

**PE1578/A**

**Rail Directorate**

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Michael McMahon MSP  
Convener  
Public Petitions Committee  
By email: [Petitions@Scottish.Parliament.UK](mailto:Petitions@Scottish.Parliament.UK)

Your ref:  
PE1578

Our ref:

Date:  
9 December 2015

Dear Convener

**Consideration Of Petition PE1578 - Forth Circle Rail Link**

Following discussions at the Public Committee meeting on 24 November in respect of PE1578 on a Forth Circle Rail Link, Transport Scotland were asked to provide the Scottish Government's view on the proposal.

The Scottish Government is committed to improving rail services and we remain on target to deliver the electrification of Stirling, Alloa, Dunblane line services by December 2018. This investment will make journeys times shorter and more comfortable for all passengers who use this important line.

Earlier this year we announced a £16 million signalling upgrade to improve reliability and create additional capacity on lines serving key commuter routes to and from Fife. Indeed, the Scottish Government's commitment to an ambitious £5 billion package of funding and investment for our railways until 2019 will facilitate improvements to infrastructure and services across the network to support economic growth and encourage modal shift.

At present, the proposed reopening of the Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine line through to Dunfermline for passenger services does not feature in the current investment programme, although we are aware that SEStran and the local authorities undertook an assessment of this proposal in 2010.

Following the announcement of the closure of Longannet Power Station, the Scottish Government and Fife Council established a Task Force to produce an Economic Recovery Plan to support workers, businesses and communities affected by the closure in March 2016. The plan will seek to address the effects of the closure by supporting workers to find new jobs, mitigate the effects on the supply chain,

produce a master plan for the long term future of the Longannet site and consider how to create sustainable employment in the local area.

As part of this plan, a comprehensive strategic transport appraisal is being taken forward by Fife Council, with support from the Scottish Government, for the Fife and Clackmannanshire area. The possibility of restoring passenger services between Dunfermline and Alloa is likely to be considered within this appraisal which will examine all transport modes to determine the most appropriate solutions.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Rose Tweedale  
Rail Policy