

MINUTE

A&B - Public

Special Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Thursday 30 January 2014 at 2.00pm

Present:

M Bell	D Sandison
G Smith	T Smith
M Stout	A Wishart

Apologies:

G Robinson	J Wills
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In Attendance (Officers):

M Sandison, Director - Infrastructure Services
J Gray, Executive Manager – Finance
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
L Gair, Committee Officer

Also In Attendance (Members):

G Cleaver

Chair:

Mr A Wishart, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None.

04/14 **Management Accounts for Environment and Transport Committee:**
2013/14 Projected Outturn at Quarter 3

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-002-F), which enabled monitoring of the financial performance of services within its remit to ensure that expenditure incurred and income generated would be delivered within the approved budget.

The Executive Manager, Finance introduced the report, highlighting the projected budget position to the year end, as set out in the appendices attached to the report.

In response to a comment from a Member, the Executive Manager – Finance agreed that providing more information, on which savings are considered one-off or recurring, would be provided in future. The Director of Infrastructure Services explained that the £160k reduction in the Private Sector Housing Grants had been taken out of the budget and was therefore a recurring saving and the increase from waste income had been factored into the budget and had helped deliver the budget target for 2014/15.

In response to a question relating to vacant posts, the Director of Infrastructure advised that Executive Managers and Team Leaders had left the Council's employment and would be reviewed in a report to Employees JCC and Executive

Committee. She also advised that the ferries service and building and transport trades were struggling to recruit to vacancies and cover had been achieved through overtime.

The Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that a report on the ferry fares review would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee and on to the Development Committee.

A Member expressed concern regarding the introduction of the new ticketing machines and asked if there was any truth to the rumour that they were not working as expected. The Director of Infrastructure Services explained that there were problems with the ticket machines due to changes in the security of electronic card payment data. She said that the ticketing machine data transfer system was not currently compliant for financial data security but the manufacturers were now addressing the issue.

In regard to the vending machines on the Yell Sound Ferries, the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that there had been problems with the water quality on board the vessel therefore the hot beverage vending machine was not currently in service. In terms of the cold beverage and sweet vending machine, she said that Officers would be instructed to ensure that they are working, if they aren't currently.

The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the £120k difference between the income and additional costs were due to two projects that required attention following the recent adverse weather conditions. The first was repairs to the Ollaberry Kirk yard wall at a cost of approx. £90k and the second was the Ireland Country road repairs at a cost of approx. £30k.

During further discussion, the Director of Infrastructure Services advised that waste and landfill charges had increased in order to generate more income to address the ongoing capping requirements, but the Council remains substantially cheaper than other landfill sites in other areas. She further advised that the landfill site is licensed by SEPA who supervise and inspect the site and confirmed that so far there had been no breach of that licence. The Director of Infrastructure Services said that capping works were slipping due to bad weather but there was capacity to deal with this as early in the New Year as possible. She confirmed that the landfill site was expected to manage the increase in waste from the larger projects currently in progress across Shetland, but advised that landfill tax was increasing on top of the introduction of the Council's increased fees so this would drive behaviour to produce less waste and recycle where possible. The Director of Infrastructure services said that recycling was being promoted.

In response to a query regarding problems in recruiting ferry staff, the Director advised that the Directorate Plan for 2014/15 includes an action to undertake proper workforce planning. She reported that the staff that moved to the private sector are starting to consider returning to the Council, however if that did not happen it was anticipated that the problem would take longer to resolved than 12 months.

The Executive Manager – Finance advised that the trading account was required to break even over a 3 year period.

A Member queried whether staff could be tied into a contract for a period of time after training is provided. The Director of Infrastructure services said that would not be enforceable. She confirmed that training is provided at an appropriate level but

training of a minimum qualification is provided for all levels of employee. In terms of induction training, a Member questioned the need for the level of training provided for the ferry staff in comparison to what is required on a cruise ship. The Director of Infrastructure Services said that training is required under the safety management system and due to the small number of crew it is not possible to train staff on the job and time must be provided for them to familiarise themselves in all areas of the job. She confirmed that this could be discussed with the MCA when the safety management system is reviewed. In addition the Director of Infrastructure Services informed Members that work had been done to create flexibility within the ferry service in order that staff may provide cover on different routes.

In response to a query the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that the additional works at Tingwall Airport were in relation to the emergency lighting. She explained that the new mains at the airport had moved to a three phased supply opposed to a 2 phased supply.

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

Decision:

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

- Review the Management Accounts showing the projected outturn position at Quarter 3; and
- Instructed the Director of Infrastructure to ensure that the approved budget is achieved by the end of the year.

The meeting concluded at 2.40pm

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Chair