

MINUTE

A&B - Public

Special Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Friday 1 February 2013 at 2.00pm

Present:

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

Apologies:

J Wills

In Attendance (Officers):

P Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services
C Ferguson, Director of Corporate Services
D Coupe, Executive Manager - Roads Maintenance
K Duerden, Executive Manager - Ferry Operations
J Gray, Executive Manager – Finance
J Riise, Executive Manager - Governance and Law
Carl Symons, Acting Executive Manager - Building & Transport Operations
J Emptage, Team Leader – Cleansing, Grounds and Burial Services
D Polson, Team Leader – Transport Operations
A Christie-Henry, Project Manager - Infrastructure and Development Services Reviews
A Hughes, Senior Assistant Accountant
C Anderson, Communications Officer
L Gair, Committee Officer

Also In Attendance (Members)

P Campbell
G Cleaver
A Cooper
S Coutts
A Duncan
B Fox
A Manson
F Robertson
V Wishart

Chair:

Mr A Wishart, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

Mr Henderson declared an interest in item 3 “Viking Bus Station/Rural Freight Centre Review” as his son’s business used the freight centre. Mr Henderson stated that he would take part in the debate and vote if necessary.

01/13 **Management Accounts for Environment and Transport Committee 2012/13 – Quarter 3 (April – December 2012)**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (Report No: F-012-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 Executive Manager – Finance introduced the report and summarised the main terms of Appendix 1.

In response to a question, the Executive Manager - Finance confirmed that a report would be presented to Executive Committee in June that would detail the original £15m savings and what savings will be recurring.

Members congratulated the Executive Manager - Finance and staff for the work done in achieving this good position.

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

Decision:

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

- review the Revenue Management Accounts, from 1 April 2012 – 31 December 2012, including the projected outturn position; and
- instructed the Director of Infrastructure Services to ensure that the projected outturn is achieved at the year-end or exceeded.

02/13 **Infrastructure Services Department – Quarter 3 Performance Overview**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-02-13-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 third quarter of 2012/13 against the objectives and actions in the Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan.

The Director - Infrastructure Services introduced the report and highlighted an error on page 8. He advised that 57% should be replaced by 48% in relation to quarter 2 of Ports and Harbours service action plan. On page 15 he also advised that reference to Quarter 3 should read “Quarter 2”.

A Member commented that this was a refreshing report that highlighted areas of slippage and reflected a realistic impression of what life is like.

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

Decision:

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

03/13 **Viking Bus Station/Rural Freight Centre Review**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Building and Transport Operations (Report No: BTO-03-13-F), which provided information on the Viking Bus Station/Rural Freight Centre Review, outlined a number of options on the Bus Station/Freight Centre's future and presented recommendations for the Committee.

The Executive Manager - Governance and Law advised that a petition has been received which had not been lodged appropriately, but would be presented to a meeting of the Council's Executive Committee.

The Director - Infrastructure Services introduced the report and confirmed that these changes related to the building only and the bus lay-by would not be affected.

In referring to the non statutory status of this service, a Member questioned whether any work had been done to identify what services are provided that are statutory or non-statutory. The Director - Infrastructure Services said that in developing budgets all services are assessed and identified on whether they are statutory or discretionary and if those statutory requirements are being met. He said that services are prioritised against the Single Outcome Agreement.

During consideration of the report Members advised of comments they had received from the Community and the concerns that this was another service that was being cut off which would affect the outlying areas. Members asked for more analysis on the numbers of people using the waiting room, and it was agreed that the Executive Manager – Finance examine the rates charged to ensure that this is set at the correct level. It was acknowledged that the overheads for maintenance and rates would continue to exist if the building were retained by the Council but the savings would be made on the reduction of staff and fixed costs. The needs assessment was questioned in terms of their being "no impact" reported and the assessment on equalities concluding there being no impact on the bus routes. A Member stressed the need for a sound impact assessment to be carried out.

The Director - Infrastructure Services explained the proposal that the full savings of £90,000 would be achieved year on year from 2014/15, but 2013/14 would see less of a saving due to the process of closing down the waiting room. Responding to further queries the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that the freight service would relocate to the stores and would be accommodated within existing resources. He explained that there were two stores that were being amalgamated and with bar coding technology this additional work could be included.

(Mr Campbell attended the meeting)

Members discussed the previous behaviour problems amongst younger people who used to gather at the station, however it was noted that this had ceased and was not as big an issue.

A Member said that if the waiting room is to be changed for an alternative use it is important that it is leased or sold with a condition that the waiting room is incorporated for the public to use. It was clarified however that such a condition would not be possible if the waiting room were sold. Members also noted that sale at this time would be with a sitting tenant. Officers provided a breakdown of the electricity maintenance costs, emergency and statutory maintenance and it was explained that the highest of these were electricity maintenance at £5662.

(Mr Duncan declared an interest as he supplies vegetables every year in the winter to the Northern Isles through the bus freight service).

In responding to further questions, the Director - Infrastructure Services advised that it would be possible to remove the additional staff member on a Tuesday and run the freight service and toilet cleaning with one Member of staff, however he was not confident that he would find additional savings from reducing services in other areas such as ferries and winter maintenance to allow the freight service to continue in this way. The Director - Infrastructure Services also advised that the cost of providing 22 metres of bus shelters as an alternative to the waiting room would cost £5,000. Members also sought more clarification in relation to the income and recharges in respect of the building.

The Chair recapped on a number of the questions presented and said that in his view he would like to see the decision deferred to look into these questions further. Mr Wishart moved that the Committee defer a decision on the station and freight service and seek a change of use in order that food or other retail, compatible with a waiting room, may be provided and that the building be offered for sale or lease to test the market. Mr Wishart clarified that until that time both the freight centre and bus station would remain open. Mr Robinson seconded.

Discussions continued taking into consideration the need to differentiate between bulky freight and lighter items that could continue to be transported from the bus station for a fee, such as newspapers which is seen as integral to keeping the community connected. Bulky freight could be managed through Gremista.

Members were advised that there would be an additional draw on reserves until this process is completed.

The Vice-Chair said that this decision was symbolic in that Members were recognising that for a number of communities the facility is important, and Members were working together to support the motion.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to defer a decision on the bus station and freight centre, and in the meantime:

- seek a change of use for food or other retail activities compatible with a waiting room;
- Offer for sale or lease to test the market and report back to Council; and
- Until such time the bus station and freight centre will remain open.

04/13

Tingwall Airport Review

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader – Transport Operations (Report No: BTO-02-13-F), which provided information on the Review of Tingwall Airport, to outlined options for the airport's future and presented recommendations to the Committee.

The Director - Infrastructure Services introduced the main terms of the report and in response to questions advised that the garage staff had been used to man the airport, however this meant that they could not take their work with them and the

garage work was being done by contractors and contractual overtime. He explained that by using Environmental Services staff who are able to take their work with them the savings have been made by removing the need for outside contractors and non contractual overtime to cover for the garage staff. He confirmed that the reduction was in costs not staff cuts.

The Team Leader – Transport Operations responded to specific questions relating to staffing costs at page 84 and he explained that the “charged out rate” was based on the total cost of the garage, divided by man hours equating to £37.50/hour. He also advised that staff work an average of 42¾ hours per week in the summer and less in the winter. Members were also advised that two Flight Information Services Officers had resigned and it was intended that one would be recruited and Environmental Officers would be used on a rota system, taking away the need for overtime.

In response to further queries, the Team Leader - Transport Operations advised that the air ambulance had landed at Tingwall airport 43 times in the first 6 months of 2012 and 204 times in 2011. He also confirmed that reference to CAA requirements on page 85 highlighted that there was ongoing work to meet the necessary regulations. He said that he was not aware of any new regulations that would have a cost implication to the Council. The Team Leader - Transport Operations explained that the runway requires surface friction tests every 7 months and it was expected that there would be 4-5 years left in the surface.

In responding to a question regarding the “other opportunities” referred to in paragraph 3.21, the Team Leader - Transport Operations explained that the intention was not to attract business from the other two airports, but if the airport was brought up to standard it would allow the Council to advertise it as a diversionary airport, leaving the decision to use it up to the helicopter pilots. The Director - Infrastructure Services commented that additionally Tingwall was well placed for the oil and gas industry and there may be potential for Tingwall to be used for a diversionary airport. However the Council was not actively marketing the Tingwall Airport, as such as it would not wish to commercially compete with the other two airports.

The Director - Infrastructure Services confirmed that by making the emergency call out system a priority for funding on the four main routes of the Inter Island Ferries instead of using Tingwall for call out air ambulance service it would make emergency call out of the ferries more achievable.

The Director - Infrastructure Services confirmed that five staff were trained as Flight Information Service officers. Four of these were Environment and Trading Standards staff.

Mr Robinson 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 increase landing charges to cover the full additional costs of accommodating Scottish Ambulance Service at Tingwall Airport.

Further, that the Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the early closure of Tingwall Airport on winter afternoons; and
- approve the change in Accountable Manager from Team Leader – Transport Operations to the Director of Infrastructure Services.

05/13 **Community Council Skips Review – SR-R024**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Environmental Services (Report No: ES-01-13-F), which sought a decision on the future delivery mechanism for rural bulky waste collection in place of the current Community Council Skips Service.

The Team Leader Cleansing Grounds & Burial Services introduced the report and together with the Director - Infrastructure Services, responded to Members questions relating to the budget figures provided.

The Director - Infrastructure Services also advised that fly tipping was the responsibility of the landowner and therefore the Council were responsible for their own land. Where there is a tenant involved it would be their responsibility in the first instance before falling to the landowner. The Council can enforce and prosecute where individuals are identified.

The Team Leader Cleansing Grounds & Burial Services confirmed that there were 20-30 calls per year where the public sought assistance with disposing of bulky waste. In addition the feedback from the “Have Your Say” initiative and Community Councils were mixed in regard to the provision of community skips.

Members were advised that the Western Isles forward their communication from the HSE to this Council and it was a matter of time before the HSE get in contact directly.

In discussing the bulky uplift, Members were advised that this service could be carried out by the Council or put out to tender. It was confirmed that the fee would be applied Shetland wide, including Lerwick where there is currently a free uplift service.

In response to a query from Members regarding liability, the Executive Manager - Governance and Law advised that the obligations rest on the Council if the skip service continues. If there were to be a fatality the HSE would seek to prosecute and that would be a matter for the Chief Executive and the Director - Infrastructure Services to face.

The Director - Infrastructure Services explained that the recommendations were based on providing the bulky uplift service in-house but if costs could be reduced by getting someone else to provide the service, then that should be considered. Members discussed the need for considering the services already provided by Cope’s scrapstore and the Amenity Trust. It was also suggested that couriers may be willing to collect bulky waste for a fee once their deliveries are complete. It was noted however that an outside operator may be subject to commercial waste charges.

(Mr Ratter left the meeting)

Mr Wishart 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 stop the Community Council Skip Service and introduce a chargeable bulky uplift service at £30 per collection with a £10 discounted rate for householders on means tested benefits.

(Mr Cleaver, Ms Wishart and Mr Coutts left the meeting)

Meeting adjourned for a short break at 4.05pm.

The meeting reconvened at 4.15pm.

06/13

Closure of Rural Toilets – Savings Review – SR-R022

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Environmental Services (Report No: ES-03-13-F), which sought a decision on the proposals generated as a result of the Savings Review of Rural Public Toilets.

The Director - Infrastructure Services briefly introduced the report and responded to questions together with the Executive Manager – Environmental Services.

During discussions Members expressed their concern regarding the scoring applied within the options appraisal and the distances and locations of the facilities deemed to be the next available toilet. Members commented that the public needed to have confidence in what was being recommended.

In particular the Brae public toilet was seen as a very important facility for the increased volume of heavy goods vehicles and passing manual labour and there was a case to retain this facility for a further 2 years. The suggestion that these individuals could use the facilities at the leisure centre or the Mid Brae Inn was considered unworkable as the facilities within these establishments were for use by their patrons and more importantly there were considerable health and safety risks relating to the parking of large vehicles in the school car park.

In relation to the Sandwich Public Toilet it was reported that the facility was well used by visitors to Mousa and by the sailing club and the toilet at Cunningsburgh was not a realistic alternative.

It was also suggested that rather than keeping the Knab Road public toilet open to the public, it could be considered under recommendation 2 whereby it would be transferred to burial ground operators to unlock only when there is a funeral.

The Team Leader Cleansing Grounds and Burial Services confirmed that 12 part-time staff would lose their jobs if the recommendations were approved.

Members were also concerned that user groups had not been consulted, however, the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that Officers require a decision from Members on what should be consulted on before that process could begin. A request that the Sandness Development Group also be included in the list of consultees was agreed.

Discussion regarding the £5,000 per annum figure attributed to the running costs of a public toilet was explained as being an average of the total cost of all public toilets. Members however said that this should be qualified by providing the figures for the

least and most expensive of these facilities. At the request of Members the Director - Infrastructure Services agreed to provide the cost of demolishing the public toilets by email.

Mr Robinson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report with the inclusion of the Knab within section two of the table. Mr Sandison seconded.

Following further discussion, Mr Robinson with the support of his seconder, agreed to include within their motion that Bressay, Brae and Sandness be included in option two and that the first two words of recommendation 2 "Close but" be removed and the last sentence be changed to read "If no transfer achieved report back to Committee".

It was agreed that this would be reported back to Members before the summer recess, but Members noted that this would have an impact on £90,000 savings figure identified for 2013/14.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to approve the proposal described in the table below:

	Recommendation	Toilet
1	Close and dispose of by sale or demolition	Mid Yell and Uyeasound
2	Offer in the first instance to transfer to local business or recognised community group to keep open, manage, clean and maintain. If no transfer achieved report back to Committee.	Knab, Brae, Bressay (Mail) and Sandness. Bigton, Hamnavoe, Burra (Meal), Hillswick, Jarlshof, Sandwick, and Skeld.
3	Cease commitment to pay for cleaning and maintaining the toilets attached to commercial business premises/Community Group premises.	Aith, Baltasound, Eshaness, Hermaness, Ollaberry and Walls.
4	Keep toilet open - transfer to other Council service to manage, clean and maintain	Belmont, Gutcher, Hamar's Ness, Ulsta, Toft, Laxo, Vidlin, Symbister, Skerries, Maryfield, West Burrafirth, Papa Stour , and Grutness: to Ferry Operations; Walls Pier (under construction), Foula to Transport Service; Cullivoe Pier Industrial site: to Ports and Harbours Operations.
5	Keep Toilet Open	Esplanade, Scalloway (Burn Beach), Voe, Cunningsburgh, and Bixter

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (Report No: F-009-F), which enabled the Environment and Transport Committee to consider the controllable budget proposals for the services within the Committee’s remit, which will in turn contribute towards ensuring that the Infrastructure Directorate meets its Target Operating Budgets as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

During the discussion which followed, it was suggested that a change management team should be set up to co-ordinate the range of reviews being undertaken across the Council. Members agreed that, as a corporate matter, this be taken up at the Council meeting on 20 February.

Reference was made to paragraph 4.2 and the removal of the air ambulance service, and the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that this was only in relation to the overnight provision, which was no longer required.

Regarding disposal of Council vehicles, the Committee noted that this was currently done in accordance with Council policy, but that discussions would be held with Corporate Services to consider whether there were any alternative options that may be more profitable for the Council to adopt, whilst continuing to achieve best value.

The Executive Manager – Finance confirmed that, in relation to the cessation of COPE Ltd funding referred to in section 4.3 of the report, further discussions were being held in relation to the ongoing provision of services to those clients. In this regard, a 6 months funding package had been put in place to allow that review to be completed.

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

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RECOMMEND** that the Executive Committee resolve to approve the budget proposals for 2013-14 as detailed in the Budget Activity Sheet and Charging Sheet.

The meeting concluded at 5.20 p.m.

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Chair