working is contained in The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 which introduced Statutory Quality Partnership Schemes (SQPs). At present, there are 2 SQPs in effect in Glasgow. These have achieved the improvements anticipated but fall short of the current demands for more fundamental improvements in buses and services.

The Transport Bill advocates Partnership Agreements as the most appropriate way of achieving the services improvements and in the absence of any effective voluntary schemes, suggests replacing SQPs with Bus Service Improvement Partnerships. In addition to previous SQP terms, these permit the inclusion of service frequencies and maximum fare levels. The BSIPs do require joint working with the bus operators to examine transport and policy issues which may need to be reviewed to achieve the intended outcomes of better, more reliable, safe and affordable bus services.

In principle, the further powers as suggested within the Bill are supported. Indeed, one of the priorities in Glasgow City Council's recently approved Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022 is to '*Improve and refine the Statutory Quality Partnership....*' There are aspects of the bill which at present appear too heavily weighted to the bus operators and this has been highlighted by ourselves and other agencies.

The Council has announced and is committed to forming a voluntary partnership with the key bus companies within Glasgow, prior to the above legislation being in place, and in advance of considering the introduction of a BSIP. Should that process not deliver the intended outcomes then BSIP is the next natural incremental option.

Local Franchising

Franchising is a system where the transport authority awards the exclusive right to run a bus route or routes for a set period to the most competitive bidder.

Current legislation within the Transport (Scotland) Act (2001) allows transport authorities to set up Quality Contracts (QC) which are a form of franchising. No QC has ever been developed in Scotland due to the process being over complex and resource intensive.

The Transport Bill proposes a more flexible, simpler and more customised approach to franchising and allows it to be used for smaller scale options than a QC.

One of the priorities in Glasgow City Council's recently approved Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022 is to *'Explore the feasibility of a local bus franchising framework to deliver a more connected service across the city.'* At present the Council is unable to introduce a Franchise arrangement, as is being proposed within the Bill, as the powers to do so are retained by SPT. In furtherance of the Council's ambitions to deliver a more integrated transport solution the Transport Bill must now address that anomaly and give Local Authorities the appropriate powers to consider a franchise solution in addition to these powers retained by the Regional Transport Partnership. It is preferred that those with democratic accountability (the Council), would take the final decision on whether a franchise proceeds, rather than an independent panel as proposed.

Transport Authorities Delivering Bus Services

The Transport Act 1985 does not allow local authorities to provide passenger bus services, however SPT, as a former public transport executive, retains the power to hold a PSV operator's licence. The new Bill proposes to legislate to enable local transport authorities to run bus services directly and/or be able to set up arms' length companies where it is clear that the public are not receiving an adequate bus service. Whilst this is supported, a number of structural and governance legacy issues need to be addressed to enable the council to determine where and when it is appropriate to consider this measure. The Bill is intended to give the local authorities the powers to operate bus services, however the prevailing situation is that SPT currently has these powers and this situation requires to be remedied to enable the new Transport Bill to achieve the intended outcomes for each respective local authority. As proposed this Bill will create an inconsistency across Scottish Local Authorities.

Open Data

Currently, the 2001 Act empowers the transport authority to require bus operators to provide a minimum level of information with regard to their service provision so that they can inform the public. The Transport Bill proposes to make it a requirement for local bus services to provide information on routes, timetables, punctuality and fares for public

access. Any legislation that provides more information to the public with regard to local bus services is supported.

Smart Ticketing

In principle, the provisions of the Bill in relation to smart ticketing are welcomed and are aligned to the Council's Strategic Plan 2017-2022 Priority No. 56 *"to explore, with transport providers, how to implement an integrated ticketing system"*.

A number of ticketing schemes are currently in effect in the city which are provided by bus, rail and subway operators. Recognising that these schemes have been developed by the private sector and intended to simplify the whole journey proposition, they nevertheless are primarily intended to capture the customer via electronic loyalty, by having only their bespoke products on the electronic ticket. As a consequence, the current situation permits these commercial considerations to take precedence over proper and effective ticketing integration.

The concept of introducing measures that co-ordinate these diverse interests and assist the commercial sector in guaranteeing a fully integrated, affordable, simple and easy to understand and use smart ticketing solution is welcomed.

Elements of the smart ticketing provisions in the Bill appear to be unnecessarily onerous. The Bill must encourage greater inter-operability and integration and approach this in a similar fashion to the proposed bus services aspect of the Bill where an incremental approach can be taken. If the market does not, on a voluntary basis, address the passengers' demands for inter-operability / integration and indeed simplicity / affordability of fares, then the imposition of a Scottish Standard should then be considered.

The concept of an Advisory Board is supported, however its remit must be to stimulate the market providers / operators into delivering the broader agenda of dynamic ticketing, as a precursor to having to default to applying a Scottish Standard. Improved integration and interoperability, designed to deliver long term passenger satisfaction and growth with a clear and simple price proposition is crucial to encourage the modal shift from the current dependency on private car use to public transport, envisaged in the Council's City Centre strategies.

Responsible Parking

The Bill will introduce a national ban on pavement and double parking to make it easier for local authorities to ensure pavements and roads are safer and more accessible to all.

The premise of the Bill is supported; however there are a number of issues and consequences that should be considered in responding to the Evidence questions:

- In many areas within the city (e.g. Croftfoot, Knightswood) there is little or no provision for off-street parking for residents and an accepted practice is for residents' cars to park with two wheels on the side of the road - if the cars parked wholly on the road, then the road would be obstructed.

- In other areas where commuter intrusion has blighted residential areas with cars parking on either the road or footway obstructively causing difficulty for pedestrians, deliveries and refuse collection vehicles; the Council has introduced Resident Parking Zones (RPZs). These RPZs have been very successful in removing obstructive vehicles and improving the general amenity for residents.
- The Council does not receive a high number of complaints regarding footway obstruction and where there are complaints, they tend to be in shopping areas where obstruction is often from deliveries or service vehicles.
- The Bill provides for the “Council” to make exemptions to the blanket ban but in doing so it seeks to have a process in place which looks similar to a Traffic Road Order process, which can be very cumbersome. Enforcement will include many areas which are not currently patrolled by existing parking attendants and therefore it is expected that there could be additional enforcement costs. The Scottish Government also proposes to provide guidelines for exemptions to be made, however these guidelines are not yet available. In the absence of the guidance notes, we are unable to assess the cost of creating exemptions. While supporting the idea of exemptions, there are significant concerns with the resources that may be necessary to assess, administer and enforce this scheme.

Road Works

The Council is broadly supportive of the proposed changes in Part 5 the Bill.

The Bill aims to raise the standard, and improve the quality, of road works in Scotland, and provide the Scottish Road Works Commissioner with better options to deal with poor performance.

The Bill seeks to create a regulatory environment which encourages the approach of getting road work reinstatements right first time, to provide better information about road works, and to ensure a consistent approach to safety at road works sites regardless of who is undertaking them.

A summary of the key changes are noted below: -

- The Bill would grant the Commissioner, and Commissioner staff, new powers to investigate and take enforcement action against organisations that failed to comply with statutory road works requirements.
- Section 60 of the Roads (Scotland) Act will now be applicable to Roads Authorities whilst working in the road.
- The Bill would require Local Authorities staff to have the same qualifications as ‘operators’ and ‘supervisors’ who work on roads.
- Similarly, there is a requirement that the whole of the works is supervised e.g. to reinstatement.

Regional Transport Partnerships

The proposal to allow RTPs to hold a balance of funds across years is supported, as it will make delivery of RTP funded local authority schemes easier.

Scottish Canals Board

The proposals for the Scottish Canals Board are supported. If additional appointments are made to the Board, consideration should be given to having local authority representation on the Board given the role Scottish Canals play in regeneration, drainage, tourism and provision of cycle routes.