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## **REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Head of Planning  
Infrastructure Services Department**

### **FLOODING AND COAST PROTECTION POLICY**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to raise awareness of the issues relating to Coast Protection and Flooding Grant provision within the Council.
- 1.2 The current Council policy, attached as appendix 1 to this report, outlines the Council's obligations under the Coast Protection Act 1949 as the Coast Protection Authority for Shetland.
- 1.3 The Council's Flooding and Coast Protection Policy allows the Planning Service to grant aid up to 80% of costs for projects which have a maximum estimated cost of £6,000
- 1.4 The matter was discussed at the Environment and Transport Forum on 18 April at which stakeholders asked that I prepare a report to the Infrastructure Committee outlining the works that are required to be undertaken at this time, the staffing issues, benefits of this approach and the possible future.
- 1.5 This report refers to the specific requirement for the creation of a new post as mentioned in a separate staffing report from the Head of Planning included in today's agenda.

#### **2. Link to Council Priorities**

- 2.1 Respecting Our Unique Landscape (Priority 7), Protecting Natural Resources (Priority 8) contained in the Corporate Improvement Plan 2004-2008 are key corporate objectives.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 In the summer of 2003 a survey of coastal protection around Shetland was undertaken. The intention of this initial audit was to establish the condition of the protection currently in place. The

majority of the sites surveyed were those developed under the Council's Coast Protection Grant Scheme. This has given us an indication of the condition of the coast protection works and a benchmark against which to measure change, but no technical assessment has been made of their effectiveness or of their current "design life".

- 3.2 The Planning Service has been continuing to issue grants for Coast Protection and Flood Prevention Schemes since the last report to Council in November 2003
- 3.3 The Scottish Executive is committed to helping local authorities increase protection for communities affected by flooding through investment in flood alleviation measures and flood defences. Grant assistance to local authorities is subject to proposed schemes satisfying technical, environmental and economic criteria. Confirmed flood prevention schemes and approved coast protection schemes are grant aided by the Executive at 80% of eligible costs; the balance is met by local authorities, usually from borrowing. Shetland Islands Council would have great difficulty in satisfying the necessary cost benefit analysis that is part of the Scottish Executive scheme.

#### **4 Concerns with the operation of the current scheme**

- 4.1 In my view, there are several difficulties in operating the present scheme; in particular::
- Increasingly, the works required adequately protecting properties cost far in excess of £6,000. There is, therefore, a problem regarding public expectation for grant assistance and the level of grant available. To make more finance available under the scheme would simply raise expectations higher. The overall burden on the SIC could prove onerous as time passes and more approaches are made seeking assistance;
  - On a day-to-day level, the present scheme is unable to cope with applications for assistance with larger projects. The policy does allow us to report to Council where the costs are in excess of the maximum grant available but the amount of money needed to implement one scheme is in excess of the total annual budget;
  - The current Grant Scheme isn't founded on a proper technical analysis of the problem, nor does it consider future requirements. The work that is undertaken is merely a "stop-gap".
  - It may be the case that the capital cost of the protection required to protect a property is in excess of the property value. Protection is often a short term measure when what is required is a long term approach to the issue;

- There is no cost benefit analysis of proposed schemes. No mechanism exists that can be applied across all approaches for assistance. The current policy has priorities for action but these are unrealistic in terms of the budget available;
  - The policy needs to be based on current knowledge and assumptions. In particular, the Council needs competent advice about climate change and its implications, especially in terms of sea level rise and increasing storminess. These considerations might lead the Council to consider the option of 'managed retreat' on the basis that coastal protection work undertaken now may have a limited useful life.
  - There is a lack of resources and expertise within the Planning Service to undertake the necessary work, leading to the routine employment of external consultants, thus reducing the amount of money available to carry out schemes.
  - There is an issue with regard to whether the Planning Service is the appropriate service within the Council to deal with this matter. There is a clear role for Planning in the development of land use planning policies, to ensure that proposed developments are located in areas where they will not be subject to flooding or erosion or indeed cause flooding to occur.
- 4.2 Given these issues, it is clear that a new policy, based on up-to-date information and assumptions, is required. Some of the background information is available. For example, my Service has produced Biennial Flood Reports that have included references to the perceived impacts of climate change on Shetland. The Forum held in the NAFC in March 2005 specifically addressed flooding, coastal protection and storms. These papers are available on the Planning Service web site at [www.shetland.gov.uk/developmentplans/OtherPolicyDocuments.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/developmentplans/OtherPolicyDocuments.asp)
- 4.3 It's also necessary to decide which Service should take responsibility for climate change, coast protection and flooding matters. Whichever Service that is, it should have ready access to expertise in civil engineering. There was a brief period when this was the case in the Planning Service and that arrangement worked well. However, there are other options, for example the Capital Projects Unit has expertise in relation to new construction and maintenance of Council works to established engineering standards.
- 4.4 The policy will need to indicate the priority to be given to flooding versus coast protection, bearing in mind that the prime responsibility for dealing with flooding rests with the owner of the affected property.

- 4.5 The policy will also need to encompass cost, socio-economic benefit, risk of future damage, return on investment and safety.
- 4.6 A responsible policy on climate change would not only need to consider its consequences but also propose ways in which we can reduce our contribution to its causes.
- 4.7 It will be obvious from the preceding paragraphs that there is a great deal of work to be done before we can confidently establish and operate new policies on climate change, coast protection and flooding. Following discussions at the Forum I propose that the way forward be a step by step process:
- Recruit an Engineer to carry out all the functions in this field.
  - Cease the operation of the Grant Scheme meantime. Should any cases of an emergency nature come forward before a new policy is in place, they can be reported to this Committee for Members' consideration.
  - Assess the reasonably foreseeable impacts of climate change on Shetland
  - Assess the condition of the existing infrastructure
  - Assess its functional life (a) given present conditions and (b) given the forecast impact of climate change
  - Assess what needs to be done to prolong the life of the infrastructure
  - Assess what areas need new protection
  - Develop a cost benefit analysis approach to assist in the decision making process
  - Develop a range of techniques that can be used to provide protection
  - Develop priorities for action
  - Develop a policy framework
  - Undertake the required Strategic Environmental Assessment of this policy
  - Calculate costs for the period of the design life of the infrastructure (including repair and maintenance and extension)
- 4.8 This approach would allow the Council to address the issues of coastal inundation and erosion in a coordinated manner with a long term vision. It may be that in the future we develop a rolling programme of work that will be undertaken within set resources.
- 4.9 The Council should not put itself in the position of taking over from property owners their responsibility to safeguard their property from flooding. The public should be made aware that they have that responsibility. It may be possible to undertake the development of a new grant scheme that assists in making properties more flood resilient. Among other duties, the engineer would be responsible for

advising property owners on what works they could undertake to adapt their property.

4.10 At the Forum there was reluctance for the Flooding and Coastal Protection Grants Scheme to cease but I have no option other than to recommend that we cease operation of the scheme until it can operate in a more informed manner.

4.11 The question remains as to where the function should be located within the Council. Members may be of the opinion that the whole topic should rest within a Service with a design or engineering function. We have considered recommending the creation of a new post within another Service as one option. We have also considered the commissioning of external consultants to undertake the tasks required, but discounted that option because this work needs a long term approach that does not lend itself well to consultancy working. I have come to the conclusion that it would be best to co-ordinate flooding and coast protection work with our other land use planning responsibilities and I think the best way to do that is by locating the new post of Engineer in the Planning Service. An additional benefit of doing so would be to provide some useful support for our Building Standards function.

4.12 There is a separate report on today's agenda which recommends the strengthening of the Planning Service's staff resources in order to enable it to meet the demands upon it. Full details of my proposals are included in that report. However, those present at the Environment and Transport Forum asked for information about the cost of employing an Engineer; including salary and employer costs; it is between £40,199 and £42,587, though that is subject to Interim Job Evaluation. There would also be recruitment costs. Given the need to undertake work quickly regarding the topic. I believe it would be sensible to seek a qualified engineer, as the sooner we clarify some of the uncertainties the sooner we will be in a position to plan a way forward based on a realistic assessment of the work needed and the costs involved.

4.13 The establishment of the post of Engineer would also allow us to begin to deal with the impacts of climate change and the ways in which we in Shetland can contribute to reducing its rate and scale. This is an issue that needs to be addressed across the Council, through the Corporate Plan, and it is part of the debate on sustainability. However, I would intend that my staff would contribute analysis and strategy on climate change to the corporate planning process.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 Two proposals in this report have direct financial implications. Firstly, the suspension of the grant scheme pending a proper analysis of work required would result in an underspend ( RCY

80812402 £30,865, RCY80811360 £8,320) until such time as it was either restarted or permanently ceased. However, this saving would only be a temporary measure. It would be possible to apply some or all of these resources to the creation of the post, but If the Grant Scheme were revived further finance would have to be found to fund the Grant Scheme or the post. Also, as discussed above, there will be instances where there is a need to grant assist applicants that comply with the existing policy until such a time as the new policy is in place.

- 5.2 Secondly, the proposal in this report that the Council should appoint an engineer to advise on flooding and coast protection matters would involve a cost of up to £42,587 (plus mileage, car user allowance and relocation; the latter could involve costs of up to £8,000).
- 5.3 Other financial implications would flow in due course from the adoption of a new policy. If the council is minded to retain its current approach the expectation will remain that the council will assist in all cases of erosion and inundation. As instances increase, so will the pressures on the Council to do something and the precedent set by undertaking one major project will make it extremely difficult to avoid the moral obligation or public expectation to undertake another and then another. Tackling this area of work in a professional manner will hopefully allow a rational application of resources.
- 5.4 At the Council meeting on 9 February 2006, the Council decided to work towards reducing expenditure on the General Fund. The financial implications of this report are in breach of that policy as it requires an increase on the draw on reserves.
- 5.5 As noted above in paragraph 5.4, the proposed recruitment of an engineer involving an additional draw on reserves is contrary to this policy and a decision is required by the Council.

## **6. Policy and Delegated Authority**

- 6.1 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act within its remit (Min Ref: 19/03 and 07/03). However, the recruitment of staff requires the approval of the council. No new policy is proposed at present; if a review of the kind suggested above results in a change of policy, it will need to be approved by the Council.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The Council faces a number of dilemmas in the implementation of its policies on flooding and coast protection and there is a need to examine the related question of our responses to climate change. This report suggests a staged approach to addressing these dilemmas.

**8. Recommendation**

8.1 I recommend that the Committee agrees:

8.1.1 that the staged process set out in paragraph 4.7 should be adopted as the way forward;

8.1.2 to recommend to the Employees' JCC and the Council that a new post of Engineer within the Planning Service be established, as proposed in paragraph 4.11, to take forward work on coast protection, flooding and related matters; and

8.1.3 to recommend to the Council that, within the corporate planning process, the Development Plans Service should lead work on climate change as proposed in paragraph 4.13.

8.1.4 to recommend an additional draw on reserves to cover the financial shortfall.

Report Number : PL12-06-F







## **FLOODING AND COAST PROTECTION POLICY**

### Coast protection powers

The Coast Protection Act 1949 (hereafter referred to as 'the Act of 1949') defines the Council as the Coast Protection Authority for Shetland. The Act of 1949 sets out the Authority's powers in relation to the protection of the coast. Coast protection work is defined in the Act of 1949 and "means any work of construction, alteration, improvement, repair, maintenance, demolition or removal for the purpose of the protection of any land, and includes the sowing or planting of vegetation for the said purpose". Works may consist of new projects or repairs or maintenance of existing works.

There is no requirement that coast protection work be carried out, but the Authority may:

- a) carry out such coast protection work as appears to be necessary or expedient for the protection of any land in its area;
- b) enter into agreement with others in relation to such work (which can be carried out by the Authority or by the other party and be on such terms as to payment as may be specified in the agreement);
- c) acquire land for, or associated with, such coast protection work;
- d) grant consent to coast protection works to be carried out by others (and contribute to the cost of such works if appropriate);
- e) require owners (etc.) to repair or maintain existing coast protection works (or repair them itself and recover the reasonable costs of such repairs);
- f) carry out work which appears to be urgently necessary for the protection of any land in its area; and
- g) prevent excavation of materials from the seashore.

### Notes

- For expenditure on coast protection projects to be eligible for government grant it has to be made by the Council.
- All works by the Council (other than repairs and maintenance or emergency works) require the approval of the First Minister.

- Small scale new works should continue to be carried out by bodies other than the Council by means of a grant from the Council.
- Urgent works can be eligible for government grant; repairs or maintenance of existing works are not.

## **COAST PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Planning Committee approved the following policy framework on 3 February 1995.

### **Priorities for action**

Coast Protection is a discretionary power; nevertheless, there will almost certainly be circumstances in which the Council feels obliged to act, either because its own assets are at risk or because of the particular case. There might also be circumstances where the Council had common law duties of care in respect of prevention of damage caused by erosion of land owned by the Council. The Council has to judge which cases warrant expenditure and the policy defines and prioritises land categories in order to assist in the process of evaluation.

### **Categories of land**

- 1 **Public Undertakings, Utilities and Assets** (usually owned by major commercial or public organisations, for example, airports; generating stations; public buildings; pumping stations; amenity footpaths; burial grounds);
- 2 **Permanently Occupied Private Dwelling Houses** (including access there-to);
- 3 **Commercial Undertakings** (for example, shops, factories and other sources of economic activity or employment generation);
- 4 **Designated Heritage Sites** (sites whose heritage importance has been recognised by a formal designation including, for example, Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest; Sites of Special Scientific Interest); and
- 5 **Other Land** (to include all other land which does not have a threatened building on it).

In respect of other land, each case should be assessed on its own merits but, generally, coast protection works would not normally be undertaken to property in this category.

(Coast protection work for the protection of public roads is carried out by the Council as roads authority with costs met from the Roads and Transport budget since the Council has a duty to maintain public roads under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984).

Coast protection works will generally be undertaken in accordance with Coast Protection Act 1949 procedures and Government grant should be sought where appropriate.

The First Minister may make grants towards any expenditure incurred by the Coast Protection Authority under the Act of 1949. Grant, at a rate of 80% for Shetland, is available provided the project is approved by the Scottish Executive (urgent works do not require to be approved before commencement). Grant is only available in respect of expenditure by the Council and not in respect of any expenditure or contributions made by other persons or bodies.

The Council's costs would be met from the Reserve Fund.

#### New coast protection works

The First Minister would be consulted in advance of formal notices being issued so that the Scottish Executive can have advance notice that an application for funding may be forthcoming and to reach agreement that the works are essential. Works would normally be carried out by the Council following voluntary agreement.

Each case would have an assessment on the basis set out below.

- A** A cost benefit assessment. The extent of this would depend on the scale of expenditure being considered but it should enable an evaluation of the costs and benefits, in cash terms, so that the Council can satisfy itself (and the Scottish Executive, where appropriate) that the project represents value for money;

and

**B Either**

- i) a formal Environmental Assessment for all major works or works which affect designated sites or landscapes;  
  
or, where the proposed project is of a modest scale,
- ii) an appraisal of engineering feasibility and environmental considerations to be generally undertaken by consultation.

(The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1988 set out the matters to be considered in an environmental assessment. The less detailed appraisals for minor projects would cover the same broad topics, but in somewhat less detail).

Such assessments place the Council in a much better position to determine whether works should proceed at all or should be modified at an earlier stage in their consideration.

The Council will consider seeking a contribution from persons with an interest in the property to be protected. The Scottish Executive expects the Council to seek such contributions from persons likely to benefit from proposed works. The following guidelines will be used:

- It is not appropriate to specify a contribution in respect of public and commercial assets and undertakings because of the diverse nature of assets to be protected and the likely variety of scale of works. The funding arrangements would need to be the subject of negotiations between the parties in each case.
- In the case of occupied private dwelling houses the contribution level will be 20% of the estimated cost of the project. The level of contribution is fixed at the time of the original project cost estimate; that contribution will not increase if the project cost subsequently increases but will decrease if the project is less costly than originally estimated. In any case the maximum contribution is £1,200 per house. Where there is more than one property affected the proportions of costs to be attributed to each are calculated in proportion to the benefit accruing to each.
- In the case of designated heritage sites, each case will be assessed on its own merits but, generally, a contribution will be sought from the body which designated the site, in addition to an appropriate contribution from the landowner.

Once it has been decided that coast protection works are appropriate and a scheme devised a notice of the intention to carry out the works has to be placed in a local newspaper (and The Edinburgh Gazette if the works are estimated to cost in excess of £500,000). A similar notice has to be served on persons or bodies with an interest in the land or likely to be affected by the work. (The list of bodies includes a range of statutory bodies, as well as the affected landowners). The notices must also state the cost of the works and that objections to the proposal must be made within 5 weeks of publication or service.

The scheme will be formally notified to the Scottish Executive and a funding request made when all objections have been resolved and any necessary consents granted. The Scottish Executive may, even then, decide that additional notifications are required. If objections are received to the proposals and not withdrawn the First Minister would give the objector, and other affected persons, the opportunity to be heard at an inquiry. The First Minister can approve the scheme, reject it or approve it with conditions.

The project could then be carried out following formal tender and contract letting procedures.

#### Existing coast protection works

Repair and maintenance of coast protection works is the responsibility of the landowner except where government grant was made available for their

construction. Accordingly, it is in landowners' best interests to insure any such works situated on their land.

The Council can carry out repairs and maintenance to existing coast protection works in the following circumstances:

- a) where the works were constructed by the Coast Protection Authority with government grant (no contribution is to be sought from the landowner in such cases);
- b) where the landowner has failed to carry out repairs or maintenance following the service of a notice by the Council requiring repairs or maintenance to be carried out (the Council would normally seek to recover the reasonable costs of carrying out such work); and
- c) where the Council is the landowner (the costs of such works are met from existing maintenance budgets).

#### Coast protection carried out by other bodies

Coast protection can be carried out by other bodies. The Council's permission as Coast Protection Authority is required. In addition, planning permission and a works licence under The Zetland County Council Act 1974, may also be required. When determining any such applications the Council also has a duty to request and consider an Environmental Assessment if required to do so by The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1988). An applicant may also require a licence from the Scottish Executive under the Food and Environment Protection Act.

The Council is empowered to assist with the cost of projects carried out by others. Any such expenditure is eligible for government grant only if the project receives Scottish Executive approval. However, there may be cases where it would be more efficient to proceed in this manner rather than for the Council to do the work itself. Alternatively, other bodies could carry out smaller scale projects without government grant being sought or we grant assist individuals to undertake the work to their property. In most cases it is this latter approach that is taken.

#### Emergency arrangements

Cases sometimes arise where work needs to be undertaken quickly because of imminent threats to property or public safety. The Council has powers, under S 5(6) of the Act of 1949 to undertake such works without the need to obtain the usual consents.

#### Agreements to undertake works

Persons to benefit from coast protection works (including urgent works) must normally enter into an agreement with the Council prior to the works being undertaken (although this may not be appropriate in the case of large or complex schemes). The agreement will include an undertaking from the affected property owner to the effect that (s)he will make a contribution to cost of the works, that

### **Coast Protection Grants Policy**

Approved 20 November 1996 Min ref 99/96; Council 179/96

This note sets out the Council's policy in respect of grants for small-scale coast protection schemes. All works must meet the following criteria to qualify:

- 1 The proposed works are to be considered within the framework of the Council's policy on coast protection (which was approved by Planning Committee on 3 February 1995) and offers of grant may be made provided that such an offer would be in accordance with the terms of that policy, subject to funds being available.
- 2 Coast protection grant under this scheme may be available for new works or maintenance of existing defences which are:
  - a) intended to protect permanently occupied private dwelling houses (including necessary accesses thereto); and
  - b) have a maximum estimated cost of £6,000, including VAT.
- 3 Grants offered under the scheme are to be for 80% of the cost of the works up to a maximum of £4,800;
- 4 The scheme is administered by the Executive Director of Infrastructure Services Department to whom authority to offer grants, subject to appropriate conditions, in accordance with the scheme and the Council's approved coast protection policy, has been delegated;
- 5 In cases where consent under S.16 of the Coast Protection Act 1949 is required an application for such consent shall be determined prior to any offer of grant being made; and
- 6 Authority to determine applications for consent under S.16 of the Coast Protection Act 1949 has been delegated to the Planning Committee, where they are for works which are in accordance with the Council's approved coast protection policies.

- 7 New works require formal consent of the Council as Coast Protection Authority and may also require planning permission. Other consents may be required.
- 8 All applications for grant should be in the form of a letter, enclosing a statement agreeing to the works signed by all affected landowners and tenants. It should be accompanied by a location plan; plans and specifications; and supported by two competitive estimates for the works.
- 9 All offers of grant are subject to standard conditions that have been drawn up in consultation with the Head of Finance Services and Legal Services Manager and any other, appropriate, conditions.
- 10 No specific sum is allocated to the grant scheme since this would have the effect of prioritising it above all other requests, regardless of their relative importance in terms of the established coast protection policy as a whole.

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## **REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Head of Planning**  
**Infrastructure Services Department**

## **PLANNING SERVICE RESOURCES**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report is in its third incarnation. A version of it was submitted to the Chief Executive in January 2006. He had asked for it to be prepared in the light of concerns about the ability of the Planning Service adequately to discharge its various responsibilities. A revised version was presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 8 May 2006. Scrutiny Committee members have also visited the Department. I should like to record my appreciation of the time they have taken to understand our position and their supportive comments; I know that staff share that sentiment.
- 1.2 The report recommends the creation of additional staff posts to support the Planning Service. Members are well aware of public concern about the planning process, particularly about delays either to applications or to projects. It must be said that, on investigation, some claims about delay have proved to be exaggerated, resulting from the failure of agents to submit necessary details. But there is no denying that, overall, our performance has been declining and is not as I would like it to be. Nor is it only a matter of performance in a regulatory sense. Planning Departments and the skills of the people they employ are – or should be – instruments for the creation of many different kinds of opportunity. We have a track record of doing so in the past, but an ever more demanding workload means that parts of the service are unable to capture these opportunities at present; if we are concerned with Shetland's future, we need to do better.
- 1.3 Planning is a challenging and often controversial function of local government. It makes exacting demands on both Councillors and staff. When we fail to meet the challenge, the consequences can be serious. On the other hand, the rewards of getting it right are significant, because if the planning system is properly resourced and operated creatively by skilled staff under visionary political

leadership, it is a powerful tool for regeneration and sustainable development. Before rehearsing the difficulties we need to overcome, let us remember that over recent years the work of the Planning Service has:

- won several awards or commendations for quality
- been quoted as an example of good practice in Scottish Executive publications
- made us one of the leading Scottish authorities in eplanning, with an online planning register regarded as 'leading edge'. The Structure Plan, the Local Plan and 'The Shetland House' are consistently among the most-viewed documents on the Council's website
- resulted in a Structure Plan being approved by the Scottish Executive more quickly than that of any other authority
- made a major contribution to regeneration right across Shetland through environmental improvement, access and heritage conservation projects.

1.4 The report explains the background to the present position and sets out proposals for change. In preparing it, I have borne in mind the wider changes to the planning system in Scotland contained in the Scottish Executive's White Paper entitled Modernising the Planning System. However, the report's proposals do not take account of the impact of the White paper proposals, since the final form of the legislation will not be known until the latter part of 2006. Rather, the proposals are intended to address the problems that we are already experiencing. In doing so, it also takes account of information published by the Scottish Executive that provides some indication of the resources required to operate a Planning Service.

1.5 I have borne in mind the comments made at the Scrutiny Committee. Among other points made, contributors to the discussion observed that:

- a Service involved in regulatory activities, however essential they may be, is unlikely to attract the same level of sympathy or support in terms of funding and staffing as other Services that are involved in, for example, caring for vulnerable people
- notwithstanding that, the success of the Shetland economy and of efforts to meet (among other things) housing need depends on a Planning Service that provides clear direction through its plans and deals with applications for planning permission and building warrant with reasonable speed

For my part, I believe it is important that, in a Council that prides itself on providing an excellent level of service generally, it is important that all areas of our service are provided to a good standard. At the moment, in relation to Planning, we simply cannot cope with the statutory duties placed upon us, let alone capture many of the opportunities that skilled planning staff are well-placed

to pursue. In a nutshell, the choice is between a Service that is properly equipped to deal with its responsibilities and one that is demonstrably unable to meet basic public expectations.

- 1.6 I have re-examined my earlier proposals in the light of the discussions that have taken place since January. I have also had to take account of changes within the Service during that period.

## **2 Links to Council Priorities**

- 2.1 A satisfactory planning system is an essential tool in helping the Council achieve its four main priorities, namely:

- Sustainable development
- Benefiting people and communities
- Looking after where we live
- Celebrating Shetland's cultural identity

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 The immediate stimulus for this report was the inability of the Planning Service to meet several of its key targets and perform some of the duties laid down in legislation. On 27 October 2005, we outlined the difficulties we were facing in our presentation to Members of our first six-month service performance review. We explained that we would need to look again at ways of managing our activities better in order (for example) to improve the quality of incoming planning applications, free professional staff from administrative duties and find ways of getting outside organisations to help with some core work that we simply don't have the resources to undertake. However, we also had to explain to Members that we had already tried all of these approaches and despite those efforts, we still faced a decline in our performance. During the discussion, Members expressed the view, with some force, that we seemed to be struggling with an increasingly complex workload in the face of limited resources.

- 3.2 Although the structure, management arrangements and even the name of the Planning Service have changed over recent years, it is nearly 9 years since there was detailed consideration of the remit of the Service and the staff resources required to discharge that remit. In that time, there have been many organisational and legislative changes, indeed many aspects of the whole local government landscape have altered. For example:

- Core Planning legislation has expanded so that we now have not one but four principal Acts (with a Bill to amend one of these currently before Parliament), as well as several completely new pieces of legislation including a whole new layer of environmental regulation which has to be implemented through the planning system. We must now subject all planning-related policies to

Strategic Environmental Assessment and it is the Scottish Parliament's intention that all Council policies will be scrutinised in that way in early course;

- The new building standards legislation makes new and greater demands on staff and their skills; there are more regulatory changes to come in that area next year;
- There is an increased public awareness of the planning and building standards systems and of environmental issues. At the same time, people are much more knowledgeable about their rights and the means of getting involved. This is partly due to our own efforts, because we believe strongly in encouraging participation;
- There is new pressure resulting from approaches such as Best Value, Community Planning and greatly strengthened internal and external auditing requirements, all of which have made substantial and continuing demands on staff. In a number of respects, these processes have improved our approach, and we naturally welcome that. But it needs to be recognised that they do absorb significant amounts of the time available to Service Managers and Heads of Service.

3.3 Changes of these kinds will continue into the future and will present us with new challenges. In the immediate future, we face a comprehensive review of the planning system that will result in major revision of our working practices and responsibilities. To mention just two examples, it is clear from the Bill now passing through Parliament that:

- There will be much more pressure to keep plans up to date, with the likelihood that sanctions in some form will be applied to Councils that fail to perform. Financial penalties or central intervention in plan preparation are possibilities
- The responsibility for notifying neighbours of planning applications is proposed to transfer from the applicant to the Planning Service. There may be various mechanisms for doing this; most of the likely options will involve us in significant extra work.

3.4 The government has recognised that the measures in the Bill will increase the costs falling on local planning authorities. The latest estimate is that the total increase in costs across Scotland as a whole will amount to at least £9m. If that increase were equally divided between all authorities, it would amount to about £261,000 per authority. Another way of looking at this is to work on the basis that Shetland handles approximately 0.69% of all Scottish applications, so the cost likely to fall on Shetland might be assessed as about £61,000.

3.5 Meanwhile, important changes are occurring in building standards and a new auditing process involving the Scottish Building Standards Agency (SBSA) is being introduced, which will affect

working practices and responsibilities. For example, the Building Standards Service has taken on the role of Verifier; this affects the processes involved in issuing warrants and completion certificates and will be audited by SBSA.

#### **4 Pressures and the Opportunities for Change**

- 4.1 In this part of the report, I set out in brief the major functions of each of the four sections that make up the Planning Service, explain the challenges they face and outline how they might better meet those challenges.

##### *The Building Standards Service*

- 4.2 The Building Standards Service exists principally to ensure public safety through applying the relevant regulations to building operations and administering various licensing functions. It also ensures that buildings perform adequately in other important ways, for example in terms of energy conservation and access for people with impaired mobility. Much of the workload of the Service is based on the processing of applications for Building Warrant, which run at between 400 and 500 per annum; there were 436 in 2005/06. It also processes applications for completion certificates, of which there were 216 in the same period. Property enquiries form another significant part of the workload, with 139 recorded last year. Licensing work involves theatres, raised structures and consultation on houses in multiple occupation.
- 4.3 The Building Standards legislation is entirely separate from town and country planning legislation, but in the majority of local authorities the Building Standards function is located in the Planning Department. This is because there are sound practical reasons for doing so. It is convenient for the public, who often need both planning permission and a building warrant, and it makes sense too in terms of the exchange of information about the progress of projects and in organising enforcement. I am in no doubt that it makes sense to retain the present arrangement.
- 4.4 The staffing structure at present consists of:
- 1 Building Standards Manager
  - 1 (Part Time) Building Standards Surveyor
  - 3 (Full Time) Surveyors
  - 1 (Full Time) Administrative support Clerical Assistant
- It should be noted that of these staff, only the Manager and the Part-Time Building Standards Surveyor are fully qualified.
- 4.5 The Building Standards Service is in the middle of a period of radical change. The core legislation itself has recently changed, with the

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result that the Service now has considerably more discretion in the way it ensures that the requirements of the Act are met. This is in some respects more demanding, with the implication that more time will be spent on negotiation. However, there are also changes in the way the Service is expected to be managed. In particular, the Service is to be audited against a series of 5 key areas of business to investigate and evaluate performance:

Public Interest	Private Customer	Internal Business	Continuous Improvement	Finance
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A new system of performance management is being set up under the auspices of the Scottish Building Standards Agency. This new regime will audit the Council's performance as a Verifier and if we failed to achieve a satisfactory standard the SBSA would take over the verification role, including the fees associated with the verification process. There is more change to come, with a new set of Building Standards due in 2007.

- 4.6 It is well known that the Building Standards Service has faced extreme difficulties over the past three to four years. A whole range of measures had to be adopted in order to maintain the service, including use of agency staff, use of external consultants, restrictions on the times during which members of the public could make appointments; and so on. An additional post was created two years ago, in effect restoring the staffing level to that which had applied in previous years. However, that post did no more than rescue the service from complete collapse; significant overtime working has been required to provide a basic level of service. The reinstated post certainly did not allow for the most recent changes in management and auditing of the Service, which make particular demands on the Service Manager and reduce the amount of time he can devote to processing applications. Indeed, the expectation is that he will audit the work of his surveyors, rather than undertake any processing of applications himself. Whilst this is right and proper, the Service Manager has, in the past, carried a substantial part of the day-to-day workload and this continues. The position has been aggravated by our inability to recruit a suitably-qualified person to one of the senior posts. There is some overtime working – though that is no real solution - and we are once again using an external agency based in Scotland to undertake plan-checking; this is not without its difficulties, but it is the best arrangement we can come up with in the short term.
- 4.7 We are presently unable to offer a satisfactory service to contractors and the wider public; in particular, we are unable to meet their expectations in terms of site visits.

Table 1: Building Standards Service Performance 2003-2006

	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual
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Indicator	2003-2004	2004-2005	2004-2005	2005-2006
1. Percentage of applications for a building warrant responded to within 15 days	42%	80%	30.4%	10.5%
2. Average time taken to respond to an application for a completion certificate	5 days	10 days	7 days	3.56 days
3. Percentage of building warrants issued (or otherwise determined) within 6 days of receiving the requested information	88%	80%	67.9%	73.2%
4. Percentage of completion certificates issued (or otherwise determined) within 3 days of receiving the requested information	98%	80%	92.8%	94.5%

- 4.8 The table above shows the performance of the Building Standards Service against the applicable statutory indicators. Whilst there is evidence of some recent improvement in the second and third indicators, performance on the first indicator has shown a marked decline to a level that is clearly unacceptable. However, even in our best recent year (2003-04) when we had no lengthy periods with vacant posts, we managed to respond to only 42% of applications within 15 days against a target of 80%. It's that statistic, as much as anything else, that convinces me that the establishment is simply not at the level it needs to be.
- 4.9 Such improvement as is evident has been achieved only with overtime working. Furthermore, these figures take no real account of the impact of the changes I have outlined above, so performance in future is likely to decline once again.
- 4.10 Over recent years, the pressures on the Building Control Service have been such that we have explored every possible avenue in an effort to make the Service achieve more with limited resources. For example, we strengthened administrative support. There are always options to be considered; however, it is obvious from what I've said above that the problem is not a short-term one. Nor have our experiences of drafting in external consultants been wholly satisfactory, indeed that approach has at times led to a considerable amount of unhappiness among our customers. I know that the staff are dedicated and hard-working; without going into inappropriate detail, I can also say that there has from time to time been unequivocal evidence of stress. I can draw no other conclusion than that the choice in the Building Control Service is therefore a straightforward one: either increase staff resources or accept a level of performance that will continue to frustrate customers, Councillors and staff. I am in absolutely no doubt that an additional, full-time member of staff is required.

*The Conservation Service*

- 4.11 The role of the Conservation Service is to lead work concerned with Shetland's environment and heritage. It performs the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities in respect of Conservation Areas

and Listed Buildings, which include the management of the Conservation Grants programme. It is also responsible for the work associated with various natural heritage projects. Other staff are engaged on work related to energy, which includes managing the Council's energy contracts and dealing with fuel poverty. One member of staff is responsible for all the work relating to KIMO and related environmental projects. The Service also hosts the Fishing for Litter Scotland Project, though that is separately funded and staffed.

4.12 The staffing structure at present consists of:

- 1 Conservation Manager
- 1 Conservation Officer
- 1 Energy Manager
- 1 Energy Assistant
- 1 Environmental Liaison Officer

4.13 I have two concerns about the Conservation Service, one general and one specific. The general one is that, by virtue of limited resources, it is - in its planning-related work - unable to operate in any more than a 'backroom' role at present. The Service perforce devotes most of its time to providing specialist advice to others, mainly the public, other parts of the Planning Service and other departments of the Council. A significant amount of time is spent on providing guidance to the owners of the 300-odd Listed Buildings and the owners of the considerably larger number of properties in Conservation Areas. There are also necessary links with Government agencies, particularly Historic Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage. Essential though all of this is, the workload leaves very limited scope for work of a more obviously creative nature that would bring wider benefit to Shetland. This is a shame, because the Council's stated priorities to do with looking after where we live and pursuing sustainable development are absolutely central to the role of the Conservation Service. There are significant economic benefits in conservation; it contributes to the 'pride of place' and confidence that we seek to promote and if it's well-done, it will enhance our reputation, most obviously among visitors. It is true that the Shetland Amenity Trust and others do hugely valuable work in this area, but my instinct is that the Council as an organisation needs to show more initiative and clearer leadership in this area.

4.14 The second area of concern is more specific. One project on which it has been possible to make some progress – albeit at a frustratingly slow rate – is Living Shetland, otherwise known as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). The LBAP is the principal means by which the Council and the community can influence nature conservation, a field that has otherwise been largely in the hands of national government (particularly Scottish Natural Heritage) or voluntary bodies. The LBAP is also the principal means by which the community's aspirations can be translated into service priorities



and actions that will enable the whole Council to meet its statutory obligation to further the conservation of biodiversity. Thanks to successful partnership working and the attraction of external funding, 29 local biodiversity plans have been prepared over the past five years. The agricultural LBAP has been used in targeting Agricultural Support Grants and it has attracted £400,000 in funding to increase the biodiversity of in-by land in Shetland, including £309,000 in direct payment to crofters and farmers. There are also important links to the Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS) and Land Management Contracts, which are replacing ESA agreements and payments. Not surprisingly, the LBAPs have been very well received and there is now a considerable demand to undertake many more community biodiversity action plans. But the partnership funding has ended and there is no possibility of continuing the work – or indeed following through the actions already agreed – unless the project is put on a sound footing.

- 4.15 There was perhaps a time when this work might have been regarded as worthy but optional. However, matters have moved on. The Scottish Executive has recently published a consultation document on the Scottish Rural Development Programme 2007-13. This document proposes three themes in its approach to rural development, namely:

- Underpinning performance and quality in the agricultural, food processing and forestry sectors
- Enhancing rural landscapes and the natural heritage
- Promoting a more diverse rural economy and thriving rural communities

- 4.16 These themes correspond with three 'axes', as they are known, in the new European Rural Development Regulation (1698/2005) and there is a fourth 'axis' which is concerned with promoting a locally-driven approach to innovation and development linked to local partnerships. This last 'axis' is the means by which LEADER funding is to be allocated.

- 4.17 Without going into excessive detail, these 'axes' are further broken down into 42 'measures' and these measures include:

- Encouragement of tourism activities (number 32)
- Village renewal and development (number 34)
- Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage (number 35)
- Implementing local development strategies with a view to achieving the objectives of one or more of the three other axes (number 38)

- 4.18 The measures also include several that relate to the 'sustainable use of agricultural land', including payments to farmers in areas with handicaps, Natura 2000 payments and agri-environment payments.

4.19 It is important to note that Land Management Contracts will be, in the Scottish Executive's terms, 'the principal gateway to support for land management, business development, diversification and wider rural development measures'. These Contracts have a number of objectives, which include:

- To support the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, through measures which halt and reverse loss and deterioration, and to promote the long-term stability and resilience of Scotland's biological environment, including its capacity to regenerate and adapt.
- To increase people's quality of life through confident participation in and enjoyment of responsible outdoor access in a welcoming countryside.
- To safeguard and enhance the distinct identity, the diverse character and special qualities of Scotland's landscapes
- The distinct cultural and historic identity of each area, as represented by its significant sites, monuments and rural buildings ("heritage assets") is recognised, valued and safeguarded.

4.20 As I trust will be very obvious, these objectives are very much part of the 'core business' of the Planning Service. We can and do contribute to their achievement through our Development Management, Development Planning and Conservation activities. The success with which we do these things will clearly influence our ability as a community to maximise the benefits arising from the new rural development framework.

4.21 As far as the Conservation Service is concerned, the area to which I think we must urgently direct resources is biodiversity. It is one of the key objectives of this framework, but we are simply not equipped at present to do the necessary work. We have spent a significant amount of time over the last couple of years trying to assemble a workable funding package to enable the good work done earlier to continue, but although we have had an offer of support from Scottish Natural Heritage we have not managed to come up with a complete package. I believe the time has come to take this matter in hand and make a clear Council commitment to supporting it, because if we don't I believe our whole approach to rural development will be put at risk. If we do manage to attract external funding, well and good, but we need to regard that as a bonus rather than a trigger.

4.19 I believe that the establishment of one additional post of Natural Heritage Officer would be sufficient to address the difficulty; that is my second proposal. The person recruited would need the skills required to undertake the natural heritage role and to do so with a degree of authority and experience. The ideal candidate might well be qualified in more than one area of work (for example, ecology and planning, or agriculture and landscape architecture) and it would be a bonus if we could recruit someone who could make a contribution

to other activities of the Conservation Service or the Planning Service as a whole.

- 4.20 There is a potential link here with the proposal to establish a study centre in Unst. The natural heritage is intended to be one of the areas in which the study centre will specialise. It may be appropriate to base the Natural Heritage Officer in Unst. Apart from providing evidence of the Council's support for the study centre proposal, and for Unst in that island's present very difficult circumstances, this would be a first step in the direction of decentralisation of services. It might be possible to base the postholder in the Unst Heritage Centre (alongside the North Isles Ranger) in the meantime.
- 4.21 As noted above, we may be able to obtain some contribution to this work from Scottish Natural Heritage. However, I have also recently had further discussions with colleagues in the Economic Development Unit, who share my view that taking this work forward ought to be a priority for the community as a whole as well as for those who have particular interests in agriculture and natural heritage. Indeed the LBAP process is one of those community-based activities of which we can be genuinely proud. Arising out of those discussions, it appears that there may be scope to take this area of work forward under the new LEADER scheme, which is integral to the Scottish Rural development programme 2007-2013 described above. SEERAD is the lead agent in Scotland and are currently out with a consultation document on how the scheme will be delivered. They are obliged to retain delivery mechanisms similar to those which currently exist and as a result there is an opportunity for the Council, in consultation with SEERAD and the other public sector partners, to promote the LBAP process as the best method for our area. This needs to be developed quickly before any attempt is made to impose a standard system across the whole of Scotland. The focus of the post I am proposing might need to be adjusted a little, but the essentials are so well aligned with the new LEADER arrangements that it looks to me, and to my Development colleagues, like an opportunity waiting to be grasped. We're in no doubt that it would bring real benefit to the whole community. My suggestion is that we make provision for the new post and go on jointly to explore how we can make it work most effectively to Shetland's advantage. Dependent on the outcome of these discussions, it may be appropriate to recruit to the post on a temporary basis in order to allow an opportunity to evaluate the arrangements.
- 4.22 My third proposal is that we should change the name of the Conservation Service. In line with my view that it needs to be more concerned with the active promotion of Shetland's natural and built heritage, not just the statutory tasks usually termed conservation, I propose that it be re-titled the Heritage Service.

- 4.23 'Development Management' is the term now preferred by the Scottish Executive for what used to be known as Planning Control. The new title reflects the Executive's wish that this part of the planning system should actively promote high-quality development rather than being regarded (albeit often mistakenly) as a brake.
- 4.24 The Service's principal statutory function is the handling of the many and varied kinds of application for consents under the Town and Country Planning Acts. The process usually begins with the submission of some kind of pre-application enquiry, either oral or written. This informal approach is something that we encourage in order to allow us to give guidance to the public on the content of the proposal and the correct procedures. In theory, this approach should improve the quality of the submitted application and speed up the decision-making process to the benefit of customers and stakeholders. The submission of an application triggers a process of consultation and assessment, including site visits and discussions with applicants, objectors and anyone else with an interest in the proposal. Once all the necessary information is to hand and negotiations are completed, a report is prepared. If the application is delegated to the Head of Planning, a decision can then be issued. Otherwise, the report goes to the Planning Sub-Committee. After a decision is made, there is often a further round of consultation and negotiation on information submitted to discharge planning conditions. Later – at least in an ideal world - there will be checks to ensure that the development complies with the conditions on the consent, though in practice resources allow very little of this. However, complaints about unauthorised development are investigated and action is taken as appropriate. The Service also deals with many general enquiries from members of the public and other Council departments and responds to solicitors' property enquiries. It provides essential information to the Development Plans Service in relation to the monitoring of development and the development of policy.
- 4.25 There is no question that the demands made on the Development Management Service have increased in recent years. Although the number of applications has varied a little over the years, their complexity has tended to increase and the requirements of the various regulations have also become more demanding. It should be noted that about 50% of applications are submitted by applicants who have not used a professional agent, a much higher percentage than in many parts of Scotland. Thus, the pre-application discussion – or even, perhaps, the submission of an application - may be the first contact that an applicant has ever had with the Service or with the planning system. The consequence of this, combined with the increasing complexity of procedures, is that we have had to devote more and more time to assisting the public by explaining the process and procedures; this, of course, means that we have less time to spend on processing the applications once submitted. The balance

between these two activities is a difficult one to strike. We have sought to place more emphasis than some authorities on pre-application advice, in the belief that it will lead to a higher standard of submitted application. We could spend less time giving advice and more time processing applications, but we think that that would represent a serious erosion of our customer service and a failure to meet reasonable customer demands. Despite our efforts, the standard of application still leaves scope for improvement; around half the planning applications received last year were incomplete in some respect. Needless to say, there is a significant amount of work involved in putting these things right.

- 4.26 In the past, we have provided significant guidance and advice on the Council's major civil engineering projects, including roads, bridges, the landfill site, etc at the initial feasibility stages of such proposals. However, our input must not compromise the Council's position as Planning Authority.
- 4.27 In the past two years, we have dealt with several particularly large or otherwise complicated projects, including the Distillery, the Sumburgh runway extension, the new Museum and Archives and the Foula electricity scheme, each of which absorbed substantial amounts of time and required creative solutions to complex problems. Given the pace of development in Shetland, there seems little likelihood that the rate of new projects will slacken. In the next two to three years we expect to be dealing with, among other things, the Anderson High School proposal and substantial housing developments. Last, but certainly not least, the Planning Service will need to handle a great deal of the work resulting from the proposal to create one of the largest wind farms in Europe, even though the Council will not be the final decision-maker. We know from experience – and from the scale of the Council's Capital Programme – that other major projects will come forward.

Table 2: Development Management Service Performance 2003-2005

Indicator	Actual 2003-2004	Target 2004-2005	Actual 2004-2005	Actual 2005-2006
Percentage of non-householder planning decisions issued within 2 months	59.1%	65% (local) 80% (stat.)	50.4%	36.8%
Percentage of householder planning decisions issued within 2 months	88.7%	90%	78%	71.7%

- 4.28 It is clear from these figures that there is a continuing decline in performance in the face of an increasingly complex operating regime. We are not unique in this: I hear similar concerns from colleagues elsewhere. The Ove Arup report indicates that, across Scotland, the number of applications 'in hand' (in other words, in a pile awaiting attention) at the end of 2003/04 had increased by 15.5% compared with twelve months previously. In Shetland, the figure was 28.6% and we were by no means the highest. West Dunbartonshire saw a 39% increase, Orkney a 40% increase and Moray a 47.4% increase.
- 4.29 Over the last few years, we have tried to redistribute as much work as we can from professional to administrative staff in order to free up professional time. We consider that we have now taken that process as far as it can reasonably go, and despite those efforts we have seen a continuing decline in our performance. We saw no prospect of effecting a significant improvement by such means with the present level of staff resources, which is why the Council agreed to enhance the Development Management team by one additional post. I am very grateful for that decision; the post has been advertised nationally and I shall be able to provide some indication of the response at today's meeting. .
- 4.30 The Ove Arup report notes that the average number of planning applications per case officer in the authorities for which they had full details was 143. The range was from 96 to 193. They concluded, partly based on experience from England, that a reasonable level of applications was 150 planning applications per case officer per annum. However, there is another factor in the Shetland workload which needs to be taken into account. Nationally, the split between the more complex non-householder applications and the generally simpler householder applications is 50:50. In Shetland it is 64:36. Therefore, we have a higher percentage of more complicated applications. Pending the filling of the newly-approved post, we have 2 case officers – one of them now part-time - and we also have a trainee who handles a small caseload alongside other duties. The Service Manager has recently taken on part of the caseload of the person who has gone part-time. Until the new post was approved, I would estimate that we have been staffed to deal with perhaps 325 applications per annum. Although figures have varied over the years, our average tends to be closer to 450; in 2005 we received 420 and in 2004 just over 500. Interestingly, I note from the Ove Arup report that the average fee per application in Scotland is £368, whereas in the year in which they collected their data the average fee in Shetland was 55% higher at £571. All of this confirms our view that our staff are having to handle significantly more applications per case officer than the Scottish average and that, on average, the Shetland workload is more demanding and complex than average.

4.31 The Development Plans Service is responsible for a wide range of work extending well beyond the preparation of statutory plans and policies. The main elements of the Service's remit include:

- Preparation and monitoring of the Structure Plan and Local Plan
- Interim policy development (e.g. on renewable energy)
- Supplementary planning guidance (e.g. The Shetland House)
- Regeneration and environmental improvement
- Flooding
- Coast protection
- Countryside access
- Public Rights of Way

The Development Plans Service also plays an important supporting role in relation to the Development Management function described above. Its staff provide policy advice on the more complex applications.

4.32 The Planning Bill lays even more emphasis than at present on the maintenance of an up-to-date Local Development Plan (which will be the new term for the combined Structure Plan and Local Plan). There are hints of penalties for Planning Authorities that do not fulfil that requirement, for example in terms of the imposition of national policy if the local one is out of date, or possibly the loss of resources. It took the Council a long time to migrate from a patchwork of Local Plans to a single Shetland-wide one and it is essential that we maintain the Local Development Plan as a live document. The Local Development Plan also needs to interpret government guidance and advice in a manner that is appropriate to Shetland's unique circumstances. It is a principal mechanism for identifying the aspirations of communities and, where appropriate, translating these into a form that will attract external funding.

4.33 The principal challenge for the Development Plans Service lies in keeping the Local Development Plan up-to-date and relevant. That must be the first priority in a plan-led system. Current staff resources do allow us to carry out that function, and directly related work such as supplementary guidance, both in terms of time and skills. However, there are issues regarding the monitoring and the review of plans, policies and strategies; at the moment, this work is not receiving the attention it should, as there are other pressing priorities. In the future this work will be a priority for the Service and will need to be undertaken at the expense of some current activities. Monitoring is important, as it is the means by which we identify trends and it provides the foundation for any case we may need to make, perhaps for external funding or special legislative treatment. However, the same cannot be said for all of the other functions that presently lie with the Service.

- 4.34 Although we have made excellent progress on work to do with countryside access, which traditionally rests with planning departments and is closely linked to the local planning process, this has been achieved through the use of a trainee member of staff who will, in the near future, qualify as a planner. I don't think that employing a fully-qualified planner in the role of an access officer is a particularly effective use of resources, when what is really needed in that role is someone who need not be professionally qualified but who does have excellent interpersonal skills, a satisfactory understanding of access legislation and (ideally) a background in agriculture. We remain the only council in Scotland without an access officer and it could be said that the new duties have been absorbed into the Service at the expense of other non statutory work. Our ability to carry out this task thus far has been, in part, a result of good working arrangements with the Shetland Ranger Service, agencies, communities and landowners. Some of the other functions of the Service rely heavily on the working arrangements with other Services and agencies; often these are informal arrangements.
- 4.35 It's clear from what I've said above about the Scottish Executive's proposals for rural development, and specifically Land Management Contracts, that access will feature prominently in the new framework. In a wider sense, it obviously makes a significant contribution to healthy lifestyles and to the development of tourism. Accordingly, I believe that the time has come to appoint an Access Officer.
- 4.36 The remaining area in which we are clearly not resourced – in terms of time or technical expertise – to discharge the Council's functions relates to coast protection and flooding. The background to this was explained by the Service Manager, Vic Hawthorne, at a recent Environment and Transport Forum. The main difficulty is the absence of engineering expertise within the Service. This results in inefficiencies in carrying out both of these Council functions. Although we are the point of contact for coast protection and flooding and are responsible for reporting to the Scottish Executive, developing policy and grant aid, we do not have the expertise in-house to manage the whole process and must rely on the support of engineers from other Services (mainly Roads) or the commissioning of external consultants. Despite the best efforts of all involved, this introduces significant delay and a degree of public confusion and frustration. This is a particular issue at those times when a rapid response is essential, which of course is when people are most concerned to receive help and advice. This raises obvious questions as to the most appropriate arrangements for managing these functions: experience suggests that we should locate them where they can operate in a unified manner. This means either placing the functions within a Service where the skills are available to manage the whole process, or providing engineering expertise within the Planning Service. The latter was in fact the position for a brief period and the arrangement worked very well.



- 4.37 The Development Plans Manager and I consider that the optimum arrangement for coast protection and flooding would place policy, administration, grant-aid and engineering advice in one place. Excluding the status quo on the basis that it isn't workable, there are two options.
- 4.38 Option 1 would involve retaining coast protection and flooding within the Planning Service. Someone with a sound civil engineering background would be recruited to undertake the appraisal and design of coast protection schemes and flood prevention work. This would include assessing applications for grant aid.
- 4.39 Option 2 would involve transferring all responsibility for flooding and coast protection out of the Planning Service, possibly to the Capital Projects section, Building Services or the Roads Service or Coastal Zone Management. However, it is not clear whether or not the workload could be readily absorbed in these areas.
- 4.40 The Service Manager, Development Plans and I have debated this question on several occasions. We did at one point feel that the flooding and coast protection responsibilities might best be transferred out of the Planning Service. However, having re-visited the matter, we are now of the view that there are advantages in leaving the function where it is. Our staff may not have the engineering skills required, but they do have valuable background knowledge and experience. There is also, of course, a direct link between planning policy, development management and issues to do with coast protection and flooding. Finally – and this is a point that has not been made previously – the presence of a civil engineer within the Service would provide useful support for Building Standards, where it is presently necessary to seek external advice on some technical matters, in particular in connection with engineering calculations. Accordingly, I am proposing that a post of Civil Engineer (Flooding and Coast Protection) be created.

*Scope for Redirection of Priorities and Staff*

- 4.41 I have carefully considered whether or not the existing staff resources of the Service could be redirected to reflect altered priorities, because this is a question that has been raised a number of times. I do not believe that there is any significant scope for altering priorities within the Building Standards Service or the Development Management Service. Both of these services are engaged in processing of applications and there is no identifiable extraneous work. There is, certainly, a choice to be made between prioritising advice to applicants and processing of applications; but the consequence of reducing the amount of time devoted to pre-application discussions would inevitably be a decline in the amount and quality of information submitted with applications, which of course makes it more difficult to process applications quickly and

efficiently. Nevertheless, we are at present in a position where we must consider the amount of advice we give to members of the public submitting their own applications.

- 4.42 I turn now to the Conservation Service. If we make the generous assumption that the Service Manager is able to devote half his time to non-management, senior level casework, it means that we have 1.5 FTE officers actually involved in providing all the planning-related advice within that unit. Given the workload, it is not surprising that they are able to tackle only the most basic statutory work and that there is little or no time to deal with many statutory requirements, let alone non-statutory ones. The effect, as I've indicated, is that they are at present unable to offer more than a 'back office' service to the rest of the Planning Service. In islands that rely to a substantial extent on environmental quality, I consider that this represents a missed opportunity. I believe there is a wide range of work that needs to be tackled to the community's advantage, but I do not see how this can be done within existing resources. In economic terms, the most obvious benefit would derive from the appointment of a Natural Heritage Officer, and there is no way that the time or the requisite skills can be found within the present Planning Service. I have proposed the creation of such a post above.
- 4.43 The Development Plans Service is also under increasing pressure. It is here that some of the main pressures arising from the new legislation will fall. In the short term, this team is going to have to cope with Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Planning Service, produce the Core Path Plan, monitor and review the implementation of Council land-use policies as well as continuing the work it is currently doing. The Council has a new set of responsibilities across all its functions which stem from the new regulations on Strategic Environmental Assessment. It remains to be seen how this will be addressed, but I should be very surprised if the skills of Development Plans staff are not in demand in that respect. In terms of assisting with the pressures currently faced by Development Management, I believe the Development Plans Service is already making a substantial contribution. I think that in order to cope properly with its functions, the Development Plans Service needs to be expanded to include the two additional posts mentioned above, namely an Access Officer and a Civil Engineer (Flooding and Coast Protection).
- 4.44 Any Planning Service requires a mix of professional skills if it is to discharge its very wide range of responsibilities. Even with the addition of the posts proposed in this report, we shall not automatically gain all of the skills we need. In particular, design skills are important in most areas of our work. Some local architects have consistently argued that it would be beneficial to have qualified design staff in the Department and point to the success of *The Shetland House*, which was prepared at a time when we happened to have a member of staff who was qualified both as a planner and

an architect. I have a great deal of sympathy with this argument. It may be that we shall be able to recruit someone with appropriate skills during the present recruitment exercise. If not, I shall consider what further action to recommend.

## 5 Summary of Proposals

- 5.1 I have set out in this report the options that exist in terms of putting the Planning Service on a sound footing. Progress has already been made insofar as approval has been given to appoint an additional member of staff in Development Management. In no respect do I believe my remaining proposals to be extravagant; if they are accepted, the Planning Service will still account for a very small part of the Council's expenditure and staffing. I believe the record demonstrates that in a number of respects our present performance is not acceptable and I simply wish to ensure that the Planning Service is capable of meeting the reasonable expectations of the public, discharging its statutory functions in a proper manner and making the greatest contribution it can to Shetland's sustainable development.
- 5.2 In tabular form, the proposals for the strengthening of the Planning Service are as follows:

Section	Post Title	Grade	FTE	Full Year Cost £
Building Standards	Building Standards Officer	PO5-8	1.0	43,000
Conservation Service	Natural Heritage Officer	PO5-8	1.0	43,000
Development Plans Service	Civil Engineer (Flooding & Coast Protection)	PO5-8	1.0	43,000
Development Plans Service	Access Officer	AP4	1.0	30,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>159,000</b>
<b>Offset by:</b>				
External Funding (estimate: unlikely to be permanent)				40,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>119,000</b>

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The new posts and the full-year costs associated with them are outlined in the table in the preceding paragraph. It will be seen that the gross cost is £159,000. It is very likely that two posts, that of Natural Heritage Officer and Access Officer, will attract external funding; however, it is very difficult to predict the precise extent of such funding. One of these posts might well receive significant support under LEADER and both of them might be eligible for assistance from Scottish Natural Heritage. We shall do our very best to attract external funding in order to reduce the Council's costs, but I do not recommend that creation of these posts be made conditional on such funding. As well as salary costs, there will clearly be one-off recruitment and relocation costs, which could be up to £30,000, but that sum may be reduced by external assistance in respect of two of the posts, which we would certainly seek to secure.
- 6.2 These costs would require an additional draw on reserves, contrary to Council policy. In the current financial year, assuming that recruitment proceeds and that postholders are employed for five months, the gross costs (before any external assistance) would amount to approximately £96,250.

## **7 Policy and Delegated Authority**

- 7.1 Planning matters stand referred to the Infrastructure Committee. However, amendments to the staffing establishment are not delegated to this Committee, so the Committee's conclusions would form a recommendation to the full Council following consideration by the Employees' JCC.

## **8 Conclusions**

- 8.1 I am greatly heartened – and so are all my staff – that the Council has already agreed to the establishment of a new Development Management post. I am confident that it will make a real difference. In some other respects, though, we remain unable to offer a reasonable standard of service. We are chronically short-staffed in Building Standards, underlined by the fact that we have never, at least in the recent past, managed to do much better than hit half the target figure for processing applications, even when the establishment was complete. This is deeply frustrating for us but more important can only slow down the pace of development. In relation to work in the heritage area, we have a significant opportunity that I think must be grasped in the community's interests. I also believe that we can only properly fulfil our roles in access, coast protection and flooding if those services are properly resourced.
- 8.2 It's because of the challenges we face that I have proposed that, in addition to the new Development Management post already authorised:

- a) Building Standards should be expanded by one additional fully-qualified officer; the likely salary scale is PO5-8
  - b) A Natural Heritage Officer should be appointed, possibly based in Unst and very probably closely linked to the new LEADER framework; the likely salary scale is PO5-8
  - c) The flooding and coast protection function should be retained within the Planning Service and supported by the creation of a new post of Civil Engineer, who would also contribute to work in Building Standards; the likely salary scale is PO5-8
  - d) An Access Officer should be appointed; the likely salary scale is AP4
- 8.3 It should be noted that these gradings are estimates and would require to be submitted for consideration by the Interim Job Evaluation Panel. The costs are set out in the preceding sections of the report.

## **9 Recommendations**

- 8.1 I recommend that the Infrastructure Committee recommends to the Council that:
- a. the proposals made in paragraph 8.2 above are adopted; and
  - b. the necessary virement from reserves is approved in respect of the part year estimated cost of £96,250.
  - c. It be noted that the Head of Planning will make every effort to reduce the demands on Council reserves by vigorously pursuing opportunities to secure any available grant aid for eligible posts.

Report Number : PL-13-06-F





## **Shetland Islands Council**

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### **REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Acting Head of Transport  
Infrastructure Services Department**

### **TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the request for Transfer of Functions from Shetland Islands Council to the Shetland Transport Partnership, as required under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 1.2 A draft transfer order was approved by Shetland Transport Partnership on the 24 March 2006 and submitted to the Scottish Executive for consideration. However due to some technical issues the wording of the transfer order has been changed.
- 1.3 The rewording however does not change the functions that have already been proposed for transfer.
- 1.4 Shetland Islands Council is a statutory consultee to the transfer order.

#### **2. Link to Council Priorities**

- 2.1 This report meets the objectives of the corporate plan by contributing to the aim of sustainability and easy to use systems for transporting freight and people.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 A condition of approval being given for a single authority Regional Transport Partnership (RTP) being established for Shetland was that significant public transport powers would be transferred to the new body. This report details these functions proposed to be transferred.

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- 3.2 It will be necessary for the Scottish Ministers to lay an Order before the Scottish Parliament detailing those functions which are to be transferred to the Shetland Transport Partnership.
- 3.3 Discussions have been on going with the Scottish Executive on the content and timetable for the transfer and it is proposed that October 2006 (as shown on the table below) would be an appropriate target date of transfer given the consultation period required.
- 3.4 Given the timetable scheduling the consultation period is from the 9 June 2006 to 16 June 2006. As Shetland Islands Council is a statutory consultee it is necessary for the Council to respond to the consultation on the draft Transfer Order, attached as an appendix, by the 16 June 2006.

TASK	LENGTH OF TIME	APPROXIMATE END DATE
Drafting of Schedules by RTPs	3 weeks	19 May
Clearance by OSSE and Executive	1 week	26 May
Consultation	2 weeks	09 June
Final changes to Order	3 days	13 June
Styling of Order	1 week	19 June
<b>Lay Order</b>	1 day	20 June
<b>Parliamentary Process</b>	40 days	
<i>Order lying before Recess</i>	10 days	
<i>Order lying after Recess</i>	30 days	
Put Order to SLC		
Put Order to LG&T Committee		
Get Order approved by Parliament	2 days	
Get Order signed by Minister	1 day	
Order comes into effect		Aim for the end of first week in October

#### 4. Transfer Order

- 4.1 The draft Transfer of Functions Order is appended to this report.
- 4.2 The only functions which are recommended to be fully transferred, initially, relate to the procurement and delivery of socially necessary local bus services as listed below:
- Formulation, consultation and publishing of policies;
  - Promotion of passenger transport services;
  - Procurement, management and administration of service subsidy agreements;



- Management and administration of concessionary travel schemes;
- Quality Partnership Schemes;
- Quality Contract Schemes;
- Ticketing Schemes; and
- Provision of Information.

4.3 Functions recommended for concurrent transfer are as listed in Scheduled 2 of the draft Order. In practice, these matters would be for mutual agreement between the Council and the RTP.

4.4 It should be noted that other passenger functions, notably schools transport, will remain the responsibility of the Council, but that it is intended that they be delivered, as at present, by the RTP/Passenger Transport Section staff.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 It will be necessary for the RTP to requisition the agreed funding for the delivery of bus services and associated functions from the Council. As the delivery of these functions will be carried out by the Council on behalf of the RTP then the same amount will be charged back by the Council from the RTP.

## **6. Policy and Delegated Authority**

6.1 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act on all matters within its remit (Min Refs SIC 19/03 and 70/03) and for which the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision, has approved the overall objectives.

## **7. Recommendations**

7.1 I recommend that the Infrastructure Committee approve:

7.1.1 The draft Transfer of Functions Order as set out in the appendix to this report; and

7.1.2 that delegated authority be given to the Executive Director or his nominee to respond to the consultation in accordance with the Committee's recommendation.



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SCOTTISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2006 No.**

**TRANSPORT**

**The Transfer of Functions to the Shetland Transport Partnership  
Order 2006**

*Made* - - - - - 2006

*Coming into force in accordance with article 1-* 2006

The Scottish Ministers in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 10(1) and 52(4) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005<sup>(1)</sup> and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, and following consultation in terms of section 10(8), hereby make the following Order a draft of which has, in accordance with section 52(3) of the Act been laid before, and approved by resolution of the Scottish Parliament:

**Citation and commencement**

This Order may be cited as the Transfer of Functions to the Shetland Transport Partnership Order 2006 and shall come into force on the day after the day on which it is made.

**Interpretation**

In this Order—

“Shetland Islands Council” means the council constituted under section 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994<sup>(2)</sup>; and

“the Shetland Transport Partnership” means the Transport Partnership established by the Regional Transport Partnerships (Establishment, Constitution and Membership) (Scotland) Order 2005<sup>(3)</sup>.

**Transfer of functions to the Shetland Transport Partnership**

The functions which are exercisable by Shetland Islands Council [in their capacity as council, local authority, traffic authority, local traffic authority, local roads authority or local transport authority (whichever the case may be)] by virtue of the enactments specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 to this Order shall, subject to any restriction or requirement in the corresponding entry in column 2 of that Schedule, be exercisable by the Shetland Transport Partnership instead of by Shetland Islands Council.

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(1) 2005 asp 12.

(2) 1994 c. 39.

(3) S.S.I. 2005/622.

**Functions exercisable concurrently with the Shetland Transport Partnership**

The functions which are exercisable by Shetland Islands Council [in their capacity as council, local authority, traffic authority, local traffic authority, local roads authority or local transport authority (whichever the case may be)] by virtue of the enactments specified in column 1 of Schedule 2 to this Order shall, subject to any restriction or requirement in the corresponding entry in column 2 of that Schedule, be exercisable by the Shetland Transport Partnership concurrently with Shetland Islands Council.

**Transitional and saving provision**

**1.**—(1) The transfer, by virtue of this Order, of any function exercisable by Shetland Islands Council to the Shetland Transport Partnership shall not affect the validity of anything done (or having effect as if done) by or in relation to Shetland Islands Council before the date on which the transfer takes effect.

(2) Anything (including legal proceedings) which, at the time when that transfer takes effect, is in the process of being done by or in relation to Shetland Islands Council may, so far as it relates to any function transferred, be continued by or in relation to Shetland Transport Partnership.

(3) Anything done (or having effect as if done) by or in relation to Shetland Islands Council for the purposes of or in connection with any function transferred to the Shetland Transport Partnership by virtue of this Order shall, if in force at the time when that transfer takes effect, have effect as if done by or in relation to Shetland Transport Partnership in so far as that is required for continuing its effect after that time.

A member of the Scottish Executive

St Andrew's House,  
Edinburgh  
2006

## SCHEDULE 1

Article 3

### FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED TO THE SHETLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

<i>Column 1</i> <i>Enactment</i>	<i>Column 2</i> <i>Restrictions and Requirements</i>
The Transport Act 1985 (c.67)-  (a) section 63 (functions of local councils with respect to passenger transport in areas other than passenger transport areas);  (b) section 64 (consultation and publicity with respect to policies as to services); and  (c) sections 93 to 101 (travel concession schemes).	Only in so far as the functions do not relate to Shetland Islands Council as an education authority or as a local authority for the purposes of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 (c. 49).
The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 (asp 2)-  (a) sections 3 to 12 (quality partnership schemes);  (b) sections 13 to 27 (quality contract schemes);  (c) sections 28 to 32 (ticketing arrangements and ticketing schemes);  (d) sections 33 to 35 (provision of information); and  (e) section 47 (co-operation).	

## SCHEDULE 2

Article 4

### FUNCTIONS EXERCISABLE CONCURRENTLY WITH SHETLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

<i>Column 1</i> <i>Enactment</i>	<i>Column 2</i> <i>Restrictions and Requirements</i>
<hr/>	
The Local Government (Omnibus Shelters and Queue Barriers) (Scotland) Act 1958 (c. 50).	
<hr/>	
The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (c.27)-  (a) sections 1 to 5 (traffic regulation orders outside Greater London); and  (b) section 19 (regulation of use of highways by public service vehicles).	Only in so far as the functions are exercisable by Shetland Islands Council as the local traffic authority for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of public service vehicles and taxis.
<hr/>	
The Transport Act 1985 (c. 67), section 106 (grants for transport facilities and services).	

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order provides for the transfer of certain statutory functions of Shetland Islands Council relating to transport to the Shetland Transport Partnership.

Article 3 and Schedule 1 provide for the transfer of certain statutory transport functions exercisable by Shetland Islands Council to the Shetland Transport Partnership. These include functions relating to local travel concessionary schemes, making quality partnership and quality contract schemes, ticketing arrangements and ticketing schemes.

Article 4 and Schedule 2 provide for the concurrent exercise of certain statutory transport functions between Shetland Islands Council and the Shetland Transport Partnership. These include the function of making traffic regulation orders and functions relating to the provision and maintenance of bus shelters.

Article 5 makes general transitional and savings provisions to facilitate the transfer of functions provided for in the Order.







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**REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Head of Roads**  
**Infrastructure Services Department**

## **EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT BID BY SCOTS TO DEVELOP AN ASSET MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 In this report, I explain a proposal by SCOTS (Society of Chief Officers of Transport in Scotland) to submit a bid under the efficient government scheme to develop an Asset Management framework to be applied by all of the roads authorities in Scotland.
- 1.2 I also seek approval in principle for Shetland to take part in this bid, and recommend that a further report be brought to you when actual costs of being included are clearer.

### **2 Links to Council Priorities**

- 2.1 This proposal meets the Corporate Plan priority to think and act collectively by joining with other Scottish Authorities to develop good practice.

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 In 2004 Audit Scotland published a report “Maintaining Scotland’s Roads” in which it looked at the condition of Scotland’s roads and at how they were maintained and managed.
- 3.2 Among the recommendations of that report they identified a need for Councils to
  - 3.2.1 improve information about the assets they manage, including roads, bridges and street lighting.
  - 3.2.2 use asset management systems linked to GIS and financial systems to improve the management of road maintenance.

- 3.2.3 calculate the size of the structural maintenance backlog using a common accepted methodology
- 3.2.4 consider whether their road maintenance service could be improved by entering into consortia arrangements with other councils to achieve economies of scale in road maintenance.

## 4 Proposal

- 4.1 In response to these comments by Audit Scotland, SCOTS is developing a project with the following aims:

- 4.1.1 to provide a single asset management protocol for all Roads Authorities in Scotland.
- 4.1.2 to collect standard inventory items to populate a national asset management dataset.
- 4.1.3 to create a common framework for the development of transport asset management plans for all Roads Authorities in Scotland.
- 4.1.4 to deliver the aspirations of a better road network as set down by the Scottish Parliament.

- 4.2 The project timescale is estimated at five years and it is envisaged that such a project would have the scope to be extended to cover all non-property infrastructure.

- 4.3 Stage 1 of the bid process attracted a 50% grant from the Scottish Executive with the balance of the cost met by SCOTS from an existing budget of theirs. Stage 2 of the bid has to be submitted by 31 August 2006 and will require a significant contribution by all Councils taking part.

- 4.4 The value of the contribution each council will need to make to take part is not yet known, but will depend on how much information each council already holds. I believe that in Shetland we are fairly well placed in that respect.

- 4.5 The Stage 2 bid is to a Challenge Fund so there is no guarantee of success. However, the better the business case that can be made, the greater the number of participants, and the greater the benefits compared to costs, the greater the chance of success.

## 5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 SCOTS have estimated that the cost of the project split between all Scottish Authorities (and Transport Scotland) would maximum contribution could average £155,000 per year per authority. However, a successful Efficient Government bid could provide grant assistance of between 40% and 75%, reducing the average contribution to between £40,000 and £100,000. Also some of this work would be done by our own staff, which would be credited against our contribution. With a smaller road network than the Scottish average, and with considerable

information already available, our contribution should be less than the average quoted.

- 5.2 There are no financial implications at this time, as the recommendation of this report, if accepted, is only to investigate this further.
- 5.3 Should this proceed, the costs would be met from existing roads revenue budgets GRY 6711 and GRY 6701, supplemented if necessary by savings from other budgets. However, that will be subject to a future report, and I will only recommend proceeding if I consider the cost reasonable, and worth the benefits that the Council will gain from being part of the project.

## **6 Policy and Delegated Authority**

- 6.1 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act on all matters within its remit (Min Refs SIC 19/03 and 70/03) and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 A full record of assets held, their condition and value is necessary to properly manage and maintain ~~those~~ assets. In Shetland, Roads probably has the highest replacement value of any Council asset. While we have a lot of information about our road network and the assets associated with them, it is not complete.
- 7.2 We need to further develop a framework for the recording and management of our road network in order to manage it properly and to meet the recommendations of Audit Scotland.
- 7.3 An opportunity now exists for Shetland to join with other authorities in Scotland to develop an Asset Management Framework. Developing a framework jointly will provide significant economies compared to each individual authority developing their own framework.
- 7.4 While the initial budget figure quoted is high, I am confident that it will be less for Shetland when further details are established.
- 7.5 I believe there would be significant benefit in Shetland being part of this project, provided the cost is reasonable.

## **8 Recommendation**

- 8.1 I recommend that the Infrastructure Committee
  - 8.1.1 Notes the contents of this report, in particular the effort by SCOTS to develop a stage 2 bid to develop an Asset Management Framework for use throughout Scotland.

- 8.1.2 Agree in principle to Shetland joining in that project, subject to a future report to this Committee with further cost information.
- 8.1.3 Instructs that discussions continue with SCOTS, and that a further report be brought back to this Committee when further information is available.

Report Number RD-06-06-F

IH/SMG



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## **REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Acting Head of Transport  
Infrastructure Services Department**

### **SHETLAND'S RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CONSULTATION ON A DRAFT NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

#### **2. Introduction**

2.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Member comments on Shetland's response to the Scottish Executive's Draft National Transport Strategy, which has been placed in the Members' Room and can also be viewed on [www.scottishexecutive.gov.uk/Publications/2006/04/20084756/0](http://www.scottishexecutive.gov.uk/Publications/2006/04/20084756/0).

2.2. The response will be formally submitted as a joint response subject to consideration by the Shetland Transport Partnership after its next meeting.

## **2 Link to Council Priorities**

2.1 This report meets the objectives of the corporate plan by contributing to the aim of sustainability and easy to use systems for transporting freight and people.

#### **3. Background**

3.1 The Scottish Executive confirmed its intention to develop a National Transport Strategy in the June 2004 Transport White Paper "*Scotland's Transport Future*". At this time the aim of the national strategy was that :

*"...it will cover all modes in a balanced way and provide the framework within which Councils and the proposed regional transport partnerships develop their own plans."*

3.2 Following a number of consultation events, (including one attended by Members and Officers of SIC in July 2005) a draft National Transport Strategy was published by the Scottish Executive on 20 April 2006. Copies have been placed in the Members' Room. The consultation document specifically directs consultees to respond to a total of 65 consultation questions.

- 3.3 The National Transport Strategy will be followed by work on a Strategic Projects Review, which will develop spending priorities for Scotland's Transport network after 2012.

#### **4. Discussion**

- 4.1 Working with officers of the Council, consultants Faber Maunsell were requested to prepare a response to the NTS. This provided an opportunity to ensure that the emerging issues arising from the Shetland Transport Strategy could be fully integrated into the response.
- 4.2 The detailed response to each of the NTS questions, and supplementary comments, are attached as Appendix A. The response has been informed by previous work setting out the case for Shetland's Regional Transport Partnership, consultation and development work for Shetland's Transport Strategy, recent research on Social Inclusion and Deprivation in Shetland, and makes reference to a broad range of Scottish and UK research and best practice.
- 4.3 Several key themes run through the response.
- a) A one-size fits all approach to national transport policy is inappropriate for remote rural and island communities, including Shetland.
  - b) Special care is required in the application of policies to remote and rural and island communities, particularly when they are principally aimed at tackling problems prevalent on Scottish Mainland, but not Shetland.
  - c) There is a responsibility on the Scottish Executive to promote decision making at the most appropriate level, to take account of the unique nature of Shetland and its transport network and connections.
  - d) It is essential the NTS ensures that there is particularly clear support for remote rural areas and islands, and can demonstrate equity between different areas of Scotland.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

#### **6. Policy and Delegated Authority**

- 6.1 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act on all matters within its remit (Min Refs SIC 19/03 and 70/03) and for which the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision, has approved the overall objectives.

**7. Recommendation**

7.1 I recommended that Infrastructure Committee:

7.1.1 Agree the response to the consultation document, with or without amendment.

Report Number : TR-18-06-F





## **RESPONSE TO “SCOTLAND’S NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY: A CONSULTATION”**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. STP and SIC welcome the opportunity to comment upon the consultative draft of the national transport strategy. We are aware that Scottish Transport policy has historically suffered from a lack of a clear and robust national policy context. We are pleased to respond to each of the consultation questions. We have also specifically responded to specific paragraphs within the text of the document, where we believe it was important to highlight specific issues for Shetland.

2. The responses STP and SIC give must be placed within the context of Shetland. Most recently outlined in “Shetland – Case for a RTP<sup>4</sup>” – *The inherent sensitivity and salience of transport issues for the Shetland economy and the quality of life of its inhabitants can hardly be over-stated. Shetland is the most distant island group from Scottish and UK centres of government, commerce and specialist services and it is the most expensive for its inhabitants or visitors to travel to or from. The cost of supporting relatively ‘thin’ but vital transport routes (irrespective of the level of fares charged) is an on-going concern for both the Scottish Executive and the Islands Council, requiring a constant three-way balance between fares imposed, support costs incurred and service levels provided to sustain viable communities. The range of incomes of its inhabitants is wide and the affordability of transport is, in consequence, a particularly sensitive factor in social inclusion.*

3. Our responses are also informed from the results of an extensive consultation exercise<sup>5</sup> undertaken to inform the development of our Regional Transport Strategy.

### **CHAPTER 1 – WHERE WE ARE NOW**

5 **Chapter 1: Paras 14 and 15** - Shetland needs to respond to the specific and urgent requirement to reduce carbon dioxide emission, and welcome recent Scottish Executive commitments to set carbon dioxide reduction targets. However, it is vitally important that a “one size fits all approach” is avoided. Measures to reduce carbon dioxide emission from transport which could be appropriate for urban areas, may well be particularly damaging and have net negative social, environmental and economic impacts to Shetland.

6. **Chapter 1: Paras 16 and 17.** Whilst recognising the importance of congestion at a national level, it is re-emphasised that many areas in Scotland are not faced with this issue. Policies to tackle congestion could be particularly damaging and inappropriate for Shetland.

7. **Chapter 1: Paras 18 and 19.** The efficient movement of goods, freight and livestock to and from Shetland is particularly reliant on reliable and effective links to and from Shetland– both sea and air. It is also particularly reliant on seamless and efficient integration with UK Mainland and European freight networks. The value of Shetland

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<sup>4</sup> Shetland Islands Council (2005), *The Case for a Regional Transport Partnership for Shetland*. Shetland Islands Council, Lerwick.

<sup>5</sup> Available from <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/consultation/Results.asp>

produce (particularly sea fish) is particularly affected by reliability – delays can significantly reduce the value of goods in transit. The viability of many of Shetland's enterprises are also reliant on freight arrangements being as cost effective and efficient as possible.

**8. Chapter 1: Paras 29 and 30.** The draft consultation document highlights that transport users do not pay full costs of journeys. It is noted that in research undertaken by the University of Leeds<sup>6</sup> that in remote rural areas, such as Shetland, drivers actually pay more than the costs imposed in society. This is a particularly relevant aspect to consider when considering changes to the current regime for fuel and vehicle taxation.

**9. Consultation Question 1 - *Are: facilitate economic growth; promote accessibility; promote choice and raise awareness of the need for change; promote modal shift; promote new technologies and cleaner fuels; manage demand; reduce the need for travel; and promote road safety the right goals for transport in Scotland?***

10. We note the list of transport goals that have been derived for Scotland, and support them in principle. However, we note that Shetland specifically requires a transport system that is affordable, reliable, effective and efficient, both to the UK Mainland and Europe, but to each of its communities.

## **CHAPTER 2 – WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE**

**11. Consultation Question 2 – *Do consultees consider that the aim, vision and objectives need to be amended, for example to reflect Scottish Ministers' expectation to see Health Improvement at the heart of Scottish Executive policy?***

**12. Vision:** Overall we believe that the vision set out for transport in Scotland is not necessarily in conformance with guidance provided for the preparation of Regional Transport Strategies<sup>7</sup>, which states “*to be useful and memorable, the vision should be short and should not try to cover every concern, focussing instead on those issues of most importance.*” A shorter, more focussed vision statement could be considered.

**13. Objectives and Goals:** Inevitably, the introduction of a new set of national transport goals, in addition to existing set of established national transport objectives is confusing. There needs to be clarity and consistency in all future policy documents regarding the definition and coverage of these objectives and goals. It is noted that the current definition of these objective (published in *Scotland's Transport Future*<sup>8</sup>) differs from the original definition of these objectives (for example as outlined in *Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance*<sup>9</sup>). Implicit within the question there is also a lack of clarity between *Transport Objectives* (eg those working towards an efficient and safe transport network) and *External Objectives* (eg transport used to fulfil wider health, social or social goals).

**14. Health:** We agree that there is a need for more explicit reference to health within the objectives, since health boards, like NHS Shetland, are statutory board members of the Shetland RTP. Health is currently referenced within the environmental protection objective

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<sup>6</sup> Sansom T, Nash CA, Mackie PJ, Shires J, Watkiss P (2001), *Surface Transport Costs and Charges: Great Britain 1998*. Final Report for Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds

<sup>7</sup> See Paragraph 80 in Scottish Executive (2006), *Scotland's Transport Future: Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

<sup>8</sup> Scottish Executive (2004), *Scotland's Transport Future*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

<sup>9</sup> Scottish Executive (2003), *Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

which seems an unusual combination. Previously, it was considered within Integration and elements within social inclusion and accessibility. Clearer articulation of external objectives would assist here.

**15. Principles:** We agree that establishing a set of principles is very important. In the process of developing a vision and objectives for the Shetland RTS, we have taken the lead from the local Community Planning Framework and set out a set of principles outlining how we will work, as follows:

- **sustainability** - *We will work to ensure that our actions are sustainable and meet the needs of the current generation of Shetland's people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*
- **accessibility and inclusion** - *We will ensure that our actions improve Shetland citizens' ability to access services and will take account of all factors that create a barrier to this. We will encourage equal opportunities for all.*
- **accountability** - *We will make ourselves answerable to the communities and people of Shetland and keep them informed of, and seek their views on, what we are doing.*
- **partnership** - *We will work together with our partners and Shetland's people to achieve our vision and will encourage communities to realise their important role in development of the transport system.*
- **evidence-based** - *We will ensure that our actions are based on clear evidence and information and are derived from what the community wants, with investment decisions based on an objective appraisal process.*
- **efficiency** - *We will aim to be as efficient as possible with resources and use them to provide as effective services as possible, maximising opportunity for external support.*
- **compliance** - *It is necessary to ensure that all RTP actions comply with legislative and regulative provision and competence.*

### CHAPTER 3 – THE ACTION WE WILL TAKE

**16. Consultation Question 3 – *Are there areas of work in relation to local/regional transport that would merit the national dissemination of best practice examples? If so, what are they and who would be best placed to lead this?***

17. Specific areas of best practice are highlighted in Appendix. In the context of Shetland, we believe that dissemination of best practice on the implementation of fixed links would be useful. As part of the Shetland RTS, one of the projects we are keen to see developed is establishment of a consortium or fixed links forum with other island Local Authorities in order to share knowledge and resources. We believe that our Scandinavian neighbours could provide the initial steer and guidance for us in this field and would also be keen for the Scottish Executive to become involved in this group if established.

18. Whilst best practice examples can be useful, it needs to be recognised that Scotland is a diverse area and best practice examples taken from other parts of the UK and Europe cannot be implemented using a blanket, one size fits all approach. The environmental reality of Shetland means that best practice examples from elsewhere will not necessarily have the same impacts in Shetland. Where best practice is to be implemented, this should be done using local resources and input.

19. We have reviewed best practice examples in the delivery of rural transport services in developing the long list of options for inclusion in the Shetland RTS. However, as stated, the difficulty is that many of these examples will not necessarily fit into the environmental

reality of Shetland as the wider conditions and pressure of change are not the same in Shetland.

**20. Consultation Question 4 – *What issues must this NTS address, to ensure that the Strategic Projects Review (SPR) which will follow it is as effective as possible? For example, should the NTS identify key transport corridors, or key types of investment which are most effective at growing the economy, to inform the SPR? If so, which ones?***

21. The NTS needs to provide clear confirmation of support for the development of sustainable rural communities and island communities. It needs to recognise the need to take account of specific rural and island transport issues, and that the principle of subsidiarity is particularly important in developing and delivering the most effective solutions.

22. The NTS needs to direct the SPR to invest in measures which will secure in the long term **affordable, efficient, effective** and **reliable** transport links in rural and island communities – a strategic direction to fund fixed links where appropriate to replace ferry links will provide significant community benefits, as well as providing long term relief from existing revenue expenditure and recurring capital investment burdens.

**23. Consultation Question 5. *Do we have the balance of investment right between spending on new and existing infrastructure and other non-infrastructure activities and between different modes of transport? If not, how should it change over time?***

24. At a UK and National level, we would suggest that there should be greater focus on behaviour change and development/introduction of technology to assist in the de-carbonisation of the UK and Scottish transport system. This has been highlighted recently by the Government's Chief Scientific Advisor<sup>10</sup>, and in research for the UK Government<sup>11</sup>, and has been accepted by the Scottish Executive in their revised climate change programme<sup>12</sup>. Shetland is particularly dependent on a cost efficient transport network for its continued social and economic viability, and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, the price of which is already high and is likely to increase and become more volatile, is an identified objective of our emerging RTS. Clearly, specific projects to reduce carbon emission need to be placed into an appropriate Shetland context – however, Shetland offers particular advantages due to significant opportunities to harness renewable energy.

25. In Shetland, £13.5 million is spent each year on maintaining the ferry network. We realise that this investment could be reduced through increased capital spend and we will seek to address this through our RTS. It needs to be recognised that the development of infrastructure can be a means of spending to save money in the long term. Fixed links are an example of this.

26. We believe that greater consideration should be given to demographic trends in weighing up transport priorities for investment. In particular, Scotland shows trends of an ageing society. This is a problem that will become more prominent in the future. Effective rural transport should continue to be given support. In rural areas the subsidy per person

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<sup>10</sup> Sir David King in Local Transport Today No 435 "Decarbonising transport systems is essential if we are to tackle climate change, says the Government's chief scientific advisor Sir David King." (26 January 2006)

<sup>11</sup> Hickman, R and Bannister, D (2006), *Looking Over the Horizon – Visioning and Backcasting for UK Transport Policy*. Department for Transport – Horizons Research Programme 2004/05, London.

<sup>12</sup> Scottish Executive (2006), [\*Changing Our Ways: Scotland's Climate Change Programme\*](#). Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

may be high in some places, but this is necessary to achieve the same outcomes as in urban areas.

**27. Consultation Question 6. *To what extent should transport spending be targeted specifically at areas with significant potential for regeneration? How should transport spending be balanced between regeneration areas and other key areas, such as rural Scotland?***

28. This is a very pertinent question in the context of Shetland, where peripheral rural areas are often classed as “fragile”, “vulnerable” or “communities on the edge”. It is essential that the NTS and subsequent investment demonstrates equity between different areas of Scotland, recognising that viable and sustainable rural communities can make a key contribution to the viability and sustainability of Scotland itself.

29. **Chapter 3 – para 22.** An Emissions Trading Programme involving aviation is necessary to assist in moving towards a sustainable transport system. However, the design of any such system needs to take full account of the special circumstances and role that aviation plays in sustaining the social and economic viability of Shetland.

**30. Consultation Question 7. *What further steps need to be taken in Scotland to facilitate the development of international connectivity both by air and by sea?***

31. Shetland recognises significant wider economic benefits from the facilitation of direct ferry links to Iceland, Faeroe, Denmark, and Norway. Further development of effective Short Sea Shipping links to Europe and our North Sea / North Atlantic neighbours is currently being progressed through our active involvement in the European *Northern Maritime Corridor* project<sup>13</sup>. Such mechanisms are considered effective for helping to develop new opportunities.

32. Seasonal international air links are currently provided to Faeroe; previously seasonal links have been provided to Scandinavia. The Air Route Development Fund has contributed to the development of the link to Faeroe, and such initiatives are supported and welcomed.

**33. Consultation Question 8. *Do consultees consider that there are issues relating to cross-border connectivity by rail and road, and within devolved competence, that the Strategy should consider?***

34. Principally, Shetland’s success is dependant on efficient supply and distribution chains to and from UK Mainland and Europe. Accordingly, the NTS should place particular emphasis on ensuring that Anglo-Scottish transport links are wholly fit for purpose.

**35. Consultation Question 9. *What view do consultees take on whether there is a need for a faster Scotland to London rail service, to provide an alternative to flying in the long term?***

36. Passengers travelling to London from Shetland are most likely to seek to travel by air. A high speed rail link would require to operate from Aberdeen to promote any significant

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<sup>13</sup> Details available from

[http://www.northernmaritimecorridor.no/ir/public/openIndex/view/list\\_nmc.html?ARTICLE\\_ID=1116575227905&\\_exp=0](http://www.northernmaritimecorridor.no/ir/public/openIndex/view/list_nmc.html?ARTICLE_ID=1116575227905&_exp=0)

change of mode. However, we recognise the negative environmental impacts of air travel and believe an appropriately designed Scotland to London rail service could be advantageous as a means to provide an alternative to flying, as an effective means of reducing Scottish transport carbon dioxide reductions.

**37. Consultation Question 10. *How do we ensure that all local authorities spend their Grant Aided Expenditure allocation for local roads on local roads? Do consultees think anything more needs to be done to ensure appropriate management, maintenance and operation of the Trunk Road Network?***

38. We strongly support the principle of subsidiarity – decisions taken at the most appropriate level. Accordingly, we would not support any measures that took away local accountability for spending on the transport network away from either the Council or the Transport Partnership. As there are no trunk roads in Shetland, we do not feel that we are best placed to respond to this question.

**39. Consultation Question 11. *What are the issues relating to the management and maintenance of the road and rail networks over the long term that the Strategy should address?***

40. Our consultation has revealed that, on the whole, Shetland's residents are very satisfied with the condition of Shetland's roads and recognise that, compared to other Scottish Islands, roads are maintained to a good standard.

**41. Consultation Question 12. *What should the NTS say about freight, bearing in mind that a freight strategy is under development? In particular, what should the NTS say about meeting the different needs of freight and passengers on the road and rail network, and how to balance these competing demands?***

42. It is essential that the Freight Strategy outlines measures to reduce freight costs to remote rural areas so that enterprises in these areas can compete on a viable basis. The introduction of freight subsidies from the Scottish Executive on the new Northern Isles Ferry operator is welcomed.

43. In the future, rising and volatile fuel prices will place an emphasis on more efficient freight transfer. Rail and sea transfer will become more and more competitive for the longer trunk hauls required to get goods to and from Shetland's mainland ports.

**44. Consultation Question 13 *What, if anything, should the NTS be saying about skills, bearing in mind the leading role that the Sector Skills Councils have in reducing skills gaps and shortages in the public and private sectors and the role Transport Scotland has in promulgating good practice across the industry? Is it right to integrate skills issues into the NTS?***

45. We feel that the National Transport Strategy is the appropriate setting to outline the concerns about a potential future skills shortage in the transport sector and to outline the mechanisms available to address this.

**46. Consultation Question 14. *Bearing in mind that investment in new transport infrastructure is not covered in the NTS, as it will be addressed in the forthcoming***

***Strategic Projects Review, what specific steps, if any, does the NTS need to set out to support tourism?***

47. In Shetland, the tourism industry has been identified as one that offers significant potential for growth. Getting it right requires attention to high quality information provision, straightforward ticketing, development of an easy to use transport system, and appropriate training.

48. The promotion of sustainable and eco-tourism is important for Shetland. There is therefore particular interest in enabling walking, cycling and public transport opportunities.

***49. Consultation Question 15. What are the key barriers to developing effective Demand Responsive Transport and how should they be overcome? For example, legislative, regulatory or operational barriers?***

50. Shetland has embraced the introduction and ongoing development of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), and is making good progress in optimising available resources. Options for continued development are being considered as part of the RTS. Reviews of other DRT schemes from across Scotland, the wider UK and Europe, highlight numerous barriers to their implementation. For example, driver shortages can be a problem, and it is also known that potential users of the system can be discouraged by the fact that they feel bad booking a trip if they are the only user i.e. they feel like the service is going out of its way just to accommodate them. There also appears to be an opportunity to use school transport services to tie into other public transport services, although it is accepted that there are barriers associated with this, such as safety concerns of parents. Securing appropriate inter-agency co-operation, a lack of proper audit procedures, and the requirement to formalise driver qualifications and training requirements are also particular issues.

51. Currently, work is being initiated in one community area auditing existing resources and opportunities, with a view to the development of more responsive provision. A key element that we hope the Executive takes note of is that, as with any new innovative scheme, they need time to work. Therefore, we hope that long-term (i.e. 3 to 5 years) support can be given for such pilots rather than just one year. This is not enough time to get people into the habit of using DRT or to build up enough confidence of using such systems.

***52. Consultation Question 16. Where are there examples of particularly good practice in demand responsive transport?***

53. In developing our RTS and potential options for appraisal, we have undertaken a best practice review of the provision and delivery of rural transport services, considering publications ranging from the Scottish Planning Research Series to Local Transport Today. Within this review, we have found numerous examples of DRT best practice, including schemes that feed into existing routes, the use of accessibility planning hand-in-hand with DRT schemes, and the provision of DRT services that link in with supermarkets etc. The introduction of a transport brokerage system could be a means to maximise resources.

54. Another key consideration is that DRT services need to be given time to work. For example, in order to build up confidence in the systems, some of the best practice examples that we have reviewed have suggested that DRT should be provided on top of



conventional services initially, as this provides a fall-back transport option for potential users.

55. Local examples of successful practice include the ongoing and beneficial working with the local health service on providing effective access to local health services. Examples include the Levenwick Surgery dial a taxi service, the Walls Surgery/Walls Care Centre trial transport service, and the Brae Surgery/dial a bus service to Mossbank (being introduced shortly).

**56. Consultation Question 17. *Is accessibility planning something that should be considered for local or regional transport strategies in Scotland? If so, should it be compulsory, or (as at present), one of a suite of possible approaches?***

57. We recognise the benefits of accessibility planning, although do not feel that this should necessarily be compulsory. In smaller rural areas like Shetland, it is pointed out that given the low population numbers, it is more likely to be individuals and households rather than communities who face deprivation and social exclusion. Transport needs to be marketed at an individual or household level, and thus accessibility planning can help to identify the areas where marketing should be targeted.

**58. Consultation Question 18. *How can we improve the accessibility of public transport to disabled people? For example, how far should concessions be extended for disabled people?***

59. In remote and rural areas providing accessible multi-modal disabled transport opportunities is a particular challenge. Not only is the right investment in equipment necessary (such as Disability Discrimination Act [DDA] compliant inter-island ferries, low floor buses, "ambu-lift" facility at Sumburgh Airport, disabled persons cabins on the Northlink Service), but equally important is the emphasis on operator and staff training.

60. One example is the introduction of bus buddying schemes could be one method to encourage socially excluded people and those with disabilities to use public transport. We understand that this is already done in some areas but extending the scheme may be an idea the Executive may wish to pursue. Bus buddying is a scheme, often open to elderly people, learning disabled people, those with physical and sensory impairments, mental health service users and people with long-term illnesses. It involves trained bus volunteers travel on the bus services with their client and attempt to boost their confidence of using public transport. When the client is confident enough to travel on their own, the buddy gradually reduces their level of support.

61. Concessions need to take account of the needs of both the person, and their carers. We note that the National Concessionary Travel scheme enables "companions" to travel free if card holder meets the eligibility criteria. Where concessions enable improved accessibility and reduce social inclusion then the NTS should support this.

**62. Consultation Question 19. *How do we make sure that transport operators and drivers follow best practice in dealing with older people, with disabled people and other groups who may have difficulties with transport? For example, should it be a condition of funding that such best practice is demonstrated?***

63. In Shetland, public transport services are DDA compliant, with staff having gone through the relevant training to ensure they are able to assist disability people to use the bus safely and confidently. This same applies to Shetland's inter-island ferry crews.



**64. Consultation Question 20. *What more could be done through transport means to tackle social exclusion in rural areas?***

65. As discussed, we believe that accessibility planning and the introduction of demand responsive transport are the two key means of identifying and addressing social exclusion in rural areas. In remote rural and island areas, there is also a particular requirement to work closely with local communities to develop sustainable and effective solutions to local problems.

66. Efforts to reduce the need to travel, such as through decentralised employment and the promotion of ICT (i.e. broad band home working) is also viewed as one means way of retaining people in rural and island areas. Mobile facilities, such as the mobile library scheme that operates in Shetland, is another means of tackling social exclusion in rural areas. In Shetland, an annual guide is produced detailing the different levels of concessions available across each of the main modes of transport – both internal to Shetland, and external to the UK Mainland.

67. In remote rural areas, such as Shetland, the bus service is appreciated, in recognition of the sparse population. Recently published Research into Deprivation and Social Exclusion in Shetland has found that despite its coverage, people without use of a car suffer exclusion due accessibility difficulties. Systems which are sustainable and complement the existing transport network require further exploration, in order to be able to provide people with more flexibility than they currently have. Otherwise there is a risk that the divisions between those that can and those that can't afford their own private transport are going to increase as fuel prices increase.

**68. Consultation Question 21. *What do we need to consider in reflecting on the future of the lifeline air and ferry network?***

69. In Shetland, lifeline services relate both to the provision of external links and inter-island links. External lifeline links include passenger/freight/livestock services to the UK Mainland, and passenger air links to the UK Mainland. Inter-Island links include both the inter-island ferry network, and the inter-island air network.

70. At the external links level, we are pleased that the Executive intends to “carry out some research” on the provision of Scotland’s lifeline ferry services for the Northern Isles and the Clyde and Hebrides Islands once the new ferry service contracts are in place. Recent research on the Northern Isles ferry service, concentrating on the efficiency of the existing Northern Isles Ferry Service, suggested there could be efficiencies and overall benefits arising from a different configuration of vessels, and different service patterns. However, any evaluation of such a proposal requires in depth information on origin and destinations of passengers, freight and livestock, and should include parallel work on the air service.

71. The scope for such a study is currently one likely outcome from the RTS. This aspiration fits with the Executive’s goal, which proposes to examine “...routes, services, fares, integration with land transport, and the role of different providers”. This should also seek to evaluate the impact of recently introduced concessionary fare schemes on both the ferry service and air service.

72. Shetland recognises the importance of the external air links to the UK Mainland. The current arrangement offering Islander discount fares is welcomed, however, this is seen as an interim measure. It does little to encourage visitors to the islands. Firstly, the lifeline nature of the air link requires formal recognition. Secondly, there is a desire to fully explore the introduction of an appropriate form of service specification and fares structure through a PSO scheme, particularly if linked to the wider development of an integrated Highlands and Islands air network.

73. Shetland's Inter-Island ferry service has significantly contributed to continued viability and vitality of Shetland's offshore islands since the 1970s. The combination of a modern fleet of ferries, high service levels, and affordable fares has sustained population levels on islands such as Whalsay, and Bressay, and provided a wider range of employment opportunities for those living on islands such as Yell and Unst.

74. One specific issue now facing the inter-island ferry service is the challenge of continuing to support our island communities, whilst managing the rising revenue costs associated with the service, one element of which are rising fuel costs. The second specific challenge facing the service are the high capital costs of replacing the existing ferries. A significant proportion of the existing fleet will require replacement within the next 10 years in order to comply with regulatory requirements. These requirements typically require a larger vessel to provide the same level of service, and there are consequential high capital cost impacts related with the renewal of the ferry terminals.

75. For a number of years, Shetland Islands Council has committed to a policy of developing fixed links to replace ferry links, where this is feasible. Work is currently at an advanced stage in relation to the construction of a bridge to Bressay. Initial scoping and feasibility work has been undertaken in relation to tunnels from Shetland Mainland to Whalsay, Shetland Mainland to Yell, and between Yell and Unst.

76. Whilst this issue will be explored further within Shetland's RTS, it is recognised that investment in such links could significantly reduce both the Scottish Executive's and Shetland's ongoing revenue burden in relation to supporting the existing ferry links.

77. Shetland is also pleased to support the ongoing development of the inter-island air service. This provides the principal means of personal access for particularly remote islands such as Foula and Fair Isle, and an essential complement to the ferry service for Out Skerries and Papa Stour.

78. We recognise that there are numerous national policies that emphasise the need to sustain rural communities. For example, the 1998 White Paper "Travel Choices for Scotland" recognises that central and local government have an important part to play in funding and subsidising the necessary infrastructure required to sustain or improve the operation of lifeline links to island communities, including piers, harbours and airports, which by their very nature are expensive. The Transport White Paper – Scotland's Future Transport (2004), SPP 17 and SPP 15 also recognise the importance of sustaining rural communities. Therefore, the NTS should continue this support for rural and small island communities.

**79. Consultation Question 22. *What more should be done to ensure that there are connections from outlying estates to towns and cities?***

80. In a Shetland context, it is easiest to consider this question from the perspective of travelling from a smaller settlement to the main town, Lerwick. From our experience

during consultation, there is a lot of informal car sharing that takes place and this appears to work well. Shetland also has a network of rural “park and ride / park and share” sites along the spine road which also appear to be relatively well-used. Promoting car-sharing may be one way that this is improved.

**82. Consultation question 23. *Are there any specific areas or events in Scotland where transport particularly well or particularly poorly supports access to cultural opportunities? Are there any specific societal groups disproportionately disadvantaged in accessing cultural activities because of transport issues?***

83. Within Shetland, it is necessary to get beyond the assumption that because Shetland benefits from a high level of community facilities, that this necessarily relates to the population benefiting from a high level of opportunities. In particular:

- young people whose parents are not able to ensure they are able to access opportunities and grow up feeling a part of the community within which they live;
- adults of any age who have low self-esteem and/or poor mental health, often due to situations which have developed as a result of negative experiences in the past and can result in homelessness and substance misuse. This is particularly acute if their situation is not understood by the community within which they live;
- those who are physically disabled or with a long-term illness and their carers, when they do not receive adequate support and understanding;
- those looking after a young family without access to their own transport, particularly those living in remote areas of Shetland; and
- older people unable to access opportunities that would enable them to feel a part of the community.

**84. Consultation question 24. *Should travel plans be required of all "larger" employers? If so, how should we define "larger" and should Travel Plans be required of all public bodies such as local authorities and Health Boards to show public sector leadership on this issue?***

85. There is general support that public bodies (both NHS and Shetland Islands Council) in Shetland should promote best practice environmental stewardship. However, in remote rural areas, it is important to focus on the measures that will be most effective. Again, a one-sized fits all approach to travel plans is not particularly helpful in the Shetland context.

**86. Consultation Question 25. *What should the relative roles of the Executive, regional transport partnerships and local authorities be in increasing the uptake and how might it be ensured that travel plans required of developers under the planning system are systematically enforced?***

87. In the Shetland context, it is important that measures are implemented that are in proportion to the problem, and effective in dealing with the problem. We support the principal of subsidiarity. Accordingly, we believe that the need for, and enforcement of, and encouragement for any travel plans should rest with the local planning authority, within a flexible framework established within national guidance.

**88. Consultation Question 26. *Should we be investing in "smart measures" to promote modal shift? If so, what degree of investment is required; what measures are most effective; and what should be the role of the Scottish Executive (for example, promotion***

89. Prior to seeking to alter modal shift in rural areas, it is first necessary to examine why we need to promote modal shift, and also consider alternative means of achieving the same outcome. Within the Shetland context it is apparent that modal shift has a context in reducing carbon dioxide emissions. More effective means of achieving this objective may well exist in Shetland.

90. However, we believe that smart measures need to focus on measures that educate on the importance of sustainable transport. Travel planning programmes within schools can help raise awareness and provide appropriate training in respect of walking, cycling and public transport use.

**91. Consultation Question 27. *Is there a need for a single national travel awareness "brand" that the Executive, RTPs and local authorities could all use? If so, what should it be?***

92. We believe that a national brand would have some benefits in terms of providing customer confidence and should be considered.

**93. Consultation Question 28. *We want to promote walking and cycling as healthy, sustainable ways to travel - what more should be done in this regard?***

94. In order to create a future population of walkers and cyclists, it will be important that these groups are given the teaching and confidence to walk and cycle safely. This means attention to creating safe and attractive environments for walking and cycling, providing appropriate walking / cycling training opportunities, and also seeking to support the development of a "culture" which regards walking and cycling as positive, healthy and beneficial.

**95. Consultation Question 29. *How can the NTS maximise its contribution to improving the health of the nation?***

96. Transport has several impacts on health.

- Increase in air pollution - affects respiratory symptoms. Not a problem in Shetland. Requires attention to engine and fuel technology (particularly buses and HGVs) and congestion;
- Noise pollution – affects child development, memory and attention. Not a problem in Shetland.
- Road Accident Casualties. This an issue in across Scotland and in Shetland. Particular local issues are speed, seat belts, drink driving.
- Impact on suppressing walking or cycling. The lack of continuous footpaths within rural areas and settlements can significantly suppress walking or cycling. However, there is a difficulty in balancing the costs of such provision, with the potential numbers of users, and also the low and infrequent vehicle flows (albeit the unpredictability of traffic flow and speed can in itself deter walking on the roads).
- Psychosocial effects – social exclusion caused by severance, either by very busy roads, or alternatively lack of transport connections. This can restrict access to shops providing a healthy diet, places for activity, employment etc. The recent research into social exclusion and deprivation in Shetland considers this issue.

**97. Consultation Question 30. *How do we make buses more attractive for people to use, and therefore allow them to make the choice to take the bus rather than using their car? How do we ensure that the quality of the travelling experience is made a priority by bus operators?***

98. In Shetland, bus use is typically restricted to those who do not have access to a car. Given the gap in convenience between the existing rural bus service, and the unlimited mobility opportunities provided by a car, encouraging car users to take the bus in Shetland will be difficult. It is a possibility that higher fuel prices could force higher bus usage in the future.

**99. Consultation Question 31. *Is there a need for change in how the bus industry operates, or are the current arrangements working? If so, what should this change be?***

100. Within Shetland, all services are tendered. The current arrangements are considered to work very effectively.

**101. Consultation Question 32. *How do we make rail more attractive for people, and therefore allow them to make the choice to take the train rather than use their car?***

102. There are no rail lines in Shetland. Key to making rail more attractive is a focus upon integration issues at Aberdeen, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow airports, and from Aberdeen Airport. Rail also needs to offer significant journey time / journey quality / overall trip convenience improvements over the car in order to be more attractive.

**103. Consultation Question 33. *What else should be done at a national level to support improvements in travel information? How do we capitalise on the potential opportunities created by new technologies - such as 3G mobile phones - to improve the provision of travel information?***

104. It is important that technology does not serve to increase the distance between the customer and the operator. Information services have to be correct, and maintain the confidence of local users. Greater use of local resources and local knowledge is considered important.

**105. Consultation question 34. *Do you consider that we need to change the cost of public transport fares and, if so, what changes should be brought in?***

106. There was little much comment or complaint on the price of fares of public transport during our consultation for the RTS. The main focus was on the high air fare levels suffered by Shetlanders prior to the introduction of the Islander Air Fare scheme. Rather, we would suggest that new forms of ticketing and greater marketing of tickets available needs to be offered (i.e. flexitickets). Shetland is shortly to introduce multi-modal ticketing.

**107. Consultation Question 35. *If you support lower fares, would such reductions need to be funded by tax revenue, or are there schemes which consultees consider could pay for themselves through modal shift (i.e. because more people would be travelling, albeit paying somewhat lower fares)?***

108. We believe that certain schemes have the potential to be financially sustainable. Schemes making best use of resources, and involving local communities would have potential to work in smaller areas such as Shetland, where the cost of providing public transport is very high due to the low number of users and dispersed population.

**109. Consultation Question 36. *How can we promote integrated ticketing between different operators?***

110. Shetland has proposals for the delivery of an integrated ticketing scheme, and we anticipate completion of this project in the short term.

**111. Consultation Question 37. *How do we promote additional modal shift from road freight to rail and waterborne freight?***

112. For Shetland, freight integration is particularly important, particularly in a future where fuel costs are higher, and freight efficiencies are necessary. This means the ability to remove barriers (such as rail freight gauge restrictions to the main Scottish ports), and improve freight interchange facilities and terminals.

**113. Consultation Question 38. *How do we ensure that people are safe, and feel safe, on public transport, at stations and bus stops, and while travelling by foot, bike or car? For example, what needs to be done to tackle anti-social behaviour on public transport and on our roads?***

114. This issue is not a particular issue in Shetland. Consultation with the police suggested the only problem is at taxi stances, and here CCTV is to be introduced. It was stated that much of the problems the police deal with are started whilst people are waiting in long queues for taxis. It was stated that the higher incidence of drink related problems in Shetland accounts for the driving problems. The police are aware of courses which disqualified drivers can be sent on to get their penalty reduced if they complete the course successfully.

**115. Consultation question 39. *Within a UK market, what, if anything, should Scotland specifically do to promote the uptake of biofuels?***

116. The greatest incentives are financial regimes to encourage the uptake of such fuels. The initial development of a distribution network and capacity building could initially be achieved through public sector support, and conversions. The public sector also has a role in awareness raising.

**117. Consultation Question 40. *Where are the commercial opportunities for biofuels in Scotland? What, if anything, is the role for the public sector in supporting commercial biofuels developments? Are there down-sides of an increased bio-fuel market in Scotland?***

118. As above. We recognise the difficulties of this in Shetland where population size is much smaller.

**119. Consultation Question 41. *Within the context of a UK regulatory framework, what more, if anything, should be done to make motor vehicles in Scotland cleaner to run?***

120. Within Shetland, there is significant potential in the development of renewable fuel cell technology, such as that being pioneered by PURE in Unst. Making a virtue out of the characteristics of Shetland, it could be possible to pilot the introduction of hydrogen / fuel network within Shetland, potentially as part of an eco-car initiative.

**121. Consultation Question 42. *Where are the potential gains in terms of new transport technology in Scotland? How do we capture the potential economic benefits of developing them in Scotland? What, if anything, is the role for the public sector in supporting the development of such new technologies?***

122. As above.

**123. Consultation Question 43. *What needs to be done to ensure that parking policy - on-street parking, bus and rail park and ride and so on - is more effective in managing demand and promoting modal shift?***

124. Shetland has limited experience in the development and implementation of such policies.

**125. Consultation Question 44. *How might park and ride schemes best be developed to further encourage modal shift and reduce congestion? How should enhancements be funded and what should pricing policies be?***

126. Informal park & ride, and park & share schemes are currently provided in Shetland along the spine road. This assists in promoting rural accessibility, reducing transport costs, and enabling improvements in the efficiency of the transport network.

**127. Consultation Question 45. *Should we pilot new approaches to improving demand management on the trunk road network? If so, which approaches should we pilot (for example, bus priority measures, multiple occupancy vehicle and heavy goods vehicle preference, metering, more park and ride) and do you have any views about where and when they should be piloted?***

128. There are no trunk roads in Shetland. Demand management is not an issue in the foreseeable future.

**129. Consultation Question 46. *Given the difficulties in managing demand for road space by other means, do consultees agree that, in principle, national and/or local road pricing in Scotland could be an effective way to manage demand?***

130. Managing demand requires making car use either slower or more expensive, relative to alternative means. At a UK and national level, in principle, a national road charging scheme could be an effective means to tackle congestion, and make a significant contribution to reducing harmful greenhouse emissions from traffic.

131. However, in accordance with advice from SACTRA, prior to seeking to manage demand in a particular area, it is necessary to ensure that the overall costs do not exceed the potential benefits.<sup>14</sup> As previously highlighted, it has been previously estimated that

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<sup>14</sup> Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (1999), *Trunk Roads and the Economy: Full Report*. The Stationary Office, London.

the overall impacts of motoring in remote rural areas such as Shetland are less than the overall costs to society. Therefore particular attention is required on the design and implementation of any scheme, or indeed any alternative approach, to ensure it is appropriate for remote rural and islands communities such as Shetland.

**132. Consultation Question 47. *Does the Executive need to do more to build support for road pricing? Should there be funding made available to local authorities and regional transport partnerships which wish to promote local/regional road pricing schemes. If so, what model should be used to provide such funding?***

133. It is recognised that the biggest barrier to the development of road pricing is public and business acceptance. It may be difficult to convince Shetland and other island communities of the need to change the existing system, when some of the biggest costs associated with traffic growth (congestion and poor air quality) are not an issue, and where there are few (if any) alternatives to car ownership and use.

134. More work is required at a national level to understand the overall pattern of costs and benefits of car use and other lifeline links in remote rural areas and islands. Most work on road pricing feasibility has also been undertaken at a national level, and paid scant attention to remote rural and island areas. Key issues include the wider social benefits of car use, as well as the potential impact on viability of Shetland's economy due to knock on impacts of changes in the costs of supply and distribution of goods.

**135. Consultation Question 48. *What should be the objectives of any future national road pricing scheme? For example:***

- *Should it primarily be concerned with cutting congestion levels?*
- *Or should it also reflect environmental concerns about CO<sub>2</sub> and other emissions?*
- *Should it be a means by which, in Scotland, we try to achieve our aspiration of stabilising road traffic volumes at 2001 levels by 2021 (see Chapter 4)?*
- *Should it aim to reflect better the true cost of motoring (including the costs to other people, the economy and the environment), or should it cost about the same to drive overall as at the moment?*

136. Road pricing is one option that can be considered to address the problems arising from (principally) current rates of traffic growth. These are congestion causing journey time delay and unpredictability, localised air quality problems, and contributions to growth in greenhouse gas emissions. It is of note that only the latter of these three main problems is particularly relevant in Shetland. We also note that there may be more efficient means by which Shetland can reduce its contribution to total greenhouse gas emissions other than by road pricing.

137. We do not support the concept of developing a road pricing scheme in order to achieve the poorly researched and flawed national road stabilisation target.<sup>15</sup>

**138. Consultation Question 49. *If there were no UK-wide national road pricing scheme, should a Scotland-only scheme be considered?***

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<sup>15</sup> Faber Maunsell (2006), *Term Commission for the Evaluation and Review of Local Authority Road Traffic Reduction Targets*. Report for the Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.



139. If it can be demonstrated that a Scottish road pricing scheme was the most effective means to achieving its national transport objectives, was feasible, and where the overall benefits exceeded the costs, then there is no reason why a Scottish only scheme should not be considered. However, the applicability, impacts, costs and benefits of such a scheme to island communities would have to be very carefully considered, evaluated and demonstrated prior to any support being provided.

**140. Consultation Question 50. *Do consultees support the inclusion of surface transport in any future CO<sub>2</sub> emissions trading mechanisms? What impact could this have on transport's emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>?***

141. Again, if it can be demonstrated that a inclusion of surface transport in any future carbon dioxide emissions trading mechanisms was the most effective means to achieving its national transport objectives, was feasible, and where the overall benefits exceeded the costs, then there is no reason why a such an initiative should not be considered. However, the applicability and impacts of such a scheme to island communities would have to be very carefully considered.

**142. Consultation Question 51. *What more, if anything, needs to be done to ensure that transport considerations are taken into account in the location decision, for example of health services and schools?***

143. National planning guidance should clearly highlight the requirement for such facilities to be in the most accessible locations. At a national level, evidence from accessibility planning should be used to consider allocations for such sites in Local Plans, and Structure Plans.

144. In a Shetland context, location of facility is important, but of equal importance is the relationship of the facility's catchment to the transport network. For many, Lerwick is more accessible (due to public transport network and the opportunity to gain lifts etc) than facilities in more local settlements.

**145. Consultation Question 52. *What contribution can broadband and flexible working practices make to reducing individuals' need to travel? What else should be done to reduce the need to travel?***

146. This is a particularly relevant debate in the Shetland context where there has been recent investment in broadband technology, which is enabling specific enterprises to be undertaken effectively in remote rural areas, such as Out Skerries and Fair Isle.

147. There is a willingness to extend decentralisation of public sector functions, where it can be demonstrated that this improves service delivery, and overall effectiveness.

**148. Consultation Question 53. *We are tackling road safety and are on track to meet our targets. But is there more that should be done at the national (rather than local) level?***

149. Shetland has continued to make steady progress towards achieving road safety targets at a local level. At a national level, awareness campaigns can make a big difference, as can targeting resources to ensure effective enforcement of existing traffic laws.

150. National support for driver education can also be useful – eg classes for those caught speeding, drink driving etc, is more effective than just fining and putting points on the licence.

**151. Consultation Question 54. *What more can be done to make our streets safer and more pleasant places to be?***

152. This not a particular issue for Shetland. In a Scottish context, Lerwick is effectively a small town. Application of best practice guidance (such as that contained with Planning Advice Note 52: Planning and Small Towns<sup>16</sup>) has assisted in the development of the town centre.

153. Outwith Lerwick, the key issue is as much about ensuring ongoing community development and support, and access to opportunity, as it is about physical infrastructure. However, during recent consultation, individual communities placed an emphasis on the provision of appropriate rural facilities for pedestrians.

**CHAPTER 4 - HOW WE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE STRATEGY**

**154. Consultation Question 55. *What issues should be considered in implementing the NTS following its publication later in 2006?***

155. The key issues are:

- to ensure the application of best practice in ongoing strategy development and implementation, taking full account of the experiences in rural and island communities;
- maintenance of transport research programme and scheme evaluation, ensuring that issues relevant to rural and island issues continue to be captured;
- Appraisal processes are continually developed and refined to take account of specific rural issues<sup>17</sup>; and
- implementation of a clearly defined programme for progress reviews, and revisions.

**156. Consultation Question 56. *Do consultees consider that "traffic intensity" is likely to be a useful overall indicator of our success with the forthcoming NTS? If not, what alternative(s) would be preferable?***

157. This appears to be a very broad indicator, but has been used previously in relation to English transport strategies. At a national level it appears to be appropriate. However, at a national level it is also considered that progress towards de-carbonising the Scottish transport network is potentially as important.

**158. Consultation Question 57. *Are the indicators outlined for each transport goal useful? If not, what alternative(s) would be preferable?***

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<sup>16</sup> Scottish Executive (1997), *Planning Advice Note 52: Planning and Small Towns*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

<sup>17</sup> For example, see outcomes of the following study: JJ Laird, J. Nellthorp and P.J. Mackie (2004), *Option Values, Business and Population Impacts in Transport Assessment: Scoping Study*. Final Report by Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds for Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness.

159. The level of detail provided in the NTS is generally insufficient to provide detailed comment, and it is apparent that further work is required in this area.

- **Indicator of the facilitation of economic growth** – Journey times to selected key markets are very important, but in the Shetland context so are the number of journey opportunities.
  - **Indicator of the promotion of accessibility** – More work requires to be done on measuring accessibility.
  - **Indicators of the promotion of choice and the raising of awareness of the need for change** - More work required
  - **Indicators of the promotion of modal shift** – Mode share for all journeys may be too aggregate to be meaningful. More useful may be the split by journey purpose, dependent on the capabilities of the data set. Changes in average car occupancy may take a significant time to change.
  - **Indicators of the promotion of cleaner fuels and vehicles** – Number and success of existing Air Quality Management Areas is a useful indicator.
  - **Indicators of the management of demand** – Care is required with this indicator to ensure that it does not become too aggregate to become useful and meaningful
- 18  
19. Congestion monitoring may be best measured by a basket of indicators, and there are opportunities to take advantage of new monitoring technologies to facilitate this, potentially on a route by route basis. For Shetland, congestion between Aberdeen and Edinburgh, and Aberdeen and Glasgow would be particularly relevant and meaningful.
- **Indicators of the reduction of the need for travel** – Local traffic growth would appear to be a relevant indicator.
  - **Targets for the promotion of road safety** – These are already established.

160. **Consultation Question 58.** *Are consultees content that the target of quadrupling cycle use should now be reviewed? What, if anything, might replace it (for example, local authority-level targets on the DfT model)?*

161. Regardless of the desirability of promoting cycling, the existing cycling target requires intelligent review. One key barrier is the current lack of ability to understand existing cycling levels and behaviour, the impact of different policy approaches on cycling levels, or the development of effective cycling monitoring techniques. In the first instance, more robust monitoring should be a priority, prior to setting national targets.

162. **Consultation Question 59.** *Are there other measures which should be considered in Scotland which would move us towards the target to stabilise road traffic volumes at 2001 levels by 2021, recognising that significant fiscal measures would have to be agreed by the UK Government?*

163. The national stabilisation target is a flawed target as it is not backed up by any objective analysis. The focus should be placed on the best and most appropriate means of achieving national transport policy objectives – in relation to road traffic levels, principally congestion and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Research has been undertaken

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18 Phil Goodwin (2001), *Running to Stand Still*. Report for Council for the protection of Rural England, London.

19 Select Committee on Transport, Local Government and the Regions (2002), *Eighth Report, 10 Year Plan for Transport*. UK Parliament, London.

indicating the types and scale of measures necessary to work towards the national target<sup>20</sup>, and suggesting alternative approaches to target setting.

**164. Consultation question 60. *Do consultees agree with the proposals to:***

- ***Continue to have stabilisation of road traffic as a high level aspiration;***  
Further work is required to assess what is achievable and realistic under the different scenarios arising from the NTS. This can then set the baseline for the high level aspiration.
- ***Use indicators measuring modal shift to measure how our modal shift policies are working;***  
This appears to be logical. Ongoing traffic level monitoring is, however, an essential element of the monitoring package.
- ***Redirect our efforts more clearly at the environmental and congestion issues which underpin the traffic stabilisation aspiration, by:***
  - ***Considering new transport-related target(s) for CO<sub>2</sub> (see further below);***
  - ***Continuing to monitor congestion trends on our trunk roads as at present, and considering what further measures might be required.***A clearer focus for targets and monitoring on the objectives, as well as the means to achieve the objectives, is very important, and in accordance with best practice.

**165. Consultation Question 61. *Do consultees have any views on the idea of a move to regional traffic reduction targets in place of a national target?***

166. In a Scottish context the majority of traffic growth problems are related to regional travel to work areas. In many instances these go beyond the boundaries of individual local authorities. Because local authority approaches to reducing traffic have largely failed (in part due to lack of national direction, but also due to inter-authority boundary impacts, and lack of partnership working between local roads authorities and the trunk road authority) there is a case to consider if statutory regional transport partnerships could fulfil the statutory responsibilities of the local roads authorities under the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997. Regional road traffic reduction targets would be more effective than local road traffic reduction targets. At a national level, there should be an emphasis placed on setting targets for congestion and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

167. In a Shetland context, road traffic monitoring is important in understanding the different demands placed on the road network. However, existing problems do not justify the development of targets, as alternative approaches are typically more effective.

**168. Consultation Question 62. *Given the difficulties with the national traffic stabilisation aspirational target, do consultees agree that realistic, deliverable milestones towards its delivery cannot be put in place at present?***

169. Current difficulties associated with the current national road traffic target relate to the Executive departing from established guidance and best practice. Realistic, deliverable milestones are an essential element of any successful long term target. All long term

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<sup>20</sup> Faber Maunsell (2006), *Term Commission for the Evaluation and Review of Local Authority Road Traffic Reduction Targets*. Report for the Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

targets should be associated with a trajectory of change. Existing English guidance on the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of Local Transport Plans, and Annual Progress Reports covers this aspect well.

**170. Consultation Question 63. *Do consultees agree that setting a level of contribution for reductions in Scotland's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which are directly linked to the impact of our policies in areas which are devolved would be the best measure of the Scottish Executive's effectiveness in tackling transport emissions?***

171. Such an approach would be helpful to measure the Scottish Executive's effectiveness in tackling greenhouse gas emissions from transport. It would do little to tackle transport emissions contributing to poor local air quality.

172. In a Shetland context, we would resist imposition of carbon dioxide reduction targets aimed specifically at transport. Instead, we would welcome the ability to offset transport related carbon dioxide emissions with reductions from other sectors.

**173. Consultation Question 64. *What specific reduction level(s) for CO<sub>2</sub> should be put in place for transport?***

174. A long term carbon dioxide reduction target has been previously established, aiming for a 60% reduction by 2050<sup>21</sup>. Latest research evidence will be required to confirm the appropriateness of this, probably within a Global / European framework. The following excerpt from the Scottish Executive's Climate Change Programme<sup>22</sup> places this value in context.

*The Kyoto Protocol targets are an essential first step for international action but will not in themselves mean we are living within acceptable environmental limits. If all countries meet their Kyoto targets, global emissions are only expected to fall by 1-2%. In 1996, the European Council agreed the EU goal to limit temperature rise to 2°C above pre-industrial levels to avoid significant climate change, which requires stabilising carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations at 550 parts per million (ppm). (There are significant scientific uncertainties around these figures and the IPCC mentions the need to stabilise at 450ppm or even lower). The UK's longer-term goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 60% by 2050 is in line with this thinking.*

*There are a number of uncertainties in the medium term which prevent us painting a precise picture of Scotland in 2050. For example, negotiations on Kyoto targets post 2012 are only now beginning to get underway following the successful Montreal Summit, and the UK Government has recently initiated a review of the UK's energy needs, with findings expected in summer 2006. However, many of the decisions that we take now will leave a legacy for the future and this is particularly the case with investments that have a long lifetime, such as our housing stock and transport infrastructure.*

*Notwithstanding these uncertainties, in 2050 we want all of the people in Scotland to be living in a country which has made the transition to a low carbon economy and reduced its vulnerability to the effects of climate*

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<sup>21</sup> Department for Trade and Industry (2003), *Our Energy Future: Creating a Low Carbon Economy*. DTI, London.

<sup>22</sup> Scottish Executive (2006), *Changing our Ways: Scottish Climate Change Programme*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.

*change. We want to have done this at the same time as becoming more efficient and competitive – both economically and ethically – and in a way in which any adverse impact on other areas of public policy and the wider environment are avoided or minimised.*

**175. Consultation Question 65 - *Do consultees have any views about the timing or scope of reviews of the NTS?***

176. Given the significance of the impact of the NTS on Scotland's social, environmental and economic welfare, it is essential that progress is regularly reported, on an annual or biannual period. Based on the progress of the strategy in meeting its objectives, opportunities should be taken to initiate reviews of specific underperforming elements on around a 2 to 3 yearly basis, with more significant reviews undertaken around every 5 to 6 years.

177. Consideration is required to matching review cycles of the NTS with the National Planning Framework, the Climate Change Programme, and the Economic Development Strategy, as well as the corresponding regional strategies (planning, transport and economic).

### **CASE STUDY 1: INTEGRATED COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVISION IN SHETLAND.**

Engagement with community groups at an early stage of the development of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement Area in Firth, Mossbank and Voe indicated a need for transport within the area and Brae in order for different groups of the community to access different services. For example, older people accessing the chiropodist, and younger people accessing youth clubs. Rather than address each of these individually the Community Council decided to establish a sub-group, including representatives of different services in the area and the Council's Transport Services Manager, to examine ways in which spare transport capacity in the area could be used and integrated to improve access in the long-term.

Other relevant examples of successful initiatives include the the North Isles integrated bus project. The service provides a seamless integrated bus and ferry service for residents living in the islands of Unst, Fetlar and Yell by improving accessibility and meeting the economic and community requirements of these islands. It provides a daily return service six days a week. The service is in accordance with Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in terms of accessible transport provision, reduces journey times, and features a discounted integrated ticketing system.

### **CASE STUDY 2: MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH TRANSPORT IN SHETLAND**

The NHS Shetland publication “2020 Vision<sup>23</sup>” highlights in detail the issues faced with the delivery of a health service in a remote island community. One particular aspect is the management of transport. Examples of best practice are highlighted as follows:

#### ***Patient Travel Office***

*Shetland patients receive help and support in arranging their travel from NHS Shetland's Patient Travel Office. When a patient is given an appointment out-with Shetland, they are given information about the travel scheme and are told to notify the Patient Travel office who arrange tickets and advise on accommodation and related issues. Escorts accompanying patients for journeys off island are supported through the Highlands and Islands Travel Scheme, only when they are deemed medically necessary, with the exception of children where escorts are always funded. This does prove a hardship for families and carers who have to bear costs themselves if they wish to accompany patients (including the partner of women who give birth out-with Shetland). To compensate for this, a reduced visitors fare is available.*

#### ***Discharge Liaison Nurse***

*In the last year, NHS Shetland, NHS Orkney and NHS Grampian agreed on provision of a Discharge Liaison Nurse to smooth the journey for patients travelling between the islands and Grampian services. This has included planning discharges with information about the islands and journey home in patients' case notes, markers in case notes and information to patients and staff to prepare for travel and contingencies for delays (for instance for out-patient or day case patients to take*

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<sup>23</sup> NHS Shetland (2005), *2020 Vision of Shetland's Healthcare*. NHS Shetland, Lerwick.

*enough medication and spare money in case they are delayed and have to stay overnight). This service is of particular value to patients who are frail, ill or emotionally distressed, when weather or technical problems cause delays or cancellations, and when journeys are complex and involve inter-island journeys as well as air or ferry to Aberdeen (or further afield). The work of the nurse includes:*

- *Implementation of systems and protocols when travel is delayed or cancelled so that arrangements work smoothly for patients and to ensure BA/ferry and hospital staff co-ordinate arrangements.*
- *Making the timings of clinic appointments and discharges fit in with travel arrangements and coordinating appointments wherever possible to avoid unnecessary delays.*

### ***Redesign and Share of Current Resources***

*There are a range of local transport initiatives already in place in Shetland, including school transport, local community and commercial transport. For example, all residential care centres have access to dedicated transport with wheelchair access. There are some very innovative schemes that link transport in the rural areas to services and community needs – for instance, drive home schemes from alcohol-related social activities and subsidised transport for youth and leisure activities. The challenge of the future is to redesign current local systems, to find opportunities for collaboration and joint ventures that will be the first step towards an integrated community transport scheme for Shetland.*

Since publication of this document, work has been ongoing to achieve this vision. Local examples of successful practice include the ongoing and beneficial working with the local health service on providing effective access to local health services. Examples include the Levenwick Surgery dial a taxi service, the Walls Surgery/Walls Care Centre trial transport service, and the Brae Surgery/dial a bus service to Mossbank (being introduced shortly).

### **CASE STUDY 3: RESEARCH INTO UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND DEPRIVATION**

The research report is formally published on 13 June when it will be presented to Shetland's Community Planning Board (CPB). Research was funded by Scottish Executive Quality of Life funding and an external grant from Communities Scotland.

This piece of research intends to develop understanding of social exclusion and deprivation in Shetland, and other remote rural areas. This increased understanding, at a local level, can be used to inform local policy and delivery to better target resources and support and thereby reduce inequalities and genuinely improve the day-to-day lives of people living in Shetland. It can also feed into discussions about how these issues can be addressed at Highlands and Islands and national levels.





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**REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Maintenance Manager**  
**Roads**  
**Infrastructure Services Department**

**SCORD QUARRY – SUPPLIES OF MATERIAL TO PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Whilst the Council's in-house operations were being conducted under C.C.T. conditions the Council undertook a thorough review of its quarrying operations in an attempt to fully understand the legal constraints and its abilities to trade with third party organisations. A detailed report on the issue was presented by the then Director of Commercial Services to the Resources Committee on 23 June 1999 (Minute ref 14/99)
- 1.2 The fact that the Council has the only facility in Shetland capable of producing coated roadstone was not in itself considered to be sufficient justification for making supplies to third parties.
- 1.3 The Council was also mindful that it needed to consider the impact that refusing to supply third parties could stifle fair competition.
- 1.4 Legislation surrounding this issue is very complex and it became clear that the circumstances in which the Council could make external supplies were limited and needed to be carefully controlled.
- 1.5 The Council's legal advisers were satisfied that provided quarry product charges were advertised and applicable to all customers then supplies of coated material could be made to certain external organisations in terms of the Council's then economic development powers. It was also agreed that limited supplies of uncoated material could be sold where this could be shown to represent surplus capacity.
- 1.6 With the repeal of C.C.T., and the introduction of Best Value under the Local Government in Scotland Act, a Local Authority's ability to trade is greatly enhanced particularly with community partners.

## **2. Background**

2.1 Since the introduction of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 several members of the community have contacted the quarry and their local members asking if they can be supplied with coated quarried material. In response to a request from the member for Scalloway the legal powers surrounding the supply of materials have again been reviewed

2.2 Eversheds (Solicitors) were commissioned by The Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) to investigate the trading powers of local authorities. In particular they were asked to determine whether there was now a limitation on trading with community partners, restricted to using spare capacity. The Maintenance Manager has obtained a copy of this guidance document and a copy of the executive summary to the Evershed's report is attached to this report for member's information. |

## **3. Findings**

3.1 The report to APSE does not deal specifically with trading with individuals, and the private sector, and the legal situation surrounding these supplies is still subject to some uncertainty. However, the material provided by APSE does support arguments to the effect that the implied powers to trade using surplus capacity were not limited by the 2003 Act There is talk of a new piece of legislation being drafted that will clarify the situation regarding trading powers but this is not expected to pass through the Scottish Parliament in the current year.

3.2 These types of supplies to private individuals will only represent a very small proportion of the quarry turnover. Most individuals do not possess the tools or skills needed to lay coated material so these requests will be very limited.

3.3 Any financial risk to the Council from making supplies to customers who have not been financially vetted can be eradicated by only permitting supplies to customers using credit card transactions in conjunction with the Council's Finance Service.

## **4. Options**

4.1 If the Council feels that it would like to make material available to private individuals then it has two options available:

4.1.a Permit these limited supplies using the spare capacity arguments referred to above where the economic impact assessment and best value considerations would support such supplies. APSE have also indicated their support for this approach as it can only be seen as a benefit to the community.

4.1.b Continue with the current policy and await the development and introduction of new legislation on trading referred to in 3.1 above. In any event the position would be reviewed in light of any new legislation being introduced.

## **5. Links to Corporate Policy**

5.1 This proposal aligns with the following corporate aims:  
Equal opportunities: ensuring that there is no discrimination in the provision of Council services.

## **6. Financial implications**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications from the proposals in this report.

## **7. Policy and Delegated Authority**

7.1 The Council has a duty to develop the well-being of the community which it serves.

7.2 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act on all matters within its remit (Min Refs SIC 19/03 and 70/03) and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision. However, policy approval remains a full Council matter.

## **8. Recommendation**

8.1 I recommend that the Infrastructure Committee:

8.1.1 Confirm their preference for option 4.1.a or 4.1.b..

8.1.2 If members choose option 4.1.a. then this represents a change in policy and the committee will need to recommend these changes to the Full Council for approval.





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## **REPORT**

**To: Infrastructure Committee**

**13 June 2006**

**From: Acting Head of Transport  
Infrastructure Services Department**

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT OF SHETLAND TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

#### **3. Introduction**

- 3.1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the progress of the Shetland Transport Strategy.

## **2 Link to Council Priorities**

- 2.1 This report meets the objectives of the corporate plan by contributing to the aim of sustainability and easy to use systems for transporting freight and people.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Shetland Transport Partnership was established on the 1 December 2005 and has a statutory duty to deliver a transport strategy by the 31 March 2007. The Council had begun work to develop a transport strategy and the Shetland Transport Partnership will adopt the work commissioned to date by the Council.
- 3.2 It is the intention that the Member Officer Working Group will continue to oversee the development of the Transport Strategy and report to the Shetland Transport Partnership.
- 3.3 The Shetland Transport Partnership has a duty to consult with the Council on the Strategy and it is therefore the intention that progress will be reported to Infrastructure Committee (which has delegated authority on transport matters) on the development of the Strategy.

#### **4. Progress**

- 4.1 The following tasks have been completed since the last progress report to the Committee :

- Strategy Scoping Report drafted for submission to the Scottish Executive.
- Assurance report drafted for submission to the Scottish Executive.
- Compilation of ferry data.
- Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) Scoping Report – in final stage of preparation.
- Finalisation of Appraisal Framework.
- Option refinement.
- Appraisal “Dry Run”.

4.2 Appendix A provides the detail on the work carried out on these tasks.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. Costs for the consultation exercise are within budget.

## **6. Policy and Delegated Authority**

6.1 The Infrastructure Committee has full delegated authority to act on all matters within its remit (Min Refs SIC 19/03 and 70/03) and for which the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision, has approved the overall objectives.

## **7. Recommendation**

7.1 I recommend that Infrastructure Committee note the contents of this report.

Report Number : TR-15-06-F

## **Progress Report on the Development of Shetland Transport Strategy – 30 May 2006**

### **1. Introduction**

This note updates the Transport Strategy Member Officer Working Group of progress made since the last meeting of the group on 19 April 2006. The main areas of progress have been on:

- Strategy Scoping Report
- Assurance Report
- Development of Appraisal Framework

### **2. Strategy Scoping Report**

The scoping report is a technical report that pulls together background analysis, and demonstrates the process of moving from a set of problems, consultation outcomes, through to a set of objectives, and a long list of strategy options. The content and format of the report has been largely driven by conformance to Scottish Executive guidance on the preparation of Regional Transport Strategies, and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance.

Information is now available from an analysis of ferry logbooks. This provides robust information on utilisation issues on each ferry route. This will be included as an appendix to the scoping report.

The transport strategy scoping report is being finalised alongside the scoping report for the Strategic Environmental Appraisal.

### **3. Assurance Report**

Based on progress made to date on consultation, analysis, objective setting, and the development of a long list options, an assurance report has been prepared for submission to the Scottish Executive. This is largely based on material previously issued to this MOWG.

### **4. Appraisal Framework**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Discussion at the last MOWG centred on the vision and objectives which had been developed to date. It was agreed that further work would be undertaken on these objectives, testing their appropriateness with some candidate schemes.

#### **4.2 Outcome of Appraisal “Dry Run”**

A day was spent with officers working up the appraisal framework for major schemes. The outcomes were as follows:

- There was agreement over appraisal framework for major schemes, and for minor packages.

Agenda Item No. 07 - Public Appendix

- If was found that the framework should seek to score using quantitative information wherever possible, rather than subjective scores. Particular value was found in the emerging ferry data.
- The use of slightly different objectives for the different themes (external, inter-island, internal) was found to be confusing, as many of the objectives considered the same concepts.
- However, overall it was found the combination of using the objectives, in conjunction with specific indicators, was satisfactory for the purpose of the appraisal.
- There was also a realisation that the appraisal framework would usefully provide consistent information on each of the schemes across the most relevant criteria. This information then could provide the basis for the development of a transparent set of recommendations. As with any appraisal framework, it does not replace at the end of the day political judgement.

### 4.3 Option Refinement

After considering the appraisal framework, it is also necessary to consider how the long lists of options previously identified can be arranged and refined prior to appraisal.

For **external links**, given the apparent limited breadth of alternative options, it is likely that there will be two alternative approaches appraised, do minimum, or do something. These will be appraised using the STAG Part 1 approach. This will be split into:

- Air links – Passenger
- Air links – Freight
- Sea links – UK Passenger
- Sea links – UK Freight
- Sea links - European

Initial recommendations for the implementation plan and strategy will be made based on the outcomes of the appraisal.

For **inter-island links**, there is a dominant hierarchy of dependencies. Therefore, a sequential appraisal is required to determine:

- Fixed links – yes or no
- Fixed links – if yes, how many, where and phasing
- Consequential ferry, terminal and service options and requirements for Whalsay, Bluemull and Yell Sound
- Service options related to the smaller isles unaffected by fixed links
- Decisions related to reliability improvements at Fetlar and Skerries
- Other operational decisions relating to the ferry service
- Decisions related to the air service – different service levels, different service delivery options

The significant level of expenditure requires a more robust approach to scheme appraisal – particularly in relation to prioritisation between schemes. For major investment decisions, the proposed appraisal framework will be based on the STAG Part 1 approach, and relevant elements of the STAG Part 2 approach.



For **internal links**, appraisal will be based on packages of options informed by each of the scenarios, split into

- Roads
- Public Transport
- Walking, Cycling, and Travel Awareness

Within each of these elements there are potential projects that could require significant investment. Within the appraisal, these individual schemes, or packages of schemes, will be appraised following the same approach adopted for the inter-island links.

For schemes with lower investment costs, appraisal will be based on packaging coherent packages of measures, and appraising these to STAG Part 1.





## Shetland Islands Council

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### NOTE

**Environment & Transport Forum  
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick  
Tuesday 6 June 2006 at 10.30 a.m.**

**Councillors:**

J A Inkster     I J Hawkins  
J H Henry

**In Attendance (Officers):**

J Grant, Waste Services Manager  
D Marsh, Service Manager - Trading Standards  
M Grains, Trading Standards Officer  
J Wylie, Community Safety Officer  
D Haswell, Committee Officer

**Apologies:**

Capt G G Mitchell  
W Tait  
N Flaws, Sumburgh Airport Consultative Committee  
Shetland Enterprise  
L Irving, Shetland Citizens Advice Bureau  
I Walteson, ASCC

**Invited to Attend:**

J C Irvine  
F B Grains  
T W Stove  
W Fraser, ASCC  
Acting Inspector F MacBeath, Northern Constabulary  
J Arculus, Shetland Civic Society

**Chairperson:**

Mr J A Inkster, Chairperson of the Forum, presided.

### Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

13/06

**Community Planning Board Update – Chairperson**

There were no updates to report to this meeting.

14/06 **Shetland as a No Cold Calling Zone**

The Forum considered a Discussion Document by the Service Manager, Trading Standards (Appendix 1).

The Service Manager, Trading Standards briefly introduced the report. Referring to the national survey, which was done in 2002 and had included Shetland residents, over 90% of Shetland residents had responded to indicate that they did not welcome doorstep selling. A copy of the campaign pack that was proposed to be distributed to households in Shetland was tabled at the meeting and is attached as Appendix 1A. The Service Manager, Trading Standards advised that the draft leaflet would be amended to reflect local requirements. It would be the householder's choice if they wished to display the stickers.

Members agreed that doorstep selling was a perennial problem and doorstep sellers tended to target vulnerable members of the community. It was stated that people could readily feel pressured into buying products that were much more expensive than similar items they could purchase elsewhere and doorstep sellers often sold products that were of poor quality.

In response to questions, the Service Manager advised that the main problem in Shetland was with doorstep sellers selling goods whilst in other parts of the UK, there was a problem with people selling unwanted services. The proposal to establish Shetland as a No Cold Calling Zone would cover both uninvited goods and services. The Service Manager continued to say that each year Trading Standards received complaints about approximately 5 – 10 individuals or groups selling door-to-door in Shetland. Members noted that the proposal would not affect charitable collections that were made in the proper way and were properly regulated.

Acting Inspector F MacBeath advised that the Northern Constabulary received a number of complaints about doorstep sellers and the complaints were received from people Shetland-wide. Members of the public were concerned about the oppressive selling technique used by doorstep sellers. The Northern Constabulary worked in co-operation with Trading Standards to alleviate the problems and the local media assisted by highlighting the problems when they occurred.

A Member said that the main problem was the aggressive and threatening attitude used by doorstep sellers, particularly when this was targeted at the elderly or vulnerable members of the community. It was suggested that the campaign should concentrate on the fact that the Shetland community did not welcome doorstep sellers and would not tolerate vulnerable people being targeted.

In response to a comment from a Member regarding section 3.6, Acting Inspector MacBeath said that if signs were displayed at mainland departure points, this would act as a disincentive for doorstep sellers to come up to Shetland in the first place. Inspector MacBeath advised

that in the past, Northern Constabulary and Trading Standards had recovered goods and their origins were untraceable. He said that nationally, small plant theft was on the increase.

In response to a query from a Member, the Service Manager said it was not the intention that villages throughout Shetland would be covered in No Cold Calling Zone signs because this would affect the attractiveness of Shetland. However, if communities wished to display signs, the cost of signage was minimal and was not an issue. Trading Standards had also considered displaying signs at the Inter-Island ferry terminals.

Mrs W Fraser said she was certain that Community Councils would be interested in discussing this issue. A Member suggested that consultation should take place with Community Councils prior to a further report being presented to the Infrastructure Committee. It was noted, however, that there was enough time for Community Councils to discuss this issue and it would not be until after the recess when a report would be submitted to the Infrastructure Committee.

The Forum was in agreement that Shetland should be established as a No Cold Calling Zone.

15/06

**Items for Future Discussion**

Asbestos

Climate Change

Shetland Transport Partnership – Transport Strategy

The meeting concluded at 11.10 a.m.

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A Inkster  
CHAIRPERSON