

MINUTE

Public

Special Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 29 October 2012 at 2.00pm

Present:

A Wishart	R Henderson
D Ratter	G Smith
M Stout	

Apologies:

M Bell	G Robinson
T Smith	J Wills

In Attendance (Officers):

P Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services
D Coupe, Executive Manager - Roads Maintenance
M Craigie, Executive Manager - Transport Planning
K Duerden, Executive Manager - Ferry Operations
J Riise, Executive Manager - Governance and Law
N Hutcheson, Team Leader - Asset and Network
B Robb, Management Accountant
C Anderson, Communications Officer
L Gair, Committee Officer
J Orr, Human Resources Officer
L Adamson, Committee Officer

Also In Attendance (Members)

G Cleaver
A Cooper

Chair:

Mr A Wishart, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None.

28/12 Inter Island Ferry Service Review Update

The Committee considered a joint report by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Development Services (Report No: ISD-10-12-F), which provided an update on progress regarding the Inter Island Ferry Service Review.

The Director of Infrastructure Services summarised the main terms of the report. He advised that the remit of the Committee includes consideration of the operational issues, and therefore questions in regard to the proposals should be made from an operational perspective. He added that the Executive Manager – Ferry Operations was also present to answer any questions.

At the suggestion of the Chair, the Committee agreed to consider each of the recommendations individually, as set out in Section 2 of the report.

Referring to Recommendation (i), the Committee agreed to note the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures already in place or in the process of being implemented, shown in Table A (Appendix 3), on the motion of Mr Stout, seconded by Mr Henderson.

The Committee considered recommendation (ii), to note the progress and implementation of the various savings measures which will be introduced as soon as possible, shown in Table B (i) (Appendix 4). In regards to Option 10.1, Mr Henderson asked that the Committee consider the need to retain the ferry booking facility in Ulsta until such time as an on-line booking system is operational and available to the public. Mr Henderson explained how the current ferry booking office serves as a communication hub for the North Isles, provides the opportunity for commuters to make booking while they wait for the ferry, and he referred to the Council Policy to diversify jobs from the central areas. The Director of Infrastructure Services explained that the original proposal was to retain the centralised booking service in Ulsta, however with the need to drive further efficiencies, a further proposal has been put forward to look to move the bookings system to the shore staff at Sellaness. He added that he could not give assurance at this time that the booking service would be retained in Ulsta, as it may be found that further efficiencies could be achieved from the Sellaness proposal.

After hearing Members speak in support of Mr Henderson's proposal in terms of the economic implications and benefits to retain the booking office in Ulsta, but also acknowledging that all opportunities and efficiencies have to be considered, the Director of Infrastructure Services proposed that consideration would be given to retain Ulsta as the centralised booking office unless a more cost effective option is identified, and in such case a report would be presented to Council. Members concurred.

In referring to Recommendation (iii), the Chair reported from the decision at Special Development Committee, to include within the recommendation two suggestions put forward from the Fair Isle community in relation to the Fair Isle Service. On the motion of Mr G Smith, seconded by Mr Stout, the Committee approved the implementation of the savings measures shown in Table B (ii) (Appendix 4) with the addition that the descriptive for Option 8.6, "Introduce a tourist fare for Fair Isle" is changed to read, "Introduce a non-islander fare for Fair Isle", and to include an option to introduce a commercial vehicle, non-islander fare at £100 return.

In response to a question, reference was made to the discussion at Development Committee that all the options for the Fair Isle Service would be progressed, with the efficiencies and outcomes reported to Council in December to allow for decisions to be made on the service.

On the motion of Mr Henderson, seconded by Mr Stout, the Committee noted the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this Review, given in Tables C (i) and C (ii) (Appendix 5).

During the discussion, assurance was given that proposals to externalise the ferry service or parts of the service had not been discontinued from the review, and were still live options.

In response to questions regarding the current practice whereby loose freight is transported on the direct sailings between Skerries and Lerwick, which run twice a week, the Executive Manager – Ferry Operations explained that there was no restriction on the existing ferry and it currently has the capacity to carry full sized freight vehicles. He said that the current practice was a choice and should the direct sailings to Lerwick be removed freight could be transported in a delivery vehicle on any of the daily sailings to Vidlin or Laxo. The Director confirmed that all options for the Skerries ferry service would be taken forward in the review, and reported to Council in December.

On the motion of Mr G Smith, seconded by Mr Henderson, the Committee noted the options summarised in Tables D (i) and D (ii) and detailed in Appendices 6 and 7, which require further detailed appraisal in accordance with the programme given in Appendix 8, prior to a final report to Council on 17 December.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to:

- i. Note the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures already in place or in the process of being implemented, shown in Table A (Appendix 3).
- II. Note the progress and implementation of the various savings measures which will be introduced as soon as possible, shown in Table B (i) (Appendix 4), but that consideration be given to retain Ulsta as the centralised booking office unless a more cost effective option is identified, and in such case a report would be presented to Council.
- i. Approve the implementation of the savings measures shown in Table B (ii) (Appendix 4), with the addition that the descriptive for Option 8.6, "Introduce a tourist fare for Fair Isle" is changed to read, "Introduce a non-islander fare for Fair Isle", and to include an option to introduce a commercial vehicle, non-islander fare at £100 return.
- ii. Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this Review, given in Tables C (i) and C (ii) (Appendix 5).
- iii. Note the options summarised in Tables D (i) and D (ii) and detailed in Appendices 6 and 7, which require further detailed appraisal in accordance with the programme given in Appendix 8, prior to a final report to Council on 17 December 2012.

29/12 Winter Roads Maintenance Review Report

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-12-12-F), which sought a decision on proposals generated as a result of the Infrastructure Roads Winter Maintenance Review; and informed of steps that have already been implemented, or are in the process of being implemented, as a result of the Review.

The Director of Infrastructure Services summarised the main terms of the report.

At the suggestion of the Chair, the Committee agreed to consider each of the recommendations individually, as set out in Section 2 of the report.

On the motion of Mr Stout, seconded by Mr Henderson, the Committee noted the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures as already introduced, given in Appendix A.

In referring to the range of proposals, as outlined in Table B, to be carried forward and implemented, the Chair reported from a meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee earlier today, that the Unions were fully aware of the proposals and had accepted the report to go forward.

Mr G Smith referred to the proposal in Option 5.1, "Winter Service Hierarchy of Treatment: revise existing hierarchy to reduce percentage of roads/routes gritted", and questioned the proposed "reduction in level of service from 24 gritted routes to 18, or less". During a brief discussion, it was confirmed that the proposal at this time was for the number of routes to be reduced to 18, and it was agreed that the wording "or less" would be removed. On that basis Mr G Smith moved that the Committee approve the proposals in Table B. In seconding, Mr Stout asked that his appreciation be recorded for the savings that have already been achieved.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to:-

- Note the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures already introduced, given in Table A.
- Approve a range of proposals, given in Table B, to be carried forward and implemented (noting that the Unions had been consulted and were content with the proposals).
- Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this Review, given in Table C.

30/12 **Streetlighting Review Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-11-12-F), which sought a decision on options generated as a result of the Infrastructure Streetlighting Review; and informed of options that have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented as a result of the Review.

The Director of Infrastructure Services summarised the main terms of the report.

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that equalities impact assessments ensure that all options are considered whereby no section of society is less or more favoured than another.

In response to questions, the Director of Infrastructure Services advised on the process that would be followed when considering the removal of streetlighting, which would involve consultation with the community and full risk assessments. He confirmed that there was no intention to remove more streetlighting from any specific location, however it was anticipated that more streetlighting would be retained in areas with a higher level of population, rather than in rural areas.

Mr Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Stout seconded.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to:

- Note the changes that have been made to the street lighting inspection regime;
- Approve the options, given in Table A, paragraph 4.16, to be carried forward and implemented; and
- Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this review.

The meeting concluded at 2.45pm.

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Chair