COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INQUIRY
ANNANDALE TRANSPORT INITIATIVE
WRITTEN SUBMISSION

ATI has delivered community transport to the Annandale area since 1999. It has grown from two accessible minibuses to 6 accessible minibuses and 2 people carriers. There are presently 150 registered groups and a number individual users, along with over 40 volunteer drivers and 4 admin/maintenance staff. ATI has achieved Investors in People recognition on 3 occasions.

ATI has taken on an increasingly important community transport role in the Annandale area and is hoping to expand to include the area of Eskdale which includes Langholm.

To help ensure ATIs continued existence and growth on behalf of ATI I would like to make the following contributions to your inquiry.

1. Since the CONCORDAT when the Scottish Government devolved responsibility for funding to Local Authorities ATI has been well supported by Dumfries and Galloway Council in terms of annual funding. However the Council funds for one year at a time which makes forward planning, Business Plans and support from other funders exceptionally difficult.
   ATI would like funding to be for 3 year periods as previously administered by RCTI.

2. Our minibus fleet is ageing and despite a very rigorous maintenance programme a number of our buses will soon need to be replaced.
   ATI would like the Scottish Government to create a scheme to support Capital Grant funding and investigate a National scheme to allow leasing of buses to be affordable.

3. ATI would support a National Strategy for Community Transport which would require Local Authorities to have a similarly strategic approach to CT.

The Third Sector is increasingly important to delivering services in Scotland. Unfortunately this seems to be mistaken as a way to deliver services more cheaply. The Scottish Government should embrace the values of the Voluntary Sector and commit to helping the Third Sector by having a clear strategy to provide appropriate and adequate funding. This would still be a 'best value' decision by the government.

Gordon G Ferrie
Director
Annandale Transport Initiative
18 April 2013