

## TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

25 SEPTEMBER 2018

## GENERAL CONSULTATIONS

## REPORT BY SENIOR PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

This report asks the Partnership to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to a Department for Transport consultation on Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy safety review: proposals for new cycling offences and informs the Partnership of consultation responses approved for submission by the Executive Committee under delegated authority.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 1.1 That the Partnership:

- (i) delegates authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response to the Department for Transport's consultation on 'Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy safety review: proposals for new cycling offences';
- (ii) notes a response to the National Council of Rural Advisors consultation on the Future of the Rural Economy in Scotland as approved by the Executive Committee in July 2017, as shown in Appendix A;
- (iii) notes a response to the Department for Transport consultation on the next Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise, as approved by the Executive Committee in August 2017, as shown in Appendix B; and
- (iv) notes the joint response by the RTPs to the Department for Transport consultation on the next Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise, as shown in Appendix C.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Department for Transport published consultation on ['Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy safety review: proposals for new cycling offences'](#) on 12 August 2018, with responses to be submitted by 5 November 2018.
- 2.2 The National Council of Rural Advisors published a consultation document ['A Rural Conversation: Together We Can, Together We Will'](#) on the Future of the Rural Economy in Scotland on 12 June 2018, asking for responses to be submitted by 24 July 2018.
- 2.3 The Department for Transport published consultation on the [Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise](#) on 7 June 2018, with responses to be submitted by 30 August 2018.

- 2.4 At its meeting on 26 June 2018 the Partnership agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve responses to both the Future of the Rural Economy and Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise consultations (Report RTP/18/25 refers).

### **3 DISCUSSION**

#### Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Safety Review: Proposals for New Cycling Offences

- 3.1 This Department for Transport consultation is seeking views on whether there should be new offences for cyclists of causing death or serious injury when cycling, and what the associated penalties might be. The consultation also seeks views on the scope and penalties of existing offences, which for cycling currently apply only to the road (which includes the pavement) but not in other public places.
- 3.2 Road traffic offences are generally reserved matters for Great Britain and not devolved to Scotland. Therefore any changes to road traffic offences and penalties resulting from this consultation will apply to Scotland as well as England and Wales, but not to Northern Ireland (where this is a devolved matter). Although the consultation was published on 12 August 2018, further information to understand the context of the law in relation to Scotland is to be published by the Department for Transport and at the time of writing is currently awaited.
- 3.3 The Partnership is asked to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to consider and approve a response, to allow submission to the Department for Transport by the 5 November 2018 deadline.

#### The Future of the Rural Economy in Scotland

- 3.4 As reported to the Partnership meeting on 26 June 2018 (Report RTP/18/25 refers) the National Council of Rural Advisers (NCRA), an independent body providing advice and recommendations on rural policy on behalf of the Scottish Government sought views on the Future of the Rural Economy in Scotland.
- 3.5 The NCRA has a vision for a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive rural economy, which offers potential for growth and the creation of new opportunities. The NCRA sought views in order to explore the opportunities Scotland's rural economy presents and to submit potential recommendations on this to the Scottish Government.

- 3.6 A document titled 'A Rural Conversation: Together We Can, Together We Will' was prepared for consultation. The consultation focused on three key areas – people, vision and infrastructure – and comprised ten questions on various issues, including how best to create valuable employment opportunities; how to effectively represent the contribution and value of rural Scotland; what skills are needed to encourage entrepreneurship; and how to ensure that infrastructure is fit for purpose.
- 3.7 The Executive Committee considered and approved a response to the consultation in July 2018 (Report RTP/18/27 refers). The response is shown in Appendix A, which the Partnership is asked to note.

#### Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise

- 3.8 The Cross Country franchise stretches from North East Scotland to Cornwall, Manchester to the south coast of England, and Wales to Stansted Airport and serves seven out of the ten major cities in Great Britain, helping grow the economy, by linking markets and people across the country. The franchise has seen continued growth with passenger numbers increasing year on year to 40 million in 2017/18. The majority of travellers on the Cross Country services are leisure travellers (64%), followed by commuters (23%) and business users (13%).
- 3.9 Cross Country rail franchise provides rail services connecting Scotland with West Midlands and South West England. North of Edinburgh there are 2 direct services per day to West Midlands and South West England in each direction, one starting/ending at Dundee and one starting/ending at Aberdeen. Services to/from Edinburgh are roughly hourly, with the majority of services being between Edinburgh and Plymouth, with Bristol being the next most frequent start/end point and a few services starting/ending at Reading, Birmingham or York. Approximately half of the Edinburgh services also serve Glasgow.
- 3.10 The current Cross Country passenger rail franchise is due to end in December 2019 and the Department for Transport will be running a competition to select the next operator for the franchise.
- 3.11 As reported to the Partnership meeting on 26 June 2018 (Report RTP/18/25 refers), the Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise consultation sought views on various aspects of the Cross Country passenger rail service which will inform the Department for Transport's 'ask' from potential operators when re-letting the franchise in 2019.
- 3.12 The Executive Committee considered and approved a response to the consultation in August 2018 (Report RTP/18/28 refers). The response is shown in Appendix B, which the Partnership is asked to note.

3.13 This consultation was discussed at the RTP Lead Officers meeting on 13 August 2018 and it was agreed that a joint RTPs response, supplementing individual RTP responses, be submitted to the Department for Transport. Appendix C provides the joint response from the Regional Transport Partnerships, which was endorsed by the RTP Chairs at their meeting on 5 September 2018.

#### **4 CONSULTATIONS**

4.1 The response to the current consultation will be prepared in consultation with relevant officers from constituent Councils.

4.2 The submitted responses detailed in appendices to this report have been prepared in consultation with relevant officers from constituent Councils and with other RTPs.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report has no direct resource implications.

#### **6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment and no material issues have been identified.

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#### **NOTE**

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:

Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Safety Review: Proposals for New Cycling Offences, Department for Transport, August 2018

A Rural Conversation: Together We Can, Together We Will, National Council of Rural Advisors, June 2018

Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise, Department of Transport, June 2018

Report to Partnership RTP/18/25, General Consultations, 26 June 2018

Report to Executive Committee RTP/18/27, National Council Of Rural Advisers 'A Rural Conversation: Together We Can, Together We Will' Consultation Response, 4 July 2018

Report to Executive Committee RTP/18/28, Consultations, 16 August 2018



### **A Rural Conversation: Together We Can, Together We Will The Future of the Rural Economy in Scotland**

#### **Consultation questions**

##### **CONTEXT:**

The Tactran area (Tayside and Central Scotland) is geographically diverse with 62% of the population living in areas defined as Large or Other Urban and 26% of the population living in areas defined as Accessible or Remote Rural. This includes such diversity as 99.5% of the Dundee population living within Large Urban areas and 46% of the Perth & Kinross population living in Accessible or Remote Rural areas.

The rural economy is a key component supporting the prosperity of the area and as outlined in the recent 'Understanding the Scottish Economy' report by Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services (RESAS) on behalf of the Scottish Government<sup>1</sup>, there are leading sectors such as Agriculture, Fish & Forestry in Angus and Finance and Distribution in Perth & Kinross.

##### **VISION**

#### **1. The development of relevant Scottish Government mainstream policies should consider the effect upon the Rural Economic Strategy and its consequent policies**

How should policy makers in Government make sure that the economic needs of rural Scotland are taken into account?

There is a need to engage with key stakeholders, businesses and community organisations in rural areas to understand the needs of businesses and communities. In addition, Scottish Government needs to align across all their agencies to ensure good collaboration and consistent actions that will assist in meeting the objectives of the Rural Economic Strategy.

As outlined in the 'Understanding the Scottish Economy' report by Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services (RESAS) on behalf of the Scottish Government (February 2018) the strongest economic growth has been recorded in Mainly Rural Scotland over the recent period. Therefore, policy makers need to acknowledge the contribution of the rural economy to national prosperity and to the national economic development strategy.

Where agencies are not regularly engaged in the rural economy, as a mitigation measure, a rural proofing process, taking into account economic needs, based on the objectives of the Rural Economic Strategy (and perhaps being broadened to take into account other rural social and/or environmental issues), could help ensure that

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding the Scottish Rural Economy, Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services, Scottish Government, February 2018

the economic needs of rural Scotland are taken into account by policy makers. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs [‘Rural Proofing: Practical guidance to assess impacts of policies on rural areas’](#) provides an example of this type of process.

In terms of transport there is currently an ongoing review of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) and it is expected that this will seek views from a range of organisations, stakeholders and the public. This provides the opportunity to ensure the rural economy and its requirements are properly considered and integrated into the NTS and STPR.

With respect to transport and accessibility, and their relationship with the rural economy, policy making should take into account whether:

- all in rural society can access the jobs, services or opportunities being created. In particular, can all in rural communities, regardless of age, sex, physical ability or any protected characteristic (as defined in the Equalities Act), access any new facility?
- the policy reduces peoples’ ability to access jobs, services and opportunities (i.e. removes jobs, services or opportunities or relocates them to less accessible locations)
- the policy increases the demand for transport for which mitigation measures may be required.

Whilst car ownership in rural areas is higher than in urban areas, it is not universal. Figures from the Scottish Household Survey indicate that approximately 17% of rural households do not have access to a car or van. Therefore, significant numbers of people in rural areas, in particular the young and the most vulnerable, may not have access to a car and may struggle to access jobs, services and opportunities. The continued decline in traditional rural public transport services compounds this problem. As these trends continue, then alternatives to fixed route local bus services need to be identified and supported.

Should there be an ability to call to account Scottish Government and their Agencies to ensure collaboration and actions to meet the objectives of the Rural Economic Strategy?

Yes, there needs to be a procedure set in place to ensure policies and initiatives across Government and their Agencies are aimed at meeting the objectives of the Rural Economic Strategy. This will be critically important as agencies seek to adapt their response to change in a post-Brexit scenario.

**2. Create quality job opportunities (that are well paid, flexible, and purposeful) to promote skills and opportunities, but also deal with inequalities in the rural labour market (such as the gender pay gap)**

What employment opportunities do we need to meet the current and future needs of our changing rural economy? Where should these be? (either by location and/or sector)

The jobs of the future will be located in rural as well as urban areas. The importance of innovation in supporting economic growth is equally important in the rural setting. There is a growing application of digital technologies to the rural setting whether through the use of satellite navigation for crop management and harvesting, the use of drones for asset survey and management and new packaging techniques that enhance the life of products. Access to the skills development required for these job opportunities will be critical to the future success of the rural economy.

The location of employment opportunities should take into account:

- the ability of everyone in society to access them, and/or the ability to provide transport to ensure access by all. Within rural areas, in addition to access by motor vehicles, this principally means considering whether the location is or can be served by some form of public or community or demand responsive transport service. Access by pedestrians and cyclists should also be considered, although this is likely to be subject to the distance of the employment opportunity from any nearby settlements
- whether the employment opportunity places demands on the existing transport network(s) which can reasonably be mitigated against. For example would the employment opportunity generate a volume of traffic which could cause road safety issues.

The rural economy is a key component supporting the prosperity of the Tactran area and as outlined in the recent 'Understanding the Scottish Economy' report by Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services (RESAS) on behalf of the Scottish Government<sup>2</sup>, there are leading sectors such as Agriculture, Fish & Forestry in Angus and Finance and Distribution in Perth & Kinross.

### How do we tackle the inequalities we face in rural Scotland? i.e. challenges faced due to age, gender, socio-economic, educational and ethnic background.

As outlined in the consultation document the percentage of older people living in rural areas is between 23% and 25% of the population, in comparison to 20% in urban areas. The higher level of older people living in rural areas should be considered and mechanisms put in place to ensure adequate public and/or community transport services are provided to mitigate the issues associated with lack of access to services.

Similarly, adequate transport solutions need to be found for young people who may struggle to afford a car and are either to access further education or retail, catering, hospitality and agricultural employment .

Part-time employment is also common in rural areas and can cause difficulties in providing traditional public transport solutions. More effective demand responsive, community transport and innovative technology solutions, such as car clubs, lift sharing, Mobility as a Service should be explored building on rural social networks to

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<sup>2</sup> Understanding the Scottish Rural Economy, Rural & Environment Science & Analytical Services, Scottish Government, February 2018

improve accessibility to employment. These solutions also require better digital connectivity in rural areas to maximise their use and benefit.

As highlighted above, access to educational and skills development opportunities either through the promotion of distance learning by colleges and universities or concessionary travel schemes for young people in education and training will be needed to overcome rural isolation and disadvantage.

Ongoing reductions to the supported local bus network could have a disproportionate impact on the accessibility to employment and training opportunities to certain groups of people. For example, currently, the national concessionary travel scheme for people who are over 60 or disabled is not valid for use on most community transport services which disproportionately affects people living in rural areas. Tactran, as part of its Buses and Community Transport strategy, advocates Scottish Government to include non-registered Community Transport services in the free bus travel scheme.

### **3. Build on existing work to gather evidence and data to measure the true value of the rural economy and monitor its growth**

Going beyond the economic contribution of rural businesses, what positive examples of social (i.e. community cohesion), cultural (i.e. protection of heritage and traditions) and environmental (i.e. carbon reducing) impacts of rural businesses can you think of?

Infrastructure to support walking and/or cycling tourism would also assist local communities lead more active lifestyles, and/or improve access to local services in nearby communities.

What specific outcomes of rural businesses should be measured and why?

As the majority of rural businesses are small businesses and many people in rural areas have 'portfolio careers' a method of aggregating the economic impact of businesses in a place and/or by sector would be helpful in addressing business support, training and distribution needs.

## **PEOPLE**

### **4. Encourage future entrepreneurship by ensuring the Scottish Government's rural skills action plan meets the needs of the Rural Economic Strategy**

What skills are required to have a vibrant rural economy?

As highlighted above the jobs of the future will be located in rural as well as urban areas and the development of digital literacy in particular will be important in driving innovation and economic growth in rural areas.

How do we best ensure that people of all ages, genders, areas, socioeconomic, educational and ethnic backgrounds receive appropriate support?

As outlined in response given to Q2, the ability of people, particularly those without access to a car, to access training and support can be limited. Accordingly the provision of support and training needs to take into account their ability to be accessed, particularly by those who are likely to need it the most.

### **5. Develop opportunities for the businesses of urban and rural Scotland to share ideas and work together**

How do you think we could do this? (for example through schools or membership organisation groups)

The LGA (Local Government Association) has previously undertaken work on an Urban/Rural Compact, the most striking success from this has been the regular appearance of Farmers Markets in towns and cities across Scotland. COSLA along with SCDI and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce could take this work forward in the context of resilience for rural produce and urban services and how these could be mutually supportive in a post-Brexit scenario.

Facilitating learning/sharing between urban and rural areas to improve and have a better understanding of the opportunities that are available would be new for Scotland. What would interest you in this approach? Are there any benefits/drawbacks?

From a transport perspective the areas of interest would be travel demand, whether commuting into urban areas or for tourist routes into rural areas, the freight logistics between urban/rural areas and how to make access to our gateway ports more resilient to support trade and how the opportunities for investment in programmes such as the City Deals could facilitate connectivity, for example through active travel.

### **6. Create communities of interest (digital, physical) where businesses and people can come together to solve problems, share ideas and understand opportunities**

Is there any place that you can think of in your community where people already do this? Can you please tell us about it?

Many rural communities have developed their own solutions to accessibility issues such as community transport schemes and shared mobility/car clubs. Events sharing such examples of best practice in addressing rural transport issues outside the major cities are rare. There may be some opportunity to develop an on-line community of practice with occasional events. As outlined in response to Q2 building on existing local social groups to maximise ease of travel will also require better digital connectivity in rural areas to maximise their use and benefit.

What might be the benefits of this approach?

Community developed schemes are more likely to reflect local needs, have a greater degree of local ownership and therefore likely to be more sustainable. Where there are developed community transport schemes and other schemes, such as car clubs,

these could be expanded and/or made more effective by providing better digital connectivity in rural areas, as outlined in response to Q2.

What things would your local community need to help people in your local area come together?

Local communities would require support through the Community Planning Partnerships and the Local Area Partnerships supporting locality working and funding for projects that encourage self-sufficiency.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **7. Help ensure there are the same opportunities and access to services between urban and rural areas**

For people living and working in rural areas there are often big differences compared to urban areas in what services might be available (things like broadband, childcare, transport, community development etc.) What do you need to enable you to choose to live and work in rural Scotland?

Whilst rural areas do not offer the same range of jobs, services and opportunities as urban areas, the ability to access a reasonable range of jobs, services and opportunities is a key element to encouraging people to live, work and visit rural Scotland.

The trunk road network (and to a certain extent the rail network) provides a spine for easy and efficient access to many rural areas in Scotland. However, away from this spine, the overall transport infrastructure can be limited and lead to long journey times by private car and either lengthy or non-existent public transport.

There is no one solution to this, people's travel demands can be complex, particularly for people with multiple part-time jobs, which is more prevalent in rural areas. A package of solutions needs to be considered, with some solutions potentially packaged within Mobility as a Service (MaaS) framework, including:

- public and demand responsive transport
- community transport schemes
- shared mobility schemes (car and lift sharing; car clubs; electric bikes etc.)
- easy access to travel information which identifies the travel opportunities available
- provision of services and opportunities via digital platforms

In order to facilitate these services it is clear that improved digital connectivity is required.

Employee Travel Plans which set out how employees travel to and from work and for business travel should be a requirement for new businesses with existing businesses encouraged to develop a Travel Plan for its staff. While these traditionally have been used for large organisations, there is no reason why smaller businesses cannot

benefit from developing a Travel Plan. These would set out how employees can access the business in the most sustainable manner. TravelKnowHow Scotland website has information and a Travel Plan toolkit to assist businesses and organisations. Tactran also has a small Sustainable Transport Grant Scheme that can be accessed by businesses and organisations in the region to help develop and/or promote Travel Plans.

Another aspect which has effect on rural areas is the ease of delivery of goods, which can increase the cost of living. Again the trunk road network plays a significant part in the distribution of goods and good maintenance of the road network is required. Next day and on-time deliveries are taken for granted in urban areas, however the cost of this in rural areas often places people at a disadvantage. More consideration could be given to communal rural collection and distribution centres.

The need for good transport and digital infrastructure is also essential for the rural tourist/visitor economy, with the accessibility, or perceived accessibility, possibly making the difference between a tourist attraction succeeding and failing. More could also be done for 'green' tourism with good walking and cycling facilities provided.

To support accessibility in rural areas Tactran has a Community Transport (CT) /Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) Strategy that seeks to complement scheduled service provision. With the advent of digital platforms for travel planning it is now perfectly possible for applications targeted at urban areas to now be available in rural areas. This would allow a greater use of shared assets, the development of community businesses and social enterprises and bespoke travel plans to access jobs, education or services through an enhanced DRT system.

### **8. Make sure Government policies, regulations, planning and support mechanisms help local businesses**

What types of policies, regulations, planning and business support need to be strengthened or removed to help a wide variety of small and micro businesses in rural areas?

Transport and connectivity are crucial for many businesses and should be considered as part of any business development and promotion to ensure sustainable economic growth.

National, regional and local transport strategies will continue to support economic objectives. Likewise, land use planning policies will continue to encourage development to be located in settlements where there is more likely to be a potential to provide transport services. Nonetheless, a requirement to undertake 'rural proofing' during the production of these strategies will help ensure that rural economic issues are considered. There is an opportunity for Scottish Government to consider this at present with both the Transport and Planning Bills currently going through parliamentary process.

Can you think of any problems in transport, housing, social care and digital infrastructure that prevent economic growth for your industry sector, business or community?

The lack of public transport opportunities for those without access to a car does restrict the ability of all to participate in, maximise and benefit from the rural economy.

The fewer roads available in rural areas mean that travel arrangements in rural areas are disproportionately affected by maintenance, accidents, landslips, snow and flooding or other events which may close routes. This has effect not only on people but services and goods provided.

**9. Make sure that community resources that contribute to our economy (like tourist attractions) also deliver benefits to their communities.**

Can you think of any examples of resources in your community e.g. that attract visitors and make money but do not benefit the community?

There are opportunities, such as the opening of the V&A in Dundee, House of Bruar, Blair Drummond Safari Park, major golf events at Carnoustie and Gleneagles, to ensure that major destinations and visitor attractions are accessible in terms of both job opportunities and visitors. The development of Travel Plans for such attractions that link into the equality obligations may be a mechanism to ensure that the investment and resources can be shared across the wider urban and rural geographical area.

Are there examples of attractions in your community that you would like to promote? What could help you do this?

We would like to promote the concept of Travel Plans across all major visitor attractions in the Tactran area and will progress this approach in partnership with our Local Planning Authorities.

**10. Please tell us below if there are any key issues you believe we may have missed**

It would be useful to take this work forward as part of a scenario planning approach to the future of the Scottish Rural Economy.

**Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise Public Consultation**  
**Department for Transport**  
**Tactran Response**

To reduce crowding on current train services for Cross Rail Passengers.

**(1) What are the particular services, routes and times of day where you think crowding on Cross Country services needs to be addressed most urgently?**

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange.

The consultation document identifies routes in and around Birmingham and between Exeter and Bristol as particularly suffering from overcrowding. However, the issue of overcrowding occurs in general where a the Cross Country service provides for both short distance commuting in morning or evening peaks as well as for long distance travellers.

It is recognised that as well as commuting journeys causing overcrowding, the cross country service is currently part of the solution by adding much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into major cities. Examples of this are the 06:32 Dundee to Plymouth service which arrives in Edinburgh at 08:09 the 06:42 Dundee to Aberdeen service arriving in Aberdeen at 07:58 – both these services provide much needed capacity for commuters to Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

If these services were rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters. Given that local commuter fleet tend to have fewer seats due to the number of carriages in comparison to the Cross Country fleet, it is likely that more services may be required to provide the same capacity and there may not be suitable paths for this.

Tactran would therefore only support retiming of these services if resources are provided to Scottish Government to provide the same peak time capacity into Edinburgh and Aberdeen through the ScotRail franchise and if this is technically feasible within the pathing constraints.

**(2) Which of the following potential measures do you think could overcome crowding caused by short distance commuters using long distance Cross Country trains, assuming that suitable alternative services are available?**

Removing calls from towns closest to the conurbation centre either completely or just at peak times.

Yes or No? Yes

Retaining calls at such stations but restricting them to pickup/set down only?

Yes or No? No

Removing the validity of multi-modal tickets on long distance trains?

Yes or No? No

Other:

Removing calls from towns closest to the conurbation centre either completely or just at peak times could potentially overcome overcrowding in particular circumstances. However, it is recognised that as well as commuting journeys causing overcrowding, the Cross Country service is currently part of the solution by adding much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into major cities.

If Cross Country services were to be rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters. Given that local commuter services tend to have fewer seats due to the number of carriages in comparison to the Cross Country fleet, it is likely that more services may be required to provide the same capacity and there may not be suitable paths for this.

Retaining calls at stations but restricting to pick up/set down only or removing the validity of multi-modal tickets are not supported as these would be too difficult to manage and be confusing to passengers.

Provide specific instances where these may be applicable.

No specific instances given.

To improve the service pattern and network to offer journeys that better meet your needs

**(3) Rank the following in order of priority for improvement for your future Cross Country services. Rank 1 for most important to 6 for least important.**

more additional summer only services	6
later times of last trains	4
more frequent weekend services	2
earlier Sunday morning services	5
earlier times of first trains	3
more frequent weekday services	1

Which routes and stations and why?

Aberdeen/Dundee to/from West Midlands/South West England

More frequent direct services without the need to interchange at Edinburgh would provide better connections to West Midlands and South West England. Given the significant leisure use this would be applicable 7 days per week.

Scotland to/from South West England.

An earlier start and later finish on the route would give better access between Scotland and major conurbations in West Midlands and South West England by providing an earlier arrival and later departure at the destination, thus providing a more useful day.

**(4) If it were possible would you agree with transferring these local routes to the West Midlands franchise:**

	Yes	No
Birmingham to Nottingham	X	
Birmingham to Leicester	X	

Why?

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange. If these routes can be covered fully within another franchise, without the need for passengers to interchange between services during their journey, consideration should be given to transferring.

Would you like to see any other routes or stations transferred to or from the Cross Country franchise?

Yes	X
No	

Which routes and stations and why?

If there are other franchises which wholly cover the end to end journey of the particular route, then consideration should be given to transferring these local routes. It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange.

**(5) If the network was unable to cope with all the service enhancement aspirations north of Northallerton on the East Coast mainline, would a:**

	Yes	No
curtailment of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?		X
diversion of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?		X

Why / why not?

It is considered that the one train per hour Cross Country service between Scotland and South West England needs to be maintained as a minimum. The proposed increase in TransPennine services between Edinburgh and Manchester from every two hours to hourly is welcomed. It is also considered that the current two trains per hour LNER Edinburgh to London service is the minimum frequency that needs to be maintained. Consideration should be given to bi-mode longer trains (9 carriage) to provided additional capacity. If there are any service curtailments required this should not be on cross border Scotland to England services.

**(6) Should bidders be given flexibility to make limited changes to the extremities to the network so that benefits such as reduced crowding in the centre of the network can be provided?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, but only if alternative services are provided by other operators
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Comments:

Bidders should be given limited flexibility to consider changes to the timing of services, but only if alternative services can be provided. The North of Edinburgh Cross Country service adds much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh. If these services were rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters. Given that local commuter services tend to have fewer seats due to the number of carriages in comparison to the Cross Country fleet, it is likely that more services may be required to provide the same capacity and there may not be

suitable paths for this.

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange. As such dividing the network into “core” and “extremity” is unhelpful and counter to the long distance purpose of the Cross Country franchise.

The direct services between Scotland and West Midlands and South West England, including North of Edinburgh route, provides a sustainable alternative to domestic aviation. Transport Focus research identifies that the need to interchange between services can be a significant deterrent to rail use. It is therefore important the direct rail services from North of Edinburgh to West Midlands and South West England are maintained as a minimum and increased, if possible.

The direct services from North of Edinburgh offer good direct connections between the Tactran area and West Midlands/Birmingham area and South West England/Bristol area and these direct services provide important business and tourism/leisure connections.

The need for efficient and effective strategic long distance connections are highlighted within the Tay Cities Economic Strategy as being essential to unlocking the full economic potential of the region enabling easier access for tourists and businesses to access markets more easily. Tourism is one of Tay Cities major industries with an estimated 1,580 businesses in the Tay Cities economic region (12% of Scotland’s total) and 22,000 people working in the tourism industry, approximately 11% of all jobs in the area. Major tourism investment is underway, planned or in the pipeline, including most notably the V&A Dundee which is projected to attract 270-300,000 visits per annum and together with the region’s inherent strengths, will provide strong foundations to increase the sector’s impact and contribute to the target in growing the value of tourism to Scotland’s economy (growing visitor spend by £1bn from £4.5bn to £5.5bn by 2020).

**(7) Do you agree that the current level of Cross Country services to the following routes are the minimum that must be specified for:**

- West of Plymouth to Penzance?
- Exeter to Paignton?
- Newton Abbot to Paignton?
- North of Edinburgh to Aberdeen?
- Southampton to Bournemouth?
- Guildford?
- Bath?
- Cardiff to Bristol Temple Meads?

Yes	No
Yes	

Do you agree that the changes to the following routes would be acceptable if a similar or improved service was provided by another operator:

- West of Plymouth to Penzance?
- Exeter to Paignton?
- Newton Abbot to Paignton?
- North of Edinburgh to Aberdeen?
- Southampton to Bournemouth?
- Guildford?
- Bath?
- Cardiff to Bristol Temple Meads?

Yes	No
Yes	

The North of Edinburgh route currently provides for both commuter and long distance passengers. Consideration to retiming the Cross Country service should only be made where alternative resources and services are provided for commuters and it is feasibly possible to provide the same passenger carrying capacity.

**(8) Do you think the department's minimum specification should preserve exactly the existing pattern of services and station calls rather than offer an opportunity to change?**

	Yes
X	No

Comments:

Overall there should be a minimum, maybe expressed as a minimum frequency between stations. However regarding specifying routes such as North of Edinburgh, where there are only few services per day, a minimum number of services and time of day should be specified to ensure the service provides a meaningful and useful long distance service.

Where currently the North of Edinburgh route provides for both commuter and long distance passengers, consideration to retiming the Cross Country service should only be made where alternative resources and services are provided for commuters and it is feasibly possible to provide the same passenger carrying capacity.

**(9) Should bidders have some flexibility to make fewer calls at some stations, for example if that enabled them to accelerate services?**

X	Yes
	No

On what routes could this be introduced?

Further information would be required to make an informed decision on this. Fewer calls at stations will not necessarily accelerate services as there are other timetable

and infrastructure considerations that may not permit this.

**(10) Should the minimum specification have the number of trains from each station to Birmingham but give bidders the flexibility to decide where the trains go after Birmingham?**

X	Yes
	No

**(11) Are there stations beyond the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

In addition to the current North of Edinburgh services to Dundee and Aberdeen, consideration could be given to extending services North of Edinburgh to Stirling, Perth and Inverness where rail capacity exists. This would enable the Cross Country franchise to provide a direct service connecting all of Scotland's cities to West Midlands and South West England.

Outside the Cross Country franchise, the intention to increase the frequency of the TransPennine Express service between Manchester and Edinburgh is welcomed and consideration should be given to extending some of these services to provide a direct connection North of Edinburgh to Manchester/Liverpool. Likewise consideration should be given to extending the West Coast Main Line north of Glasgow/Edinburgh to provide direct connections to Carlisle, Crewe, Birmingham and Milton Keynes.

Consideration should also be given to some of these services utilising Motherwell station and running through to Larbert via Coatbridge and Cumbernauld to provide more direct services to/from Stirling, Perth and Inverness in the North of Scotland rather than via Edinburgh/Glasgow.

**(12) Are there stations within the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

Maintaining the current stations served in Tactran area (Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose) is considered suitable.

Tactran considers that the hourly services between Edinburgh and West Midlands and South West England should be maintained as a minimum. Currently the majority of these services serve Plymouth and Bristol. Tactran would be supportive of consideration being given to other destinations south of Birmingham, such as Oxford, Reading, Southampton and Cardiff. However, this would need to be evidence based regarding the demand for these destinations to/from Scotland.

To improve and simplify fares and ticketing

**(13) What changes would you like to see to the way Cross Country currently sells and provides tickets?**

It is agreed that passengers should be provided with widespread and easy access to a full range of tickets and that they have all the information required to select and purchase the most appropriate ticket. All methods of payment should be available. A consistency of offer should be provided between franchises, such as ScotRail “Kids go Free” being able to be used on all franchise services in Scotland.

**(14) What changes would you like to see to the current Cross Country current fares structure?**

Ticket pricing should be incentivised to encourage off peak use for long distance journeys.

**(15) What changes would you like to see to the Advanced Purchase on the day (APOD) system?**

APOD providing access to cheaper advanced fares up to 10 minutes before departure is welcomed. However, by allocating a seat to these purchases it does give difficulty for other passengers already on the train knowing whether a seat has been reserved or not.

APOD could perhaps assign seats in specifically dedicated parts of the train and the signage on the train seat display should make it clear that (for example) “this seat may be subject to reservation” – it should also be made clear that other “non-reserved seats under any circumstances” are available and should be identified as such. As stated later in the document the operator could be encouraged to develop ideas to ‘segregate’ passenger and one option could be that APOD are intelligently allocated in this manner.

To improve access, information and making connections

**(16) What additional information would be useful to you when planning your journeys or making connections onto other services?**

As noted in the consultation document, Transport Focus has undertaken research that shows the top ten passengers priorities. The franchise should look to maximise these priorities.

How would you like the information communicated to you?

As noted in the consultation document, Transport Focus has undertaken research that shows the top ten passengers priorities. The franchise should look to maximise

these priorities.

**(17) How could the way in which Cross Country deals with your complaints and provides compensation to you be improved?**

Information on how to make complaints must be clear, easy and readily available for the passengers and staff must be trained in dealing with these efficiently.

**(18) What more could be done to improve access and provide facilities for those with disabilities or additional needs?**

As noted in the consultation document, Cross Country does not manage any stations, with station management undertaken by ScotRail or directly by Network Rail at stations in Scotland. The Cross Country operator should be required to work with the station management company to ensure improved access and facilities for those with disabilities or additional needs.

It is agreed that franchise bidders should consider solutions to improve access and interchange for people with accessibility needs; improve passenger assistance systems and offer better and accessible connections with other forms of transport.

**(19) How do you believe Cross Country staff could be more effective in providing service and assistance that passengers need on a modern railway network?**

Passengers value the presence of staff on-board and at stations. Currently Cross Country staff members are fairly anonymous at stations compared to other franchises and their presence at stations should be increased to be more visible. Staff should be trained to provide information and be present to guide and reassure passengers.

**(20) What comment do you have on improving the overall passenger experience before, during and after the journey?**

The passenger should be suitably informed throughout the journey to have confidence in the journey they are making and for onward connection.

Prior to making the journey, as well as timetable and fare information, the franchise bidder should be asked to consider methods of providing information on crowding and availability of seats.

At the station clear and concise wayfinding should be provided, as well as real time information train times.

On-board there should be clear information given on any delays and the effect this may have on onwards journeys and how to access onward connections. In addition staff should be trained and informed to provide information and, for example direct

passengers to suitable seating.

At destination station, clear and concise wayfinding and information on onward connections to all modes to make interchange as easy as possible.

To improve the on-board experience

**(21) Rank your priorities for improvement to the carriage layout for local trains on Cross Country? Rank 1 for most important to 7 for least important.**

More seats	<input type="text" value="1"/>
More table seats as opposed to 'airline' seats	<input type="text" value="6"/>
More comfortable room for short distance standing	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Cycle storage	<input type="text" value="4"/>
Seats that align with windows	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Greater leg-room	<input type="text" value="7"/>
Extra room for luggage	<input type="text" value="2"/>

**(22) Rank your priorities for improvement to the carriage layout for long distance inter-city Cross Country trains? Rank 1 for most important to 7 for least important.**

More seats	<input type="text" value="1"/>
More table seats as opposed to 'airline' seats	<input type="text" value="4"/>
More comfortable room for short distance standing	<input type="text" value="7"/>
Cycle storage	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Seats that align with windows	<input type="text" value="6"/>
Greater leg-room	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Extra room for luggage	<input type="text" value="2"/>

Where and when do you think these facilities are most required?

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services and as such the carriage layout should be designed more for the long distance passenger. However, if more seats could be provided this may reduce the overcrowding at peak times.

Consideration could be given to utilising two types of carriages – one catering for shorter journeys and one for longer - and an intelligent booking system used to allocate passengers to seats in the appropriate carriage depending on their journey length.

Increasing cycle storage capacity on rolling stock and easier access both on train and when booking for people with bikes to support and encourage inter-modal travel

and tourism, is supported.

**(23) What other comments or suggestions do you have about the on-board experience?**

The standard of catering is poor, particularly north of Edinburgh where it is curtailed, and this needs to improve. Other requirements valued are provision of power points and free wifi.

**(24) Which initiatives would you suggest to try to reduce the disturbance caused by the ‘churn’ of passengers alighting and boarding at frequent station calls?**

The potential approach for the operator to develop ideas to ‘segregate’ passengers according to the distance they travel through intelligent allocation of seat reservations is supported and considered worthwhile exploring. This could allow different carriages for short journeys and long journeys, potentially increasing the seating capacity of the service.

Stakeholder Engagement and Community Rail Partnerships

**(25) Are there any improvements to the level stakeholder engagement by Cross Country that you would like to see and how could stakeholder engagement be improved?**

Tactran would welcome direct engagement regarding the Cross Country Passenger Franchise.

**(26) Does Cross Country provide a sufficient level of support to relevant Community Rail partnerships in your experience?**

N/A	Yes
N/A	No

**(26) Has their support improved in the last year to 18 months?**

N/A	Yes
N/A	No

**(27) Provide ideas on what more you feel the franchise could do to help the relevant Community Rail partnerships?**

Transport Scotland, ScotRail and Regional Transport Partnerships work closely to develop and advise Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) in Scotland. Where Cross Country Passenger services provide services to stations within a given CRP it would

be expected that the operator would engage with the CRP.

**(28) Do you have any other views on how the future Cross Country franchise could be improved that have not been captured in the questions above?**

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange. However, it is recognised that the Cross Country services currently also serves a significant role in providing for shorter commuter journeys at various points along the route.

Transport Focus research identifies that the need to interchange between services can be a significant deterrent to rail use. For long distance cross border travel this could lead to less sustainable modes, such as air travel being chosen or could lead to tourists to choose not to travel to the area with economic consequences.

The direct services from North of Edinburgh offer good direct connections between the Tactran area and West Midlands/Birmingham area and South West England/Bristol area and these direct services provide important business and tourism/leisure connections. The need for efficient and effective strategic long distance connections are highlighted within the Tay Cities Economic Strategy as being essential to unlocking the full economic potential of the region enabling easier access for tourists and businesses to access markets more easily.

The direct Cross Country services, combined with LNER East Coast and Caledonian Sleeper services providing cross border long distance connectivity are seen as essential to the region's economic prosperity.

Tactran therefore considers it important that the existing two services per day North of Edinburgh are maintained as a minimum service requirement for Cross Country franchise and consideration should be given to exploring whether this can be increased, possibly extending the Dundee – Plymouth service to Aberdeen and giving consideration to serving Stirling and Perth.

The consultation document identifies routes in and around Birmingham and between Exeter and Bristol as particularly suffering from overcrowding. However, the issue of overcrowding occurs in general where a the Cross Country service provides for both short distance commuting in morning or evening peaks as well as for long distance travellers.

It is recognised that as well as commuting journeys causing overcrowding, the Cross Country service is currently part of the solution by adding much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into major cities. Examples of this are the 06:32 Dundee to Plymouth service which arrives in Edinburgh at 08:09 the 06:42 Dundee to Aberdeen service arriving in Aberdeen at 07:58 – both these services provide much needed capacity for commuters to Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

If these services were rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters. Given that local commuter fleet tend to have fewer seats due to the number of carriages in comparison to the Cross Country

fleet, it is likely that more services may be required to provide the same capacity and there may not be suitable paths for this.

Tactran would therefore only support retiming of these services if resources are provided to Scottish Government to provide the same peak time capacity into Edinburgh and Aberdeen through the ScotRail franchise and if this is technically feasible within the pathing constraints.

Tactran considers that the hourly services between Edinburgh and West Midlands and South West England should be maintained as a minimum. Currently the majority of these services serve Plymouth and Bristol. Tactran would be supportive of consideration being given to other destinations south of Birmingham. However, this would need to be evidence based regarding the demand for these destinations to/from Scotland.

Outside the Cross Country franchise, the intention to increase the frequency of the TransPennine Express service between Manchester and Edinburgh is welcomed and consideration should be given to extending some of these services to provide a direct connection North of Edinburgh to Manchester/Liverpool. Likewise consideration should be given to extending the West Coast Main Line north of Glasgow/Edinburgh to provide direct connections Carlisle, Crewe, Birmingham and Milton Keynes.

Consideration should also be given to some of these services utilising Motherwell station and running through to Larbert via Coatbridge and Cumbernauld to provide more direct services to/from Stirling, Perth and Inverness in the North of Scotland rather than via Edinburgh/Glasgow.

**Cross Country Passenger Rail Franchise Public Consultation**  
**Department for Transport**  
**Joint RTP Response**

To Reduce crowding on current train services for Cross Rail Passengers.

**(1) What are the particular services, routes and times of day where you think crowding on Cross Country services needs to be addressed most urgently?**

Given the slightly atypical pattern of usage on Cross Country it appears that a larger proportion of patronage comes from the leisure and recreational market which is unusual on the rail network, this has implications for staff, route, rolling stock and service pattern planning. It also begs the question as to what the Franchise is specifically designed to achieve within the wider rail network. It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange.

Peak patterns of course exist and Cross Country services in Scotland fulfil a certain amount of urban centre peak purposes however, some patterns at weekends would also appear to be in need of additional capacity – longer rather than necessarily more trains. Furthermore electrification of the network needs to be exploited by new bi-modal rolling stock.

The consultation document identifies routes in and around Birmingham and between Exeter and Bristol as particularly suffering from overcrowding. However, the issue of overcrowding occurs in general where a the Cross Country service provides for both short distance commuting in morning or evening peaks as well as for long distance travellers. It is recognised that as well as commuting journeys causing overcrowding, the Cross Country service is currently part of the solution by adding much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into major cities.

Examples of this in Scotland include North of Edinburgh services to/from Aberdeen and Edinburgh and also between Glasgow and Edinburgh via Motherwell and East Lothian to/from Edinburgh, where a significant proportion of the services are provided by Cross Country. If these services were rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters.

**(2) Which of the following potential measures do you think could overcome crowding caused by short distance commuters using long distance Cross Country trains, assuming that suitable alternative services are available?**

Removing calls from towns closest to the conurbation centre either completely or just at peak times.

Yes or No? Yes

Removing calls from towns closest to the conurbation centre either completely or just at peak times could potentially overcome overcrowding in particular circumstances. However, it is recognised that as well as commuting journeys

causing overcrowding, the Cross Country service is currently part of the solution by adding much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into major cities.

Retaining calls at such stations but restricting them to pickup/set down only?

Yes or No? No

Retaining calls at stations but restricting to pick up/set down only is not supported as it would be too difficult to manage and be confusing to passengers.

Removing the validity of multi-modal tickets on long distance trains?

Yes or No? No

Removing the validity of multi-modal tickets is not supported as it would be too difficult to manage and be confusing to passengers.

Other:

Provide specific instances where these may be applicable.

No specific instances given.

To improve the service pattern and network to offer journeys that better meet your needs

**(3) Rank the following in order of priority for improvement for your future Cross Country services. Rank 1 for most important to 6 for least important.**

more additional summer only services	6
later times of last trains	4
more frequent weekend services	2
earlier Sunday morning services	5
earlier times of first trains	3
more frequent weekday services	1

Which routes and stations and why?

Aberdeen/Dundee to/from West Midlands/South West England

More frequent direct services without the need to interchange at Edinburgh would provide better connections to West Midlands and South West England. Given the significant leisure use this would be applicable 7 days per week.

Edinburgh – Glasgow via Motherwell

More services to call at Motherwell specifically, where the significance of the station as a rail-head for a large section of the built up conurbation might suggest that more long distance services should serve the station rather than fewer.

Scotland to/from South West England.

An earlier start and later finish on the route would give better access between Scotland and major conurbations in West Midlands and South West England by providing an earlier arrival and later departure at the destination, thus providing a more useful day.

**(4) If it were possible would you agree with transferring these local routes to the West Midlands franchise:**

	Yes	No
Birmingham to Nottingham	X	
Birmingham to Leicester	X	

Why?

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange. If these routes can be covered fully within another franchise, without the need for passengers to interchange between services during their journey, consideration should be given to transferring.

Would you like to see any other routes or stations transferred to or from the Cross Country franchise?

Yes	X
No	

Which routes and stations and why?

If there are other franchises which wholly cover the end to end journey of the particular route, then consideration should be given to transferring these local routes. It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange.

**(5) If the network was unable to cope with all the service enhancement aspirations north of Northallerton on the East Coast mainline, would a:**

curtailment of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other

Yes	No
	X

existing or new routes)?

	Yes	No
existing or new routes)?		
diversion of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?		X

diversion of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?

Why / why not?

It is considered that the one train per hour Cross Country service between Scotland and South West England needs to be maintained as a minimum. The proposed increase in TransPennine services between Edinburgh and Manchester from every two hours to hourly is welcomed. It is also considered that the current two trains per hour LNER Edinburgh to London service is the minimum frequency that needs to be maintained. Consideration should be given to bi-mode longer trains (9 carriage) to provided additional capacity. If there are any service curtailments required this should not be on cross border Scotland to England services.

**(6) Should bidders be given flexibility to make limited changes to the extremities to the network so that benefits such as reduced crowding in the centre of the network can be provided?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, but only if alternative services are provided by other operators
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Comments:

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services, without the need to interchange. As such dividing the network into “core” and “extremity” is unhelpful and counter to the long distance purpose of the Cross Country franchise.

Bidders should be given limited flexibility to consider changes to the timing of services, but only if alternative services can be provided. The North of Edinburgh Cross Country service adds much needed passenger seating capacity for commuter journeys into Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh. If these services were rescheduled outside the peaks, other capacity provision would need to be provided for these commuters.

The RTPs would only support rescheduling of these services if resources are provided to Scottish Government to provide the same peak time capacity to/from Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow through the ScotRail franchise and if this is technically feasible within the pathing constraints. The direct services from North of Edinburgh offer good direct connections to West Midlands/Birmingham area and South West England/Bristol area and these direct services provide important business and tourism/leisure connections.

The documentation suggests that Glasgow extensions will be retained at their current frequency – this is to be welcomed, specifically as the service dove-tail with

the Scotrail service on the line to offer an hourly service between Edinburgh and Glasgow via Motherwell.

The direct services between Scotland and West Midlands and South West England, including North of Edinburgh route, provides a sustainable alternative to domestic aviation. Transport Focus research identifies that the need to interchange between services can be a significant deterrent to rail use. It is therefore important the direct rail services from North of Edinburgh to West Midlands and South West England are maintained as a minimum and increased, if possible.

**(7) Do you agree that the current level of Cross Country services to the following routes are the minimum that must be specified for:**

- West of Plymouth to Penzance?
- Exeter to Paignton?
- Newton Abbot to Paignton?
- North of Edinburgh to Aberdeen?
- Southampton to Bournemouth?
- Guildford?
- Bath?
- Cardiff to Bristol Temple Meads?

Yes	No
Yes	

Do you agree that the changes to the following routes would be acceptable if a similar or improved service was provided by another operator:

- West of Plymouth to Penzance?
- Exeter to Paignton?
- Newton Abbot to Paignton?
- North of Edinburgh to Aberdeen?
- Southampton to Bournemouth?
- Guildford?
- Bath?
- Cardiff to Bristol Temple Meads?

Yes	No
Yes	

The North of Edinburgh route currently provides for both commuter and long distance passengers. Consideration to retiming the Cross Country service should only be made where alternative resources and services are provided for commuters and it is feasibly possible to provide the same passenger carrying capacity.

**(8) Do you think the department's minimum specification should preserve exactly the existing pattern of services and station calls rather than offer an opportunity to change?**

	Yes
X	No

## Comments:

Not necessarily although it should inform the timetable option it should not necessarily dictate it. Working with other franchise holders could result in a better overall service provision for passengers whilst maintaining local, regional, and long distance rail service patterns – particularly at rush hours but also at less busy times (early/late/weekend/Sunday services for example) when one service might have to meet a multiplicity of service purposes. The franchise should also be mindful of passenger resistance to changing trains or to travel on connecting services – particularly on longer-distance journeys.

Overall there should be a minimum, maybe expressed as a minimum frequency between stations. However regarding specifying routes such as North of Edinburgh, where there are only few services per day, a minimum number of services and time of day should be specified to ensure the service provides a meaningful and useful long distance service.

Where currently the North of Edinburgh route provides for both commuter and long distance passengers, consideration to retiming the Cross Country service should only be made where alternative resources and services are provided for commuters and it is feasibly possible to provide the same passenger carrying capacity.

**(9) Should bidders have some flexibility to make fewer calls at some stations, for example if that enabled them to accelerate services?**

X	Yes
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On what routes could this be introduced?

Further information would be required to make an informed decision on this. Fewer calls at stations will not necessarily accelerate services as there are other timetable and infrastructure considerations that may not permit this.

**(10) Should the minimum specification have the number of trains from each station to Birmingham but give bidders the flexibility to decide where the trains go after Birmingham?**

X	Yes
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**(11) Are there stations beyond the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

In addition to the current North of Edinburgh services to Dundee and Aberdeen, consideration could be given to extending services North of Edinburgh to Stirling, Perth and Inverness where rail capacity exists. This would enable the Cross Country franchise to provide a direct service connecting all of Scotland's cities to West

Midlands and South West England. A direct connection from Scotland to South Wales should also be considered.

Outside the Cross Country franchise, the intention to increase the frequency of the TransPennine Express service between Manchester and Edinburgh is welcomed and consideration should be given to extending some of these services to provide a direct connection North of Edinburgh to Manchester/Liverpool. Likewise consideration should be given to extending the West Coast Main Line north of Glasgow/Edinburgh to provide direct connections to Carlisle, Crewe, Birmingham and Milton Keynes. Consideration should also be given to some of these services utilising Motherwell station and running through to Larbert via Coatbridge and Cumbernauld to provide more direct services to/from North of Scotland.

**(12) Are there stations within the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

Within Scotland the RTPs consider that regional rail head locations should be served by more long distance services.

The RTPs consider that the hourly services between Edinburgh and West Midlands and South West England should be maintained as a minimum. Currently the majority of these services serve Plymouth and Bristol. The RTPs would be supportive of consideration being given to other destinations south of Birmingham, such as Oxford, Reading, Southampton and Cardiff. However, this would need to be evidence based regarding the demand for these destinations to/from Scotland.

To improve and simplify fares and ticketing

**(13) What changes would you like to see to the way Cross Country currently sells and provides tickets?**

It is agreed that passengers should be provided with widespread and easy access to a full range of tickets and that they have all the information required to select and purchase the most appropriate ticket. All methods of payment should be available. A consistency of offer should be provided between franchises, such as ScotRail “Kids go Free” being able to be used on all franchise services in Scotland.

**(14) What changes would you like to see to the current Cross Country current fares structure?**

Ticket pricing should be incentivised to encourage off peak use for long distance journeys and simplification of the ticket offer should be prioritised.

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APOD providing access to cheaper advanced fares up to 10 minutes before departure is welcomed. However, by allocating a seat to these purchases it does give difficulty for other passengers already on the train knowing whether a seat has been reserved or not. Whilst a good idea in theory, it should perhaps be limited to seats in specifically dedicated parts of the train and the signage on the train seat display should make it clear that (for example) “this seat may be subject to reservation” – it should also be made clear that other “non-reservable under any circumstances seats” are available and should be identified as such. As stated later in the document the operator could be encouraged to develop ideas to ‘segregate’ passenger and one option could be that APOD are intelligently allocated in this manner.

To improve access, information and making connections

**(16) What additional information would be useful to you when planning your journeys or making connections onto other services?**

As noted in the consultation document, Transport Focus has undertaken research that shows the top ten passengers priorities. The franchise should look to maximise these priorities.

How would you like the information communicated to you?

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**(17) How could the way in which Cross Country deals with your complaints and provides compensation to you be improved?**

Information on how to make complaints must be clear, easy and readily available for the passengers and staff must be trained in dealing with these efficiently.

**(18) What more could be done to improve access and provide facilities for those with disabilities or additional needs?**

Legislation covers much of this area but legislation is sometimes not enough when it comes to meeting specific needs. Appropriate and compliant facilities at stations are of paramount importance and the rail industry should address both on and off train facilities for passengers who require assistance.

As noted in the consultation document, Cross Country does not manage any stations, with station management undertaken by ScotRail or directly by Network Rail at stations in Scotland. The Cross Country operator should be required to work with the station management company to ensure improved access and facilities for

those with disabilities or additional needs.

It is agreed that franchise bidders should consider solutions to improve access and interchange for people with accessibility needs; improve passenger assistance systems and offer better and accessible connections with other forms of transport.

**(19) How do you believe Cross Country staff could be more effective in providing service and assistance that passengers need on a modern railway network?**

Passengers value the presence of staff on-board and at stations. Currently Cross Country staff members are fairly anonymous at stations compared to other franchises and their presence at stations should be increased to be more visible. Staff should be trained to provide information and be present to guide and reassure passengers.

**(20) What comment do you have on improving the overall passenger experience before, during and after the journey?**

The passenger should be suitably informed throughout the journey to have confidence in the journey they are making and for onward connection.

Prior to making the journey, as well as timetable and fare information, the franchise bidder should be asked to consider methods of providing information on crowding and availability of seats.

At the station clear and concise wayfinding should be provided, as well as real time information train times.

On-board there should be clear information given on any delays and the effect this may have on onwards journeys and how to access onward connections. In addition staff should be trained and informed to provide information and, for example direct passengers to suitable seating.

At destination station, clear and concise wayfinding and information on onward connections to all modes to make interchange as easy as possible.

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Cycle storage	<input type="text" value="4"/>

Seats that align with windows	5
Greater leg-room	7
Extra room for luggage	2

**(22) Rank your priorities for improvement to the carriage layout for long distance inter-city Cross Country trains? Rank 1 for most important to 7 for least important.**

More seats	1
More table seats as opposed to 'airline' seats	4
More comfortable room for short distance standing	7
Cycle storage	3
Seats that align with windows	6
Greater leg-room	5
Extra room for luggage	2

Where and when do you think these facilities are most required?

It is considered that Cross Country should be a long distance operator focussing on providing good quality direct long distance and inter-regional services and as such the carriage layout should be designed more for the long distance passenger. However, if more seats could be provided this may reduce the overcrowding at peak times.

Consideration could be given to utilising two types of carriages – one catering for shorter journeys and one for longer - and an intelligent booking system used to allocate passengers to seats in the appropriate carriage depending on their journey length.

Increasing cycle storage capacity on rolling stock and easier access both on train and when booking for people with bikes to support and encourage inter-modal travel and tourism, is supported.

**(23) What other comments or suggestions do you have about the on-board experience?**

The standard of catering is poor, particularly north of Edinburgh where it is curtailed, and this needs to improve. Other requirements valued are provision of power points and free wifi.

If more seats could be provided through longer trains, this may assist in reducing overcrowding at peak times and negate the need for two types of carriages and concentrate on providing a high quality standard carriage layout.

**(24) Which initiatives would you suggest to try to reduce the disturbance caused by the 'churn' of passengers alighting and boarding at frequent station calls?**

The potential approach for the operator to develop ideas to ‘segregate’ passengers according to the distance they travel through intelligent allocation of seat reservations is supported and considered worthwhile exploring. This could allow different carriages for short journeys and long journeys, potentially increasing the seating capacity of the service.

### Stakeholder Engagement and Community Rail Partnerships

**(25) Are there any improvements to the level stakeholder engagement by Cross Country that you would like to see and how could stakeholder engagement be improved?**

The RTPs would welcome direct engagement regarding the Cross Country Passenger Franchise.

TPE are considered to be good at stakeholder engagement – perhaps this franchise should seek to work with stakeholders in a similar fashion.

**(26) Does Cross Country provide a sufficient level of support to relevant Community Rail partnerships in your experience?**

N/A	Yes
N/A	No

**(26) Has their support improved in the last year to 18 months?**

N/A	Yes
N/A	No

**(27) Provide ideas on what more you feel the franchise could do to help the relevant Community Rail partnerships?**

Transport Scotland, ScotRail and Regional Transport Partnerships work closely to develop and advise Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) in Scotland. Where Cross Country Passenger services provide services to stations within a given CRP it would be expected that the operator would engage with the CRP.

**(28) Do you have any other views on how the future Cross Country franchise could be improved that have not been captured in the questions above?**

The consultation makes no mention of first class travel and consideration needs to be made regarding the proportion of first class and standard class seats, based on demand evidence.