

Response ID ANON-PA1N-7G3P-H

Submitted on 2015-07-29 15:06:06.614605

Evidence

Questions about you: In order for the evidence to be analysed and taken forward by the Inquiry we will need some further information about you and / or your organisation. Please note that all evidence submitted to the Inquiry may be published at any point during the Inquiry or when the Inquiry Report is issued. If you are responding as an organisation your full details will be published. If you are responding as an individual your name will be published, but your address will only be published if the Inquiry considers this to be relevant to the evidence submitted.

Organisation Name (if applicable):

Surname:

Drysdale

Forename:

Robert

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]

Edinburgh

Postcode:

[REDACTED]

Phone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Are you responding as an organisation or an individual?

Individual

Does your evidence relate to a particular period of time?

No

If yes, what period?:

Does your evidence relate to a particular event or activity?

No

If yes, please explain what the event / activity was.:

We are particularly interested in:• How you found out about what was happening, and how informed you were throughout the project• What

did you think would happen• What actually happened• What were the effects if any, on you (or your organisation) at the time of the project• What if any, were the on-going or longer-term effects on you (or your organisation). Please write your evidence here.

We are particularly interested in:

1. Initial Proposals: The initial proposals were soundly based in the main, and the proposed routes would have provided penetration into many urban parts of Edinburgh, delivering new journey opportunities, particularly in the north-west of the city where there is acknowledged social deprivation. The only section of route which had glaring deficiencies (and a preferable alternative) was that between Leith and Granton. Unsurprisingly that route was the first to be abandoned.

The Parliamentary Process, in which I participated, was very challenging for ordinary members of the public, as TIE employed many teams of consultants armed with statistics and expertise which the public could not match. Public participants faced very adversarial cross-examination from advocates employed by TIE. TIE witnesses changed their evidence and submitted revised statistics during the Parliamentary hearings, which the Parliamentary Committee permitted them to do. The Committee also permitted the subsequent submission (after the close of the hearing) of further evidence by TIE intended to rebut evidence submitted by the public, and the public were not given an opportunity to see or make further comment on this supplementary evidence.

2. Procurement: It is vital that the inquiry collects evidence from other UK cities as to how new tram systems can be delivered efficiently and effectively. In particular, the inquiry should examine the procurement and implementation methods used to deliver the very substantial extension of the Manchester Metrolink tram network, from 24 route miles five years ago to 57 miles today, and with investment in improvements and additional routes still continuing. Under Issue 10 – Costs – the inquiry should examine why it was possible to construct the most recent Manchester line – the nine mile Airport link – for only £368 million (2014), equating to £40 million per mile, less than half the cost per mile of the Edinburgh tram line (not allowing for Edinburgh's future interest payments). Similarly the Nottingham tram network, broadly similar in length to Edinburgh's tram line, was constructed for £180 million in 2004, equivalent to around £270 million now, or £31 million per mile, compared with Edinburgh's £91 million per mile. The Nottingham line includes considerable length of street-running sections, more so than in Edinburgh.

6. Tram Vehicles: 27 tram vehicles were ordered to serve a network of 19 miles. It was too late to reduce the number of trams ordered by the time the network started being reduced in length, and certainly by the time it was truncated to only 8.5 miles. Consequently the inquiry should spend much time considering whether there was merit in ordering 27 trams. Had it been known at the outset that the tram line would be only 8.5 miles in length, inevitably a smaller number of trams would have been ordered.

While the number of trams is not a major issue for the inquiry, the inquiry should examine why such long and heavy trams were specified, which in turn required

stronger track foundations and generally more robust infrastructure, which in turn pushed up costs. The Edinburgh tram unit weighs 56 tons whereas the Manchester tram weighs 40 tons. Furthermore the inquiry should investigate why TIE insisted on a bespoke design for the Edinburgh tram instead of selecting a vehicle design already available and in production.

7. Management: It became clear to the public at a relatively early stage in the planning process that there were management problems associated with TIE, for example when (1) the decision was taken (around 2006) to 'phase' the construction instead of building the whole network at the outset, reflecting the fact that cost control was already slipping, (2) the successive changes in senior management within TIE throughout its life, (3) the abandonment of Line 1b from Haymarket to Granton in April 2009, (4) the chaos which surrounded the first attempt to lay track along Princes Street (which had to be repaired later), and (5) the prolonged cessation without public explanation of all construction work in summer 2010. It was late 2011 before TIE was disbanded, and only after the appointment of a new Chief Executive of the Council, Ms Sue Bruce.

8. Local Governance: It appeared, particularly during the 2008-11 period, that the elected council was not being fully furnished with relevant important facts from TIE, and in turn that the council was not fully informing the public of how badly wrong the project was going. The reasons for this should be fully investigated by the inquiry, including the extent to which the council was aware of major problems which it chose not to communicate to the public, perhaps for reasons related to future council elections.

10. Costs - see 2. Procurement

11. Consequences: The most striking consequence of the failure to construct the full tram network has been the lack of any improvements to public transport services in North Edinburgh, where the tram would have provided many new journey opportunities, much faster links between North Edinburgh and West Edinburgh via the Craighleith route, better access to the airport, and improved mobility for people living across a large part of North and North West Edinburgh. The fact that it now seems unlikely that the full 19-mile network will ever be delivered, and certainly not for 10 years, is an appalling consequence of the council's failure to launch the tram project properly, with a competent and experienced procurement agency and effective delivery mechanism, a failure which was then compounded by its refusal to address the issues which were so clearly associated with TIE's mismanagement of the project, and which became evident at an early stage in the life of the project.

Do you have any documents which you think it would be useful for the Inquiry to see?

Yes

Details of documents:

I have several files of articles and press cuttings dating from around 2000 relating to the tram project, but I imagine that most of these will be in the possession of the inquiry already.

Upload documents:
No file was uploaded

Are you content for the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry team to contact you again in relation to this evidence?*

Yes