

# MINUTE

# A&B - Public

**Environment and Transport Committee**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**  
**Thursday 12 December 2012 at 2.00pm**

**Present:**

M Bell	R Henderson
D Ratter	G Robinson
G Smith	T Smith
M Stout	A Wishart

**Apologies:**

D Sandison	J Wills
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**In Attendance (Officers):**

P Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services  
D Coupe, Executive Manager - Roads Maintenance  
K Duerden, Executive Manager - Ferry Operations  
M Sandison, Executive Manager - Environmental Health and Trading Standards  
G Leask, Team Leader – Roads Design  
C Gair, Traffic and Road Safety Engineer  
B Robb, Management Accountant  
L Gair, Committee Officer

**Chair:**

Mr A Wishart, Chair of the Committee, presided.

**Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

**Declarations of Interests**

None.

**31/12     Confirm Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meetings held on 3 October and 29 October 2012 on the motion of Mr Henderson seconded by Mr Stout.

**32/12     Management Accounts for Environment and Transport Committee 2012/13 – Quarter 2 (April – September 2012)**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (Report No: F-054-F), which provided the opportunity to monitor the financial performance of services within the remit of the Committee to ensure that expenditure incurred and income generated has been delivered within the approved budget, so that timely action can be taken when required to mitigate projected overspends.

The Management Accountant introduced the report. Comment was made by a Member on the reference to “Council-wide savings” and it was suggested that this was not being achieved in other departments. The Chair said that the Council had to accept that there would be shortfalls across budgets, but stressed how important it was to keep moving forward with this. Members were assured that all undeliverable savings would be a feature of the new budgets to be set and were part of the medium term financial plan.

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Infrastructure Services provided an update on the Bixter Burial Ground tender and explained that following re-specification of the project, consultation would take place with the Community Council with a report being presented to Committee, at the end of January 2013.

An explanation with regard to the water meter charges was provided in that the budget was set on estimated rates and ultimately set too low with the actual costs being quite a bit higher.

Mr G Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Robinson seconded.

**Decision:**

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- review the Revenue Management Accounts, from 1 April 2012 – 30 September 2012, including the projected outturn position and savings in the year;
- note the position on the removal of capital projects from the Asset Investment Plan for 2012/13 which will be dealt with under the cyclical Asset Investment Plan Progress Report to Council; and
- instructed officers to bring forward alternative savings proposals to address the projected overspend.

33/12 **Infrastructure Services Department – Quarter 2 Performance Overview**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-13-12-F), which summarised the activity and performance of the Infrastructure Service Department as it pertains to the functional responsibility of the Environment and Transport Committee for the second quarter of 2012/13 against the objectives and actions in the Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan.

The Director - Infrastructure Services summarises the main terms of the report and highlighted the improvements on the percentage of actions on track compared to Quarter 1, as well as the improvement in the budget savings target.

In response to a question regarding the increase in staff mileage, the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that an objective of the Council's Directorate is to be more customer focussed and to attend more Community Council meetings and meet with the public on site. He explained that this would incur more mileage however this was expected to be a flat trend for the year and was not expected to continue to increase. Members agreed that this level of engagement with the public was valuable and were content for it to continue.

Mr G Smith expressed his appreciation for the Director of Infrastructure Services' recent attendance at the Gulberwick, Quarff and Cunningsburgh Community Council at a time when he was busy with a number of reviews.

In response to a further query, the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that the figure provided relating to the energy recovery plant down time was an accumulative figure and there had actually been less down time. He said that the plant was on target to meet the percentage downtime set.

Mr Robinson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr T Smith seconded.

**Decision:**

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

34/12 **Neighbourhood Support Workers Review – SR-R004**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Environmental Health and Trading Standards (Report No: EHTS-06-12-F), which sought a decision on proposals generated as a result of the Neighbourhood Support Workers Service Review.

The Executive Manager - Environmental Health and Trading Standards summarised the main terms of the report and responded to questions and comments made by Members as follows:

- With the reduction to two staff in February this year there appeared to be no great rise in crime.
- More integration with the Police could enhance the role of the Neighbourhood Support Workers (NSW) and providing more value and making them more effective. This however would not be a replacement for experienced qualified police officers but would support them at a lower level.
- Members were advised that the NSW's were complimentary to the Police and did things that the police do not have time to do and are proactive in their patrolling and are preventative rather than being reactive in responding to incidents.
- In response to a query on whether part time NSW's would be adequate to provide a service within and outwith Lerwick, the Executive Manager - Environmental Health and Trading Standards acknowledged that there was now less resources but there was capacity to do morning, evening and weekend patrols and these do make a difference. This would continue but not as much as previous years.
- Members recalled that this initiative was originally set up by the Scottish Government and was not expected to be a burden on the Council, but this had now fallen to the Council to provide.
- Members acknowledged that the visibility and presence of NSW's had been effective with patrols making a difference and providing reassurance within communities.

*(Mr Ratter left the Chamber)*

- Members agreed that contact should be made with Total to explore possible financial assistance for the NSW posts.
- Comment was made on whether half a service was better than none and during some discussion Members heard that work was being done on working together with outreach services in the community and Housing Service, Community Safety partners and youth work in order to introduce flexibility into the work they do.
- Members noted that complaints were down in terms of anti social behaviour and dog complaints which indicated that there was still benefit from having the two NSW's.

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

**Decision:**

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the proposal described as Option 2 – to retain two 23-hour posts.

35/12 **Review of Charging for Off-Street Parking in Central Lerwick – SR-R019**

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader – Roads Design (Report No: RD-12-12-F), which advised of the review into charging for off-street car parking in central Lerwick, and sought a decision on whether or not to implement charges for off-street parking in the town centre area.

The Team Leader – Roads Design introduced the report, drawing attention to the set up costs and predicted revenue from the scheme and advised that it was likely that objections would be received from the Community Council and Living Lerwick.

In considering the report, Members questioned the budget that was set at £100,000 for this as a savings target. The Director - Infrastructure Services explained that he had pushed this concept forward based on evidence from Orkney and other authorities that had made surpluses from policing the parking activity. However what was not available to him at the time was the number of spaces and the conditions placed on the car parks. He said that this had been put forward as a review because the information was required was not available to progress the project.

Members expressed their surprise at the cost of installation and running costs and suggested ways of reducing the running costs. However Members did acknowledge that the number of car parking spaces available for charging did not make this a viable option at this time.

In response to a query from Members, the Team Leader – Roads Design explained that with the recent office moves the parking trends had changed and it would be appropriate to revisit this review in the future.

Members commented that they wished to encourage activity in the town centre and that such a scheme would effectively penalise the public from outwith Lerwick by charging for parking spaces.

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

**Decision:**

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve that implementing charges for parking in any of the Council owned 'off-street' car parks is not pursued at this time.

The Environment and Transport Committee **NOTED** that:

- There is a risk that an 'off-street' Pay & Display scheme will make a loss, particularly in the early years; and

- There have recently been significant changes to pattern of traffic and parking in Lerwick due to the new developments at the North Ness. Therefore, the issue of charging for 'off-street' parking should be reviewed again in 2 years time. This timescale will allow the changes to 'bed-in', and allow the Roads Service to update the Parking Study to measure the changes.

#### 36/12 **Review of A & B Class Road Speed Limits**

The Committee considered a report by the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer (Report No: RD-13-12-F), which advised of the review of speed limits on A & B Class Roads.

The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer introduced the report and explained that the study had been undertaken using criteria laid down in the National Guidelines. He advised that the review undertaken does not deal with individual accident sites but looks at average accident rates. The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer went on to explain that the study had been ongoing for a number of years and used some 160 traffic counts.

In response to questions from Members, the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer explained that the guidance provides minimum lengths of road over which speed limits should be introduced as well as outlining where and when they ought to be implemented.

In response to a specific area of concern at Quarff, the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer explained that this section had been analysed using the framework and it had also been looked at in detail using 5 counters to gain as much information as possible. He explained that the speeds remained fairly consistent throughout the whole of Quarff. The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer acknowledged the comment that the number of turning vehicles could reduce the overall speed measured but he went on to explain that the accident rates were not significant.

Following further concern regarding the criteria used, the Director - Infrastructure Services advised that this Council's approach was the same as others in the data and criteria that it uses. However if Members wished to change to a more proactive approach based on local criteria the Council could move to a Shetland Speed Management System but this would have a cost implications. He said that it was current Council policy to follow national standards.

In responding to a query relating to paragraph 2.1.2 and the provision of crash barriers that had been requested the Director - Infrastructure Services advised that the investigation for this would be determined in line with the Council's Capital Programme. He explained that there were in excess of 150 requests for different improvements that would be prioritised and set against the capital programme budget as set out in the medium term financial plan.

In explaining the threshold accident rate, the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer explained that these figures are provided within the guidance based on research by Transport Research Laboratories.

Mr Stout explained that community perception tends to be on speed and this is one area that is discussed frequently at the Road Safety Advisory Panel. Mr Stout moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Robinson seconded.

**Decision:**

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- The introduction of a 50mph speed limit on the A970 through Gairloch incorporating the Wadbister and Brunt Hammersland Junctions;
- The investigation of possible minor road works to the series of bends on the A971 north of Kalliness, Weisdale to reduce long term accident rate;
- The investigation of enhanced edge delineation and route marking on the A968 between Mossbank and Toft;
- The investigation of the A970 between the Laxo Junction and Tagon, Voe to see what additional measures could be employed to try to reduce the accident rate;
- Continue to monitor the A970 north of Cunningsburgh in winter weather conditions to see if there are suitable measures that could be employed;
- Highlight to the Police the incidence of accidents involving drivers under the influence of alcohol on the B9074 through the Tingwall Valley.

The meeting concluded at 11.05am.

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Chair