

Cross-Party Group on Sustainable Transport

29 March 2022, 18:00

Held as a virtual meeting on Zoom

Minutes

Present

MSPs

Graham Simpson MSP

Sarah Boyack MSP

John Mason MSP

Brian Whittle MSP

Liam Kerr MSP

Invited guests

Guest speaker: Bruce Whyte (Public Health Programme Manager at Glasgow Centre for Population Health)

Non-MSP Group Members

Colin Howden (Transform Scotland)

Elsbeth Wray (Transform Scotland)

Ros Browning (Transform Scotland)

Rachel McFarlane (Transform Scotland)

Bruce Whyte (Glasgow Centre for Population Health) - speaker

Josh Hill (office of Graham Simpson MSP)

Olivia Pullman (office of Evelyn Tweed MSP)

Dave du Feu (Spokes)

Ian Budd (Friends of the Far North Line)

Scott Prentice (ScotRail)

Suzanne Forup (Women's Cycle Forum Scotland)

Patrick Miner

Maina Corolla-Larifla (Sustrans)

Alastair Dalton (The Scotsman)

Ian McCall (Paths For All)

Mike Harrison (Midlothian Disability Access Panel)

Stuart Hay (Living Streets)

Ralph Roberts (McGill's Buses)

Chris Day (Edinburgh Bus Users Group)

Andrew Lindsay (CPT Scotland)

Graham Dunn (Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland)

Jim Harkins (Light Rail UK Group)

Carmen Martinez

Andrea Thompson (SPT)

Chris Thompson (Living Streets Scotland)

David Giles (Scottish Association for Public Transport)

Heather Cowan (Transport Scotland)

Iain MacDonald (Light Rail Transit Association)

Jane Ann Liston (Starlink)

David Kelly (Community Transport Association)

Rachael Murphy (CoMoUK)

Tom Dickson (Rail Action Group, East of Scotland)

Sally Hinchcliffe (Pedal on Parliament)

David Winpenny (Heritage Railway Association)

Apologies

Mark Ruskell MSP

Stephen Kerr MSP

Mercedes Villalba MSP

Richard Ardern (Friends of the Far North Line)

Keith Irving (Cycling Scotland)

Emma Scott (Disability Equality Scotland)

Catriona Burness (RNIB Scotland)

Stewart Leslie (RAGES - Rail Action Group East of Scotland)

Peter Ovenstone (Heritage Railway Association)

Welcome and introductions

Ros Browning (Transform Scotland) opened the meeting at 18:00, and handed over to the meeting chair, Graham Simpson MSP, who welcomed those present.

Speaker Bruce Whyte:

Bruce Whyte, the Public Health Programme Manager at Glasgow Centre for Population Health, discussed 'the equalities impacts of historic traffic growth and the 20% car mileage reduction target'.

Bruce's presentation:

1. Outlined relevant policy context
2. Discussed impacts of traffic growth over time
3. Considered potential impacts of reductions in traffic

As part of his discussion Bruce talked about a variety of points, including:

- The current range of local and national policies that have been put in place to improve active and public travel in Scotland (i.e. the recent increase active travel budget)
- The mismatch between active travel policy versus the lack of change in car use
- Commuting trends in Scotland: car commuting has increased massively over the past 60 years
- Obesogenic environments
- When more people drive, less people feel safe walking and cycling
- Inequalities: children living in poorer areas more likely to be injured by cars and/or not own a bike
- 50% of people in Glasgow don't have access to a car

- Health benefits of active commuting
- Getting people back on public transport post-Covid: opportunities and challenges
- Road space reallocation: redirecting space away from cars towards public spaces
- The importance of having segregated routes to separate walkers, cyclists and motorists.

Questions and answers

The Convenor then invited comments and questions. A variety of themes and topics emerged.

Inequalities

- Social inequalities: people who own cars are wealthier
- Importance of recognising and including wheeling in the discussion
- There should be a consultation put in place for those who are disabled as part of planning for reduction in kilometres set out by the Scottish Government

Bus prioritisation

- Buses do not get as much attention as active travel but are equally important
- Important that local authorities engage in programmes to increase bus patronage
- U22s free bus travel: a lot more young people going on the bus now
- Still quite a lot of U22s paying for their bus travel, money is not the only motivator

Trams

- The importance of trams as a convenient mode of public transport
- Manchester example: significantly helped encourage more people to use public transport

Daily commute

- People's daily commutes have increased

Incentivising people: 'the carrot' method

- Ticket integration
- Reduced fares
- Faster than taking the car
- Cheaper than taking the car
- More convenient than taking the car
- Making it safer to walk, wheel, cycle

De-incentivising people: the 'stick' method

- Demand management
- Workplace parking levies
- Reducing car parking spaces
- Low emission zones

Car clubs

- People who are part of car clubs use a car six times per year as it's only when they really need one
- Car clubs help reduce traffic, the number of cars parked on our streets, and still allow people access to a car if they need it

Economic argument

- If people walk, wheel, cycle then people spend more money at the shops

'Carrot versus stick' - striking the balance

- What works better: incentivising people to use public transport, or making it really difficult to use a car, or both?
- Not able to make public transport more convenient than car, so should we make it less convenient to use a car?
- Discussing variations between cities (Edinburgh much worse place to take the car compared to Glasgow)
- Glasgow has an over capacity of parking in the city
- If you concentrated parking in multi-storey car parks you can make more routes for public transport and active travel

Local authorities

- Will they be able to equip themselves with the correct tools to reduce car kilometres
- It is important that local authorities are given the necessary resources to achieve modal shift

Date for subsequent meetings and close of meeting

Colin Howden (Transform Scotland) advised that the next meeting would be held at 18:00 on Tuesday 24 May 2022, that Clare Linton (Urban Transport Group) had been confirmed as a speaker, and that a speaker invite had been made to Professor Iain Docherty (University of Stirling).

The Convenor closed the meeting at 19:00.

Minutes

Draft minutes prepared by Rachel McFarlane (Transform Scotland) on 30.03.22.