

Edinburgh Trams chairman abdicates the hot seat

David Mackay, Chairman of Transport Edinburgh, Lothian Buses and Edinburgh Trams has today made public his decision to step aside, with immediate effect, from his position as Chair of all three organisations. A report on filling the vacancies created by David's departure will be brought forward to Council later this month.

Over the last two years, David Mackay has overseen the appointment and realignment of the Edinburgh Trams organisation (including bringing in the very impressive Richard Jeffrey as Chief Executive), and, since January 2010, has overseen the development and the future of the highly successful Lothian Buses organisation. In addition, David Mackay has made a significant contribution towards the integration of public transport in Edinburgh.

Speaking today on his decision to stand down, David Mackay made the following statement:- "This project has been an enormously absorbing one and as such there was never going to be an entirely ideal time to step aside. In the past few months I have been keen to see a number of milestones set in place and this I have now done. I believe that for every Chair there comes an important juncture when the most powerful action you can take is to pass the controls to a successor and to then watch that organisation develop further under a new champion.

"The last few years have been stimulating and challenging and I believe that considerable progress has been made across many fronts and particularly, on Trams, where our imperative to protect the public purse has been notably successful.

"The time has now come when it is appropriate for me to move

on which should allow me to refocus my energies on to a better, and probably much overdue, calmer work/life balance.

“I would particularly like to pay tribute to the many colleagues and peers I have worked with and those at Edinburgh Trams in particular who have shown remarkable resilience and energy in the face of what has been at times, a very difficult and complex situation”.

Speaking on the announcement, the Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council, Councillor Jenny Dawe, said: “I am obviously disappointed to be losing the drive, commercial expertise and commitment which David brought to his chairmanship of Transport Edinburgh, Lothian Buses and **Tie**. However, I would like to express my sincere thanks to David and pay tribute to the pivotal role he has played on this enormously important project for the city. I was aware that we were unlikely to retain David until full project delivery and fully appreciate his reasons for standing down at this point.

“Urgent steps will be taken to ensure that we build upon the very substantial foundation that David Mackay has built.”

Tom Aitchison, Chief Executive of the Council said: “David has contributed greatly to the development and delivery of public transport in Edinburgh and has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the Edinburgh Tram Project and Lothian Buses through extremely challenging times. Over the last two years his leadership, determination and courage have been invaluable to the project through some extremely testing times.”

Councillor Gordon Mackenzie, Transport Leader for the City of Edinburgh Council, added: “David has been a critical figure in ensuring that we get best value for the public purse and has been a formidable chairman on our behalf throughout the negotiations with our contractors. There is never an ideal time for a Chairman of David’s calibre to step aside, but with the appointments of Richard Jeffrey and Ian Craig, I believe

that he leaves **Tie**, TEL and Lothian Buses in a much stronger place."

David Mackay who has a highly respected and distinguished career record for working in challenging environments leaves the business today.