

Report No 1041/99

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

14 OCTOBER 1999

SUBJECT: CREATE - CAMPAIGN TITLE AND FOCUS

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: The CREATE Steering Group has requested member authorities to give their views on the changing of "electrification" to "enhancement" within the acronym CREATE.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. consider the relative merits of the proposed adjustment to the CREATE title;
2. agree to advise the CREATE Steering Group that, on balance, this Council supports the change in campaign title within a clear strategy which continues to fully pursue electrification as part of a wider agenda aimed at securing the best possible rail infrastructure and rail services for the area served by the East Coast Main Line, north of Edinburgh.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 At the CREATE Steering Group meeting held in Aberdeen on Monday 23 August 1999, a decision on whether to change "electrification" to "enhancement" within the acronym CREATE (CAMPAIGN for RAIL ELECTRIFICATION ABERDEEN TO EDINBURGH) was deferred to allow member authorities to consider their position.

2.2 This report briefly sets the background to CREATE and provides a context within which the Planning and Transport Policy Committee can respond to the CREATE Steering Group.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 CREATE was established in 1989 and generally covered the geographical area of the east coast main rail line between Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The key concerns at that time related to peripherality and the issue of electrification was the focus to raise these concerns. The current membership includes Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Dundee City, City of Edinburgh, Fife, Perth and Kinross Councils, Aberdeen, Fife and Dundee Trades Council, Aberdeen, Fife and Perth Chamber of Commerce.

3.2 This Council's member representatives on CREATE are Councillors Sandy West and Ian Angus.

3.3 While the electrification of the east coast main line remains the long term objective, CREATE has been increasingly involved as a strategic lobbying group on rail issues.

The production of CREATE's 10 Point Plan leaflet (Appendix 1) in 1996 emphasised that the remit of the campaign had broadened to represent more than the electrification debate. While commitment to electrification remained important, the campaign's agenda extended to the wider context of improving the quality of service of the Aberdeen to Edinburgh rail link. It has also become increasingly important to ensure that rail interests appreciate that CREATE is not a single issue campaign but seeks to secure various improvements for passengers and freight between Aberdeen, Edinburgh and beyond including links through to Europe.

- 3.4 Some member authorities have recently questioned the emphasis on electrification where media attention has overly concentrated on that issue rather than the campaign's wider strategic goals. The City of Edinburgh Council has formally asked that reference to "**electrification**" be dropped from the campaign's title replacing it with "**enhancement**" thus avoiding the need to alter the CREATE acronym. It is suggested by some that this would allow the campaign to focus more on the wider remit of the 10 Point Plan. It would also involve refocusing away from the electrification issue only and giving greater attention to other aspects of the need to ensure an adequate level of investment in railways in the east and north-east of Scotland.
- 3.5 Since the establishment of CREATE, transport issues nationally and locally have come increasingly to the fore and there is a growing optimism in rail transport, in particular growth in both passenger and freight traffic. Significant changes have occurred and will continue to occur in the rail industry, in particular the Government's commitment to an integrated approach to transport policy, the establishment of a new Strategic Rail Authority and establishment of the Scottish Parliament and its executive. The need to maintain and develop a dialogue with the rail industry is an important requirement to deal with both strategic views and on local rail requirements and opportunities. In this respect CREATE can play an important part as a strategic lobbying group on rail issues.

4 DISCUSSION

- 4.1 A range of views have already been expressed within the CREATE Steering Group on the benefits or otherwise of making this possible change. The following are some of the issues which members may wish to consider in reaching a view on the issues arising:-

Potential Advantages of Change

- Allows the campaign to be seen to be broadening its scope across different audiences. Overall makes CREATE look more realistic to political and industry audiences.
- Opportunity for campaign relaunch which will help raise campaign profile.
- Good opportunity to mail key opinion formers (inc MSPs)
- Doesn't exclude electrification - the campaign can still encompass electrification as a long term aim.
- Railtrack will always win the short term technical argument about whether electrification is viable so CREATE needs to focus on the outcomes (journey times, frequency, quality, freight capacity, stations etc) which it wants to achieve rather than the means by which they might be achieved; the suggested name change allows this.

Potential Disadvantages of Change

- Less clear objective (electrification is a simple goal; enhancement could mean anything).
 - Danger that the campaign loses focus so need to agree prioritisation of 10 point plan so that identity of group and its key concerns are clear.
 - Loss of a common purpose which has bound together campaign members representing diverse geographical areas and interests.
 - Perception (real or imagined) that electrification is no longer sought.
- 4.2 The weight to be attached to any perceived advantages/disadvantages may well vary among different members of CREATE according to their particular circumstances and interests. From an Angus perspective my own view is that the acronym, while significant and clearly linked to objectives, is less important than the general campaign strategy. In this respect I would suggest that the Council should express its support to fully pursue electrification as part of a wider agenda aimed at securing the best possible rail infrastructure and rail services for the area served by the East Coast Main Line north of Edinburgh.
- 4.3 On balance, I would favour the change to "enhancement" provided that this helped raise the awareness of rail requirements and opportunities locally as well as strategically. This would, in my view, complement the approach suggested in the Angus Interim Local Transport Strategy agreed by the Committee on 26 August 1999 (report 819/99 refers).
- 4.4 In particular it would more fully recognise that there may, in some circumstances, be tensions arising between improved longer distance services Aberdeen/Edinburgh/London and local rail service requirements and opportunities among stations within Angus and to neighbouring areas. Our particular aim in Angus could be summarised as the need to improve local rail services within and to Angus, including investigation of a dedicated local services where appropriate as well as improving journey times, speed, reliability and comfort of longer distance services.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Angus Council has previously contributed £6,000 toward membership of CREATE for the financial year 1999/2000, from the Planning and Transport Budget. Continued membership of CREATE will involve financial commitment in subsequent years. This will be the subject of separate reports to Committee.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Since the establishment of CREATE in 1989, there has been substantial change in the organisational structure of the rail industry, including the introduction of separate Train Operating Companies, Railtrack and, most recently, the Strategic Rail Authority. CREATE have already adopted and broadened their involvement through

publication of the 10 Point Plan, CREATEivity (quarterly newsheet) and discussion with key players in the rail industry.

- 7.2 Any change in title or focus should seek to maximise benefits and minimise potential disadvantages. In this context there may be merit in adopting a changed title which acts as an opportunity to encourage increased involvement with the rail industry, aimed at securing improvements to the East Coast Main Line north of Edinburgh, with electrification remaining a longer term goal.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/GDP//CGR/SP
4 October 1999

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning and Transport

10 the point plan

- 1 To secure the best possible rail infrastructure and rail services for the areas served by the East Coast Main Line.
- 2 To ensure a continuation of through-running trains between Aberdeen and London.
- 3 To push for a long-term commitment for a programme of major investment in railways.
- 4 To press for a Government review of investment criteria for rail projects - acknowledging the wider benefits that can be achieved on environmental, safety and socio-economic grounds.
- 5 To encourage a level playing field in UK and European Government decision-making to ensure fair allocations of capital expenditure for both UK and trans-European rail networks.
- 6 To seek a commitment to upgrading, and extending the working life of the current diesel Inter City 125 fleet to ensure through-trains in the medium term.
- 7 To maximise the potential for transporting freight by rail.
- 8 To support electrification proposals in Fife and Central Scotland, contributing to improved overall prospects of long-term investment in the East Coast Main Line and an electrified network throughout Scotland.
- 9 To secure short-term works - such as line speed improvements - which can contribute towards overall upgrading.
- 10 To campaign for electrification of the East Coast Main Line from Aberdeen to Edinburgh through Fife.

84

SWITCH ON TO CREATE

CREATE - THE CAMPAIGN *for* RAIL ELECTRIFICATION ABERDEEN TO EDINBURGH - was established in 1989 to ensure that businesses and communities in the East and North East of Scotland can enjoy the benefits of a high speed electrified rail service linking them with the rest of Europe.

CREATE is now one of Scotland's most powerful public transport pressure groups drawing cross-party political support from local authorities and members of both UK and European Parliaments.

The campaign is made up of members representing the local authorities along the route of the East Coast Main Line and is supported by Chambers of Commerce and Trades Councils.

CREATE
CAMPAIGN *for* RAIL ELECTRIFICATION
ABERDEEN TO EDINBURGH

St Nicholas House
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1BW
tel: 01224 664732
fax: 01224 636181

the point plan