



Staff Travel Survey

Committee Personnel

Date of meeting 28 April 2023

Date of report 14 March 2023

Report by Chief Executive

1. Object of report

To advise the Committee of the outcome of a recent staff travel survey and subsequently to seek agreement to amendments of staff Conditions of Service General Section which support SPT to utilise public transport.

2. Background

A staff survey was conducted recently to understand how staff travel to and from their place of work and how this had changed over the last few years, particularly following the disruption of the Covid pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis.

It is important that SPT supports its staff to be an advocate for public transport use and, where possible, encourage staff to utilise public transport for their journeys to their workplace.

3. Current proposals

The findings of the survey are attached at Appendix 1 and have been shared with all staff.

It is clear that the number of staff using public transport following the pandemic has reduced, reflecting the wider societal change. Hybrid working is obviously a contributor to this, but it is important to reflect that more than 50% of SPT staff are not operating on this basis.

SPT Conditions of Service General Section include:

- a maximum of £300 (or 50%, whichever is lower) contribution to an annual rail season ticket operated on a salary sacrifice basis; and
- a Subway travel pass which supports the travel arrangements of staff between the Subway main depot, stations and offices in Glasgow city centre and Govan.

Both of these arrangements have remained unchanged for over 20 years. Clearly in that time the perceived and actual value of the salary sacrifice arrangement has diminished - £300 in the year 2000 is now the equivalent of £646.

Having assessed the staff survey outcomes, it is proposed to make changes to the relevant staff Terms & Conditions as follows:

- To increase the contribution towards an annual rail season ticket to £600, with this being adjusted annually for inflation. In addition, it is proposed to extend its applicability to include bus and ZoneCard season tickets, thus maximising the travel options of staff. HMRC tax rules apply to all season tickets and staff are advised of this accordingly.
- To extend the Subway travel pass to one member of their household residing at the same address of the employee. Comparison with other public transport providers has highlighted this to be a feature of their support both to staff retention and to the use of public transport.

Both proposals have been shared with respective Trade Unions in terms of consultation terms, with limited positive comments received from UNISON.

The cost of both proposals have been included in the 2023/2024 budget, with an anticipated cost of £70,000 per annum dependent on staff take up.

The change in staff travel behaviours and use of public transport to access workplaces will be monitored following the implementation of the change.

4. Conclusion

SPT supporting its own staff to use public transport is a core principle to encouraging more people to use public transport. The pandemic interruption has changed the number of staff using public transport and it is essential that SPT considers proposals to remedy this.

5. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) approve a change to the SPT contribution to staff season tickets of £300 to £600 per annum and agree to adjust this annually to reflect the impact of inflation; and
- (ii) allow the staff Subway travel pass to be extended to one member of their household who resides at the same address.

6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>Directly supports the Regional Transport Strategy.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>Costs have been budgeted for in 2023/2024.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>Support to all staff and assists with staff recruitment and retention.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Available to all staff.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None directly.</i>

Climate Change, Adaptation &
Carbon consequences

Contributes to encouraging modal shift.

Name Neil Wylie
Title **Director of Finance
& Corporate Support**

Name Valerie Davidson
Title **Chief Executive**

For further information, please contact *Neil Wylie, Director of Finance & Corporate Support* on *0141 333 3380*.

APPENDIX 1

SPT staff travel survey – key findings and recommendations November 2022

1. Background

SPT's strategic framework in the new Regional Transport Strategy sets out three targets for modal shift from car to active travel and public transport, reducing transport emissions and reducing kilometres travelled by car. One of the easiest ways for SPT to operationalise these strategic targets is through influencing and managing SPT staff travel to work towards more sustainable transport. To this end, SPT is now exploring options to help SPT staff travel to work through means other than single occupancy car journeys where possible.

A staff travel survey was carried out over a 2-week period in November 2022 to inform decisions on these options. The survey aimed to improve understanding of staff commuting and the level of interest in the options. These options include: discounts on public transport tickets, car sharing support through SPT JourneyShare, and Cycle to Work scheme.

2. Methodology

The survey was open to all members of staff as a simple convenience sample. Participation was voluntary and staff were encouraged but not incentivised to participate. The survey was available to complete over a two-week period as an online questionnaire. A total of 255 completed responses were received. The questionnaire is attached at Appendix A.

3. Findings - Key Issues

3.1. Travelling to work by car is moderately high

Nearly three in five staff (58%) travel to work by car for at least part of their journey. For comparison, in Glasgow, just under half of commuters travel to work by car. Two in every 5 (40%) of people who use a car to travel to work do not work shifts and nearly three-quarters (73%) are male.

Additionally, more than four in every five SPT staff (82%) have a car that can be used to travel to work all or some of the time. This is higher than local and regional car ownership averages – 53% of households in Glasgow own a car and 68% of households in the region own a car. This presents challenges to influencing staff towards more sustainable travel behaviours.

Staff were asked why they travel to work by car. The top five reasons were:

- quickest
- convenience
- no alternative transport available when I need to travel
- fits best with my work pattern
- easy to park at my workplace

Staff based at Broomloan were most likely to drive to work and were more likely to only drive (rather than park and ride). A substantial minority of 131 SVS staff drive for part of their journey, but most appear to be using a park and ride. However, it appears that free subway travel may be encouraging staff to park and ride at Subway car parks rather than at a rail station closer to home (this is only being inferred from the data). The availability and cost of parking is known to be a key determinant of mode choice so it may be an area worth exploring further as this is an area that is somewhat within SPT control.

3.2. Staff who use public transport are interested in different or deeper discounted tickets

Over half (56%) of all staff use bus, rail or Subway to travel to work for some or all of their journey to work. Use of public transport varied strongly by workplace as can be seen by table 1, with 90% of 131 SVS staff using public transport for all or part of their journeys compared to 14% - 16% for staff located at Govan or Broomloan.

Table 1: Use of public transport to travel to work by workplace

Workplace	Uses bus, rail or Subway (total)	Uses bus, rail or Subway (percentage of total workplace)
131 SVS	80	90%
BBS	29	74%
Subway	20	50%
Broomloan	12	16%
Govan	2	14%

The types of modes and tickets used to travel to work were varied, as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Type of tickets used to travel by public transport

Ticket type	Ticket users (total)
Bus - any	31
ScotRail - total	73
<i>ScotRail annual with discount</i>	33
<i>ScotRail - other</i>	40
Subway staff travel pass	59
NEC	13
ZoneCard	4

As anticipated, it was found that the number of days working in the office is a factor in the take up of the ScotRail season discount. 35 out of 40 staff who are using ScotRail tickets without the staff discount on annual tickets are travelling to work an average of 4.5 days every 2 weeks. Staff who are using the annual discount on ScotRail tickets are travelling an average of 6.3 days every 2 weeks.

Almost all (92%) of staff who use public transport to travel to work reported that they would be likely to take up one or more of the potential discounted ticket types. 74 staff were interested in the ScotRail discount, 41 in a discount on bus tickets and 27 in a discount on ZoneCard. Staff were allowed to select more than one option.

Table 3: Level of interest in ticket discounts by mode

Ticket type / discount	Public transport users interested in this discount
Bus tickets	41
ScotRail (increase in discount)	74
Zonocard	27

3.3. Some car users may be persuaded to change travel behaviours through discounted fare incentives

About 40% of staff travel to work by car only [and do not use public transport at all to travel to work]. About half of these staff [which equates to about 20% of all staff], said they would consider using bus or rail to travel to work if the fare discounts were broadened or increased. Almost all of these staff were interested in an increase in the Scotrail discount and about half of these staff were interested in bus and ZoneCard discounts.

3.4. COVID19 has had minimal impacts on travel to work overall, but has changed ticket usage

Only 29 staff (11%) reported that their travel to work behaviour had changed since COVID19.

Many reported that factors such as moving house, a partner changing jobs or becoming eligible for NEC were the reasons for the travel behaviour changes rather than factors directly related to the virus and or changes in home working.

A few staff said they now drive due to unreliable rail or bus services. 7 staff noted that they used to use the ScotRail discount but now use other modes or other ScotRail ticket types because it is not financially sound to purchase a season ticket when they are not travelling into the office every day (all of these staff reported working from home 4 or 5 days out of every two weeks).

It should be noted that this question was open to interpretation so the above points give a general sense of changes.

3.5. Few staff are car sharing, but many are open to the idea

About 10% of staff are car sharing with a member of their household or with another SPT staff member. This increases to 17% of staff when limited to people who travel by car.

Of those who driving but not car sharing, 58% are open to the idea of car sharing if a suitable partner could be found, as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Openness to car sharing among staff who travel to work by car

Staff who drive to work and do not car share: would they consider car sharing?		
Response	Total	Percentage
Yes	28	21%
Maybe	49	37%
No	54	41%
Total	131	100%

Just over one-third (36%) of staff who are not car sharing are also not aware of SPT JourneyShare. A strong majority of these people said they were interested in car sharing so this represents an opportunity around increasing awareness of JourneyShare.

3.6. Cycling to work is low but a substantial minority of staff are open to cycling

About 6% of staff cycle to work for all or part of their journeys over a typical two-week period. Although this is lower than other modes, this is higher than the regional and city averages.

Of staff who do not cycle to work, 17% said they would like to cycle to work and another 15% said they may like to cycle to work if barriers to cycling could be reduced. Staff were asked what needed to change to allow them to cycle. Some staff mentioned personal issues like motivation or factors like weather; however, a majority of staff mentioned practical measures like lockers and bike storage, infrastructure including segregated cycle lanes and access to a bike.

Over one-third (37%) of staff have access to a bike that they could use to travel to work. For comparison, about 28% of households in Glasgow and 29% of households in the region have access to a bike for private use. There is very high awareness of Cycle to Work scheme within SPT, with 94% of staff reported that they are aware of the Scheme and 20% have made use of the Scheme. However, 43 of 53 staff who have used the Scheme do not cycle to work.

3.7. Policy change and increased investment required to effect wider travel behaviour change

Many staff mentioned lack of suitable public transport, problems with public transport reliability or lack of cycling infrastructure and routes as reasons why they do not travel by public transport or they do not cycle more often or at all. These barriers cannot be resolved by staff incentives alone and instead are linked with SPT's role in delivering transport policy and making the case for investment in services and infrastructure.

3.8. The Subway works bus provides a crucial service particularly for staff who do not have access to a car

13 staff who use the Subway works bus responded to the survey. All but one staff does not have access to a car to travel to work and almost all staff noted that they use the bus due to lack of alternative transport and that the bus offers safe and secure transport. All but one staff were highly or somewhat satisfied with the bus although a

few mentioned reliability problems. A number of staff mentioned that the bus is vital for them to get to/from early/late shifts. It may be worth running a dedicated survey just for Subway works bus users to gain a more detailed understanding of the value of the service and any specific issues, but generally it appears that the service is seen as essential by the people who use it.

3.9. Offering discounted Subway travel to staff family members would have a mild impact on Subway use

Staff who have a spouse/partner (through marriage or civil partnership) or a child under age of 16 were asked about their family member’s current Subway travel and how much they anticipated this may change if SPT offered discounts for staff family travel on Subway. Table 5 shows that only a small number of staff family members currently use the Subway on a frequent bases and that frequency of use would not change substantially if a discount is offered. For example, only one staff reported that their spouse/partner uses Subway on a daily basis and only nine felt that their spouse/partner would increase use to daily basis after a discount.

Table 5: Change in Subway use if SPT offered a travel discount to spouse/partner or child

Frequency of Subway travel	Spouse/partner: number of people who use subway by frequency		Child: number of people who use Subway by frequency	
	Current travel	Travel with a discount	Current travel	Travel with a discount
Daily	1	9	1	3
A few times a week	10	10	3	5
A few times a month	13	27	9	17
A few times a year	1	99	35	47
Never	120	0	24	0