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Ms Marisa Di Filippo-Ferrier
North Queensferry Community Council
North Queensferry Community Centre
Brock Street
North Queensferry
KY11 1JD

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:
10 September 2012

Dear Ms Di Filippo-Ferrier

Forth Estuary Transport Authority (FETA) Bill

The Forth Replacement Crossing (FRC) is currently under construction to safeguard a vital connection in Scotland's transport network by ensuring a new crossing is in place by 2016 before any restrictions are necessary on the existing Forth Road Bridge (FRB). When the new crossing opens, the bridges will operate as a managed crossing strategy: the FRB will be retained as a dedicated corridor for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists and the FRC will carry all other traffic.

As part of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, primary legislation will be brought to the Scottish Parliament in 2012/13 to enable the most cost-effective and co-ordinated approach to the management and maintenance of the FRC and FRB.

In summer 2013, Transport Scotland will hold a competitive tender exercise to award a single bridge operating company the 'Forth Bridges Operating Company Contract' to manage and maintain the two bridges and approach roads. It is anticipated that a preferred bidder will be announced by the end of 2014 with the contract commencing in mid-2015.

At the point of the new contract commencing, the Forth Estuary Transport Authority (FETA) – the Joint Board that operates and maintains the existing Forth Road Bridge – will be dissolved. Its property and liabilities will be transferred to the Scottish Ministers and its land and assets will be made available to the Bridge Operating Company.

The Scottish Ministers will be responsible for the bridges and the roads over them, with the day-to-day operation and maintenance functions carried out by the bridge operating company. This will mirror the arrangements for Scotland's existing trunk road and motorway network.

The skills, knowledge and professionalism of FETA staff are greatly valued. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 will apply meaning that FETA staff will be transferred to the Bridge Operating Company appointed by Transport Scotland.

The Bill will not involve any form of construction or involve any physical change to the Forth Road Bridge or surrounding land. However, Transport Scotland recognises that members of the local community, businesses and bridge users may have some questions in relation to how the dissolution of FETA will affect them.

Transport Scotland therefore intend to hold a series of meetings with interested parties in October 2012 to discuss the background to why the decision has been taken to dissolve FETA and to provide assurance that the high standards to which the Forth Road Bridge is currently managed and maintained will be continued when a new Bridge Operating Company is appointed.

We would very much like to invite you to attend one of these meetings on 01 October, at the FRC Project Offices, King Malcolm Drive, Rosyth between 19:00 and 20:00. I would be grateful if you could confirm attendance by RSVP to **forthbridges@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk**.

If you are unable to attend, we would be happy to address any concerns that you have by correspondence.

In addition, please confirm using the email address above if you would like to receive email updates reporting on progress with the Bill and Forth Bridges Operating Company Contract.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



David Thomson
Transport Scotland