

Thursday 18 January – Session 4 – 12:45hrs**Changing perceptions of public transport**

As decision making over public transport moves away from the centre, the role and perceptions of decision makers and the media in our devolved regions becomes ever more important. This session will explore how those perceptions affect the decision-making and landscape in which we operate in different parts of the country.

Our panel of speakers – drawn from across the UK – will reflect on how the decision-making landscape in their part of the country has affected bus services, and how the perceptions of the industry have influenced decision makers there. We will explore how the industry can build on its reputation and use local relationships to strengthen our offer and improve services in every part of the UK.

**Chair: Aaron Hill, Director CPT Cymru**

Aaron Hill is the Director of CPT Cymru. He leads CPT's external work in Wales, engaging with members and working to influence the Welsh Government, members of the Senedd and a wide range of key stakeholders on behalf of bus and coach operators. Aaron's previous roles include Director of Policy and Membership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Head of Policy and External Affairs with Community Housing Cymru. He is also a board member with a local housing association – RHA Wales – and was previously Chair of Public Affairs Cymru.

**Alex Robertson, Chief Executive, Transport Focus**

Alex spent over five years at Transport for London early in his career working in policy and public affairs. After a brief spell in the voluntary sector, he moved to the Electoral Commission where he was Director of Communications and the Programme Director for the Scottish Referendum (2014) and EU Referendum (2016). Prior to joining Transport Focus, Alex was the Executive Director for Strategy and Operations with the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman and Chief Operating Officer at the Pensions Ombudsman.



Aleena Khan, Assistant Transport Planner, AtkinsRéalis

Aleena is a Commissioner on the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales and formerly a Board Member at Taff Housing Association. Aleena joined AtkinsRéalis as a Graduate Transport Planner in 2021 following the completion of BSc in Urban Planning & Development, and MSc Transport & Planning at Cardiff University. She is co-lead of the AtkinsRéalis UK & Europe Transportation Early Careers Forum and the AtkinsRéalis UK & Europe Graduate Forum.

She regularly contributes to BBC/S4C (TV, radio and online) on environmental, cultural and social issues, through the medium of Welsh, Urdu/Hindi, Punjabi and English.

Aleena was recently elected as the lead Chartered Institute for Highways & Transport Wales ED&I officer and now forms part of the Committee.



Gordon Dickson, Head of Bus Strategy and Delivery, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Gordon Dickson is Head of Bus Strategy and Delivery at Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT), responsible for taking forward the Regional Bus Strategy and overseeing SPT's Bus Operations. Before joining SPT in 2009 Gordon was a Senior Economist with Halcrow Group Ltd, a leading engineering consultancy. This followed a previous career with the Scottish Government as an advisor on Environmental and Rural issues. As lead sponsor on SPT's emerging Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy (SRBS), Gordon overseen the development of the SRBS Case for Change, and is currently leading on an options appraisal considering the way forward for the future of the bus network in the west of Scotland.

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