



**Community
Transport
Association**

Response to the
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

**Regional Transport Strategy
Issues and Objectives Report**

20 July 2006

The Community Transport Association

The CTA is a rapidly growing national charity giving voice and providing leadership, learning and enterprise support to member organisations, which are delivering innovative transport solutions to achieve social change. CTA UK promotes excellence through providing training, publications, advice and information on voluntary, accessible and community transport.

Voluntary and community transport exists to meet the travel and social needs of people to whom these would otherwise be denied, providing accessible and affordable transport to achieve social inclusion.

The CTA is the representative body for third sector passenger transport operators in the UK. CTA Member organisations are involved in the provision of transport, especially accessible services.

The CTA is part-funded by the Department for Transport, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department for Regional Development (Northern Ireland).

CTA's Response to Consultation

The CTA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the SPT Report. The response to the 5 questions asked in the report is shown on the following pages.

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CONSULTATION QUESTION 1

Do the issues, problems and constraints summarised in Appendix 1 fairly reflect the challenges facing transport in the west of Scotland?

The headline issues, problems and constraints in Appendix 1 show a wide range of challenges. Some are given lower priority than the CTA feels they merit and some of the bullet points do not fully reflect the challenges facing transport. The following are the ones of most relevance to the community transport sector:

- **Accessibility/ social inclusion**
 - **There is no mention of community transport projects filling gaps in provision in this area. There have been a number of excellent projects throughout the SPT area that can be used to show good practice examples of solutions to accessibility and social exclusion, e.g. Coalfield Community Transport based in Cumnock.**
 - **Access to employment and health services is specifically mentioned and there are good examples of community transport projects fulfilling these needs, e.g. Stepping Stones for Families in Carrick where subsidised taxis are used to enable access to work and training, and the demand responsive transport project in Glasgow, operated by Community Transport – Glasgow, providing hospital access for visitors.**

- **Funding**
 - **This is a major concern for the community transport sector. Many groups in the voluntary sector struggle to find the funds to keep going and usually rely on short term funding packages. The CTA advocate full cost recovery and longer term funding agreements. One of the mechanisms that could be implemented in the Strategy is a Compact between the SPT and the voluntary sector on funding.**
 - **Balance of funding between modes – this is also important allocation of funding between modes should be made on a basis of need and not on the basis of population density.**
 - **Funding not ring-fenced - we have encountered problems, especially with local authorities where money has been allocated for other purposes than that specified in Grant Aided Expenditure settlements. The CTA position is that**

funding should be ring fenced as part of the Strategy. However if this is not possible political decisions should be made at the highest levels to achieve the same result.

- **The need to review and improve access to healthcare facilities**
 - **This should be changed to a high priority rather than medium.**
 - **Patient Transport services are currently only available for those who fulfil the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) eligibility criteria and are attending consultants' appointments. The Scottish Executive guidance to Regional Transport Partnerships on their Strategy states that they should work with Health Boards to "facilitate access to hospitals, clinics, surgeries and other places where health services are provided". This guidance embraces far more than the SAS patient transport services provision. Community transport groups currently undertake many of these services. For example, Ayrshire Cancer Support who provide transport to cancer patients and the British Red Cross who provided transport for Isle of Arran residents both on the island and onward to hospitals once on the mainland. Rural Community Transport Initiative funds both of these projects. There are also numerous local schemes providing transport to doctor's surgeries, dentists and opticians, currently sporadically funded from numerous sources. This means that SPT is obliged to work with community transport to facilitate access to health provisions not covered by the Health Board/SAS.**

- **Equality Issues**
 - **Again this should be changed to high priority. It is definitely not a low priority.**
 - **Community transport plays a major role in providing services for those with mobility problems and would wish to be included in any discussions on this issue.**
 - **Under the DDA 2005, there are new duties being introduced, in most areas, for transport providers via the Disability Discrimination (Transport Vehicles) Regulations 2005, coming into force in December 2006. Under these regulations transport providers are now providers of services to the public for the purposes of Part 3 of the DDA, therefore passengers with a mobility problem are not to be**

treated less favourably than other people when using services in relation to the provision or use of a vehicle.

- **Community Transport/ Demand Responsive Transport**
 - **Again this should be changed to high priority. It is definitely not a low priority. In those areas where community transport is operating it is because there are no other appropriate alternative or cost effective solutions.**
 - **The co-ordination issue is an important one. There has been discussion in the past about forming area forums enabling local community transport groups to network. This approach has been used in the HITRANS area and they have also worked with the CTA to arrange a stakeholders group at Regional level. Local groups nominate 2 members to sit on the stakeholder group that meets every 6 months. This fulfils the Scottish Executive guidance Point 34, “considering the needs of all groups”, involving them in the consultation, taking account of meeting their needs and monitoring the impact on the strategy. The CTA calls for a similar forum to be set up in this area and it should continue beyond the Strategy development phase.**
 - **There are many areas and many individuals in the SPT boundaries, rural and urban, who do not have a bus or rail service or cannot access the services provided because of a mobility problem. As stated in bullet point 3, community transport does form an important part of the transport mix and there should be recognition of this and encouragement for the sector to continue to fill gaps in transport provision.**

CONSULTATION QUESTION 2

Do the issues, problems and constraints summarised in Appendix 1 have an appropriate level of priority?

As mentioned above the need to review and improve access to healthcare facilities, equality issues and community transport/demand responsive transport should all be changed to high priority.

CONSULTATION QUESTION 3

Is the vision set out in Appendix 2 appropriate to the RTS?

The Draft Vision focuses on the need to grow the economy of Scotland. Although economic development is an important factor and

the Scottish Executive regard it as their top priority, the CTA feel that the other criteria, improving access and addressing transport inequalities, which appear in the Scottish Executive guidance are equally important

An exemplary sustainable transport system is a good aim but currently many services promoting social inclusion, meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups and filling gaps in the public transport network are grant aided or operate under contract to SPT and health boards. Provision has to be available to continue and if necessary expand these services. This should include assistance to access contracts for those in the voluntary sector who want to become a social enterprise.

CONSULTATION QUESTION 4

Is the Mission set out in Appendix 2 appropriate to the RTS?

The aim to have a high quality provision is excellent but the CTA feel the statement could be improved by adding the words “fully accessible”, so that it reads:

“ To champion and deliver the development and provision of high quality, fully accessible, sustainable transport choices for the West of Scotland”

CONSULTATION QUESTION 5

Are the objectives set out in Appendix 2 appropriate for the RTS?

The objectives are very basic statements and as they stand they cover all. The CTA feel that more detail should be included reflecting the guidance given by the Scottish Executive. For example, for Social Inclusion and Equality the guidance mentions promoting social inclusion, enhancing social well being and meeting the travel needs of specific groups.