

# DRIVERLESS CARS

MEMBERS' BUSINESS  
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## 1. Introduction

We note the debate under discussion 'Members Business' - Driverless Cars Bringing Transformative Change to Scotland - government should explore the opportunities and challenges that this will bring' and would agree that this should be a matter of interest to the Scottish Government.

There are of course more immediate issues of concern to the Scottish Government. Given the rapid decline in bus patronage, and the failure of central and local government to take action to tackle the factors that are leading to this, we would contend that the prospect of passenger-less buses should remain a more immediate concern to the Scottish Ministers than driverless cars.

## 2. Three important trends in car use

Three trends have been predicted to dominate the future of cars: (i) Car sharing services; (ii) Electric vehicles; (iii) Driverless cars.

There is a large evidence base regarding the impact of car sharing services in reducing overall car dependence (as users of car sharing services tend to also be greater users of walking, cycling and public transport). Meanwhile, the replacement of fossil fuel-powered vehicles with electric-powered vehicles will certainly assist in reducing carbon emissions.

The impact of autonomous vehicles is, however, much more uncertain. They could lead to automatic eco-driving, reduction in congestion, shared use, and more appropriate vehicle weights and sizes. However, they could also lead to a switch from public transport to private car use, increased energy use, and 'zero occupancy congestion'.

## 3. Policy considerations for driverless cars

Our European colleagues, the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E), have drawn up these policy criteria for the success of autonomous vehicles.

While this represents an initial list of factors that deserve consideration, we would suggest that provides a useful frame within which to debate the matter.



Autonomous cars should be electric



Autonomous cars should be largely shared



Road pricing for cars must manage demand



Road space for cars must be reduced



Speed limits must be retained or reduced



Testing & approval regime must be strengthened