

MINUTE

“A&B”

**Zetland Transport Partnership
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 18 August 2008 at 10am**

Present:

A S Wishart	A Black
I J Hawkins	C H J Miller
F A Robertson	S Taylor

Observer/Adviser:

S Laurenson, Chief Executive, Lerwick Port Authority
J G Simpson, Chairman, Development Committee
J L B Smith, Chairman, Sumburgh Airport Consultative Committee
J Dickson, General Manager, Ports and Harbours Operations

Also:

R S Henderson, Substitute

Apologies:

A Steven, VisitScotland
Dr A Black, HIE Shetland (for lateness)

In attendance (Officers):

M Craigie, Lead Officer
K Duerden, Transport Development Manager
E Perring, Transport Strategy Officer
L Saunders, Policy and Development Assistant
B Robb, Management Accountant, Finance
L Gair, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Mr A S Wishart, Chairperson of ZetTrans, presided.

The Chairperson advised Members that the Policy and Development Assistant would have to leave for another meeting, therefore, agenda item 3 would be heard first. Members agreed.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes

The note of the meeting held on 26 May 2008 was confirmed, on the motion of Mr F A Robertson, seconded by Mr A S Wishart, with the exception of the following:

Min Ref: 23/08 - The Chairperson drew attention to page 4 of 5, paragraph 3 and was given clarification that the figure stated in line 4 should have been £63m without optimism bias.

Members' Attendance at External Meetings

There was nothing to report.

26/08 Gender Equality Scheme – Annual Report

The Partnership noted a report by the Transport Development Manager (Appendix 1).

The Policy and Development Assistant introduced the report and, in response to a query from Mrs I J Hawkins, advised that it was hoped that more women and younger women would chose to stand for Council in the future, and assistance would be provided where possible eg. childcare.

Members commented on the work involved in preparing the document and the Policy and Development Assistant confirmed that it had been prepared from scratch as no template was available.

Dr S Taylor asked whether gender analysis on Committees had been considered, and Members were advised that the information could be provided at another time.

Mrs C H J Miller said that having read the document she was of the opinion that there were three key factors, namely attitudes, barriers and provision. She advised that education and giving women more opportunities was important, and that were ZetTrans to make provision for a more enhanced transport service, women could work when they wanted, where ever they wished.

Mr F A Robertson said that he perceived that young women of today had a distinct confidence and would be able to move into decision making roles, at a younger age.

The Chairperson thanked the Policy and Development Officer.

Mrs I J Hawkins moved that Members approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr A S Wishart seconded.

27/08 Lead Officer's Report

The Partnership considered a report by the Lead Officer (Appendix 2).

The Lead Officer gave an brief update on the items in the report.

Approval of the Shetland Transport Strategy

The Shetland Transport Strategy had been approved and was the blueprint for the next 10-15 years. The purpose of the strategy was to provide transport, to support and grow economies and to meet environmental responsibilities. Members were advised that the strategy had been approved by Ministers and Government Officers without comment.

The Chairperson acknowledged the amount of work involved in preparing the strategy including the work carried out by other bodies outside the SIC.

Mr J Dickson drew attention to the Scottish Government's letter and asked what was meant by the last sentence in paragraph 2. The Lead Officer advised that it was for ZetTrans and the Council to decide how the strategy would be delivered and the challenge would be to find more innovative ways to deliver the aims and objectives in a move creative manner.

Mr J G Simpson said that there were three Island Links studies, namely Bressay, Bluemull Sound and Whalsay, which would cost multi millions of pounds to implement. He said the links were undergoing the STAG process but queried where the money would come from to deliver them. He added that communities were having their hopes built up but that the links would cost big sums of money, and if it was not in place, it would be detrimental to the whole of Shetland. He said it was important to find funding and that every channel had to be explored.

The Lead Officer said that they would have to look beyond the internal resources to raise capital and revenue funding. He added that the Council currently had projects that exceeded their resources. The Lead Officer said that the matter would require informal discussion with Members on various concepts and then formal discussion would be required on how the Scottish Government and other funding sources would be approached.

The Chairperson said that Housing, Social Work and Infrastructure were all equally important to Shetland but that the Whalsay link was becoming a priority because of the deteriorating infrastructure.

During further discussions, Mr J Dickson said that funding was not a problem that was exclusive to the Council, and advised that the oil discovery industry were also looking for third party investment for the future.

Scottish Transport Conference 2008

The Lead Officer advised that ZetTrans would be sharing a stand with SWESTRANS, as there were similar connections with outside areas for tourism, and they would be able to demonstrate to the wider Scottish Communities what they both faced with regard to transport.

Response to Consultation for the Policy and Financial Review of Highlands and Islands Airports Limited

Mr J L B Smith advised that he had discussed the consultation with the SACC and said that it was a fair report. He said that the Government control provided a safety net but it was also restricted by its regulations.

Dr S Taylor said that there were areas on which a response could not be given and suggested that there needed to be more accessible information so that comment could be made. Mrs I J Hawkins agreed adding that the Partnership should make it their business to find out the information required to make comment. The Lead Officer said that he would strengthen that message further. Mr J L B Smith advised that there were regulatory matters that would not be accessible as this was commercially sensitive information and the detail would be argued as being financially sensitive under a freedom of information request.

The Chairperson said that where information was not provided ZetTrans would push the boundaries highlighting the points being made.

Members noted the report and approved the response to the consultation.

28/08

Implementation of Shetland Transport Strategy

The Partnership noted a report by the Transport Development Manager (Appendix 3).

The Transport Development Manager briefly introduced the report and drew attention to paragraph 2.12 and advised that the Tier 2 Ferry Consultation expressed concerns regarding the RET Pilot and a letter had been sent to Ministers from the Chairperson, on the matter.

Mrs I J Hawkins said that it was a comprehensive document and drew attention to paragraph 2.13. In response to a query, regarding the increase in fuel prices, the Transport Strategy Officer advised that there were different options now being appraised on the usage of ferries and buses, and that a STAG like approach was being used. She added that a report would be presented to the Infrastructure Committee on 7 October. The Transport Strategy Officer said that a new consultation had not been carried out as they were already in possession of a lot of information to assist with the future planning of services.

In response to Mrs Hawkins query at 2.10, the Transport Development Manager advised that the project team had been pressing for a response on the outcome of the Marco Polo Funding since early July. He said there was some urgency as the vessel owners were now looking at options on vessels.

The Transport Development Manager advised Mrs C H J Miller that the question of High Season prices being charged on Christmas fare had been taken to the Tier 2 meeting, however it was explained that the charges were part of the contract specification and required a government decision for it to be changed. Mrs Miller said that it was extremely discriminatory and the Transport Development Manager advised that the matter would have to be brought back to the next Tier 1 Forum when Northlink are present for discussion.

The Chairperson advised that at the last Forum meeting, through boarding card issue from Sumburgh had been raised as a problem, and the Transport Development Manager advised that this had been taken up with Loganair and Flybe who responded to advise that the equipment at Sumburgh would be upgraded by Flybe once they are in place at Sumburgh Airport.

In response to a query from Mr F A Robertson, the Lead Officer advised that the information received from Area Transport Forums would be reported to ZetTrans.

The Chairperson tabled a letter from the Fetlar Community Council which highlighted the need for a breakwater. He advised that a report would be presented to the Development Committee. Mr J G Simpson said it was important to build confidence back into the community.

Other matters raised by Members included the Skerries Pier, the need for a Scandinavian link and Mr Dickson advised that Fair Isle had requested a marker to assist boats at night, but indicated that the costs would be met within existing budgets. The Lead Officer provided an update on the tank test for North Voe, Whalsay, and advised that a proposal from the contractor would be ready in 2-3 weeks.

The Transport Strategy Officer provided a brief update on the Bluemull Sound STAG and advised that the report findings would be presented at the next ZetTrans meeting.

(Dr Black attended the meeting)

Key Performance Indicators

The Partnership considered a report by the Transport Strategy Officer (Appendix 4)

Mr F A Robertson moved the recommendations contained in the report, seconded by Mr A S Wishart.

Mrs I J Hawkins drew attention to page 27 – Access to Health, and advised that the Area Transport Forum for the Central Area had concerns with regard to access for Weisdale. Members discussed the need for better public transport links to Health Centres and as a starting point, the Chairperson suggested looking at trends and hoped there would be big improvements.

In response to a query from Mrs C H J Miller, the Lead Officer said that it was too early to provide figures on the effects of the rising fuel costs on usage of public transport, but he expected to be able to report through the year.

Dr S Taylor asked whether the Key Performance Indicators could be shared with Area Transport Forums. She said it would be interesting to hear from others and have discussions on what was not in the document. Dr Taylor said it could also assist Members to prioritise and get a consensus on what the priorities were. The Chairperson said that comparing statistics with reality was something that could be worked on.

The Transport Strategy Officer confirmed to Mr J Dickson that the weather related disruptions to sailings was taken out of the information, and the reported cancellations related to mechanical or other failures.

The meeting ended at 10.55am.

A S Wishart
CHAIRPERSON