

MINUTE

A&B - Public

Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday 6 March 2013 at 10.00am

Present:

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

Apologies:

None

In Attendance (Officers):

P Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services
D Coupe, Executive Manager - Roads Maintenance
C Gair, Traffic and Road Safety Engineer
A Cogle, Team Leader – Administration
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

The Chair declared an interest as a Living Lerwick Limited Observer.

08/13 **Minutes**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting on 12 December 2012 and 1 February 2013 on the motion of Mr T Smith, seconded by Mr Stout.

09/13 **Burns Walk Closure**

The Committee considered a report by the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer (Report No: RD-01-13-F), which sought approval to proceed with the closure of Burns Walk to vehicular traffic.

The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer introduced the report and explained that alternative solutions had been considered in consultation with the Lerwick Community Council and Living Lerwick. He advised that the most cost effective solution was closure of Burns Walk. The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer explained that there was no register of complaints, but the trigger for consideration of this matter came from the Lerwick Community Council.

Members noted the objection from the Fort Chip Shop, on the grounds that they would lose business if the Burns Walk access were closed.

Some Members highlighted the following concerns:

- access from Harbour Street to Fort car parking will become more congested.
- the turning point outside the Fort Chip Shop is not safe when the street is busy
- the turning point may not be big enough
- bollards would be better placed in front of Boots to stop parking on the pavement
- there would be an increase in the volume of traffic travelling the full length of the street from the Market Cross.
- The cost of £1,600 appeared excessive when this was a policing issue.

Some Members made comment in support of closing Burns Walk:

- it would make it easier to enforce the Commercial Street pedestrianisation order if there was only one access point from the Market Cross.
- there are currently a low number of people with legitimate need for access, this is unlikely to increase.
- disabled badge holders may still access the street from the Market Cross and parking would be easier with less cars gaining access via Burns Walk.
- The turning point at the Fort Chip shop is currently made worse by oncoming traffic, the majority of who have accessed through Burns Walk.

During further discussion, Members considered whether Neighbourhood Support Workers (NSW's) could be given authority to enforce the pedestrianisation order, but were advised that there was a number of issues to be resolved at a government level before this would be possible. Members also noted that there were currently only 2 NSW's and such a role would remove them from the work the currently undertaken.

Following further deliberations, Mr Robinson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Ratter seconded.

Mr Henderson moved as an amendment that the Committee do not close Burns Walk, stating that there were no reported accidents in this area. Mr T Smith seconded adding that more traffic would be likely from the Harbour Street end, adding to the chaos.

Following summing up, voting took place with a show of hands and the results were as follows:

Amendment (Mr Henderson)	4
Motion (Mr Robinson)	4
Abstention	1

The Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion which became the decision of the Committee.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve that the Director of Infrastructure Services, as the Proper Officer of the Council in such matters, makes the Shetland Islands Council (Burns Walk, Lerwick)(Road Closure) Traffic Regulation Order 2012, as advertised.

The Committee considered a report by the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer (Report No: RD-02-13-F), which sought approval to proceed with the pedestrianisation of Harrison Square and the removal of vehicular traffic from the area at all times.

The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer introduced the report and advised that to proceed with the pedestrianisation would require a public hearing due to the objection received against the proposals. The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer responded to Members questions advising that the cost of a public hearing would be approximately £2,500 to engage a reporter. He confirmed that the last time this process was followed it took around three months for the reporter to be engaged, the hearing to be undertaken and the report to be provided to the Council. The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer advised that taking the summer holiday period into account he would expect the report to be back after the Member's summer recess.

The Traffic and Road Safety Engineer also confirmed that the decision would rest with the Committee, following receipt of the information provided by the Reporter.

In response to specific questions regarding the work to be carried out the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer explained that the surface would be bitmac until such time as external funding became available, whereby it would be replaced with slabs in keeping with public spaces. He confirmed that the subsurface had been prepared to accommodate any options in the future.

Members expressed concern that the loading bay may not provide enough space, but acknowledged that the heaviest loading took place at Conochies. The Traffic & Road Safety Engineer advised that the use of trolleys from the loading bay had been supported by the previous owner as there had been difficulties, in the past, with the public when this area was blocked for deliveries. Members noted that provision had been made to allow Conochies vehicle to reverse close to the delivery door at the back of Harbour House.

Members were advised that collapsible bollards had been considered but discounted due to the high implementation and ongoing maintenance costs.

A Member questioned the need for a public hearing but was advised that there was a legal requirement to hold a hearing following receipt of an objection on the grounds specified.

Mr Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Robinson Seconded.

Mr Bell spoke in respect of the concerns expressed by the Cancer Shop Manager, including restricted access for patrons and a reduction in donations and income. Mr Bell said it was important that the Committee show that there is a contrary opinion and moved as an amendment that the proposals stop now and no hearing is held. Mr Sandison seconded.

Following summing up voting took place with a show of hands and the results were as follows:

Amendment (Mr Bell)	3
Motion (Mr Ratter)	6

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve that the Director of Infrastructure Services proceeds with appointing an independent person from the list of suitable persons compiled by the Scottish Government to conduct a public hearing in respect of the Shetland Islands Council (Harrison Square, Lerwick)(Pedestrianisation) Traffic Regulation Order 2012, as advertised.

11/13

Traffic Regulation Orders, etc – Annual Progress Report

A report by the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer Operations (Report No: RD-03-13-F) informed of the Traffic Orders, etc. made during the past year and provided an overview of the progress of those that are currently being promoted.

The Traffic & Road Safety Engineer introduced the report.

In response to questions, the Traffic & Road Safety Engineer explained the process for removing disabled parking space orders, advising that spaces are reviewed every 2 years and if an applicant for a space no longer meets the required criteria then it would be removed.

The Traffic & Road Safety Engineer also confirmed that the Dunrossness speed limit referred to in paragraph 3.2.9 was not a priority at this time. He explained that the necessary speed counts had been carried out and there were no incidents reported in this area. The Traffic & Road Safety Engineer advised that there were no technical grounds to promote a change to the speed limit. Mr G Smith asked for a briefing note on the work done around the conclusions that arrived at this decision. The Traffic & Road Safety Engineer agreed to provide this information by email.

Clarification was provided to Members on the location of the 50mph speed limit signs at Girlsta.

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

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

12/13

Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-04-13-F), which presented the draft Infrastructure Services Directorate Plan, setting out the policy and performance management framework for the directorate and outlining the aims, objectives and actions for the financial year 2013/14.

The Director - Infrastructure Services introduced the report and advised that work had been undertaken to improve the layout and format of the Directorate Plan.

Members commented on the comprehensive plan provided, but Mr G Smith stated however, that the Council needs a better strategy and said that there was no Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) or Community Plan in place yet, from which, he believed, that the directorate plan should flow. The Director - Infrastructure Services explained that the planning process required a bottom up approach as well as a top down approach and this plan provided that. He said that it was important for staff to

know what they are doing from 1 April. The Director - Infrastructure Services advised that this was a working document that would be adapted as the SOA and Corporate Plans are developed. Mr G Smith disagreed and said that it had to be done the right way around otherwise there would be a lack of strategy and direction. In response, Mr Robinson said that the priority for the Council following election was to get its finances sorted, but it was right to proceed with the Directorate plan for sake of providing direction to staff. He said that SOA, Corporate Plan and Directorate Plans would all fit together. The Chair advised that this was a valid point but was a matter reserved for the Council. He said that the Directorate Plan would provide the leadership for the department and a direction for staff to follow at this time.

In responding to a queries from Member, the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that some information provided had to be refined for 2012/13 and advised that up-to-date figures would be for the next meeting.

Mr Bell referred to page 45 and the achievements listed. He said it was important to have a list of things not achieved as it was important to identify whether items have been dropped or need to be followed up on. The Director - Infrastructure Services agreed but suggested that such a list should be provided under the quarter 4 report. Referring to earlier comments, the Director - Infrastructure Services reiterated the importance of the Directorate Plan updates and said that it was his priority, as Director, to inform Members of progress in achieving financial stability.

In response to a query regarding the timescale for implementation of the bus station target, the Director - Infrastructure Services advised that a service would report to Members in July 2013.

Mr Stout referred to page 68 and the cost of fuel poverty. He said that it would be useful to indicate what real difference had been made.

Mr Robinson commented on the clarity provided in the report on what was a challenging programme for the next year. Mr Robinson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report, seconded by Mr T Smith.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the priorities for the Infrastructure Services Directorate for the financial year 2013/14 as set out in the Plan.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 a.m.

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Chair