

MINUTE

B - PUBLIC

Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 16 June 2014 at 2.00 pm

Present:

M Bell	S Coutts
R Henderson	D Ratter
D Sandison	G Smith
T Smith	M Stout
J Wills	

Apologies:

G Robinson

In Attendance (Officers):

M Sandison, Director - Infrastructure Services
M Craigie, Executive Manager – Transport Planning
K Duerden, Executive Manager – Ferry Operations
C Symons, Executive Manager – Estate Operations
M Lisk, Team Leader – Carbon Management
C Gair, Traffic Engineer
K Simmons, Solicitor
L Gair, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr M Stout, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

Mr Coutts declared a non financial interest in item 3 “Scottish Government Grant Scheme: Fuel Poverty/Carbon Reduction” as he has contact with Energy Scotland through is employment. He said this was not a significant interest and he would remain in the meeting.

Mr Ratter declared a non financial interest in item 4 “Energy Recovery Plant and SHEAP Agreement” and he would remain in the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee meeting held on (i) 23 April 2014 were confirmed on the motion of Mr Henderson and Mr G Smith; and (ii) 26 May 2014 were confirmed on the motion of Mr Sandison seconded by Mr G Smith.

22/14 Yell Sound Timetable Changes

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Transport Planning (TP-06-14-F), which sought approval to implement a solution to the disruption caused to the Yell Sound ferry service during the current period of scheduled maintenance, cleaning and drills.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report and explained the benefits and differences between Options 1 and 2, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

During consideration of the report a Member noted that consultation with the communities of Yell and Unst had taken place separately. A Member requested that future consultations should be carried out jointly to discuss options that may affect both communities. The Director of Infrastructure Services explained however that in this case compromise had not been possible.

The Executive Manager – Ferry Operations explained that the changes to the timetable implemented in mid 2013 resulted in a single vessel operating on Yell Sound on Saturdays and Sundays. He said that Sullom Voe Workers ending their shift at 0800 prefer a 0815 from Toft but this is not currently possible on Saturdays. The workers accept that for one day a week it will not be possible to get their sailing of choice but do not want the 0815 on Sundays to be withdrawn as well. However, it was noted that the level of data gathered could not identify the numbers of passengers travelling North on Sunday but Officers observed that Sullom Voe Workers and other personnel, such as pilots and launch crews and tug crew change over at this time every morning.

Officers confirmed that a number of alternative options had been considered and in response to a suggestion, the Executive Manager – Ferry Operations advised that a 25 minute turn around would increase the fuel burn and in turn increase the costs therefore the timetable should remain with 30 minutes between sailings.

On the motion of Mr Coutts, seconded by Mr Henderson the Committee approved the recommendation in the report, on the proviso that future consultation on timetabling involves bringing all affected Community Councils together for discussion.

Decision:

The Committee **RESOLVED** to implement the revised Sunday morning timetable for Yell Sound as described in Option 2 in Appendix 1 to the report, and

Instructed officers that future community engagement would include a meeting with all three affected Island Community Councils.

23/14

Accident Investigation Summary Report

A970 Gulberwick Black Gaet and A970 Brig of Fitch

The Committee considered a report by the Traffic and Road Safety Engineer (RD-07-14-F), which informed of the reported accident history and investigations into those accidents at the A970 Gulberwick Black Gaet and A970 Brig of Fitch junctions and sought approval to promote an improvement scheme at the A970 Brig of Fitch.

The Traffic Engineer introduced the report, and in response to a question from a Member he advised that national figures for costs associated with injury accidents averages around £70K. He said that non-injury accident could also incur costs where work is undertaken to clean up oil spillage for example. The Director of Infrastructure Services said that work could be done to estimate the costs of accidents to the Council by investigating the logged for incidents. If there is an opportunity to use Council's spend to save in regard to accident prevention, and achieve cost recovery within 3 years, it may be worth carrying out a piece of work to

analyse the cost of accidents. The Traffic Engineer said that in terms of cost recovery relating to replacing damaged signs and barriers this can be recovered through an insurance claim and therefore there should be no cost to the Council.

In responding to a question regarding three recent overshoot accidents, the Traffic Engineer advised that although speed can often be a factor in this type of accidents, visibility was not an issue in any of these three accidents. He also advised that illuminated warning signs were not being proposed for the Black Gaet or the Brig o Fitch on cost grounds as there was no suitable electricity supply in the immediate area. There is also insufficient solar power during the winter to power such units, as had been the case when solar power was tried at the weather stations.

On the motion of Mr Stout seconded by Dr Wills the Committee approved the recommendation a in the report.

Decision:

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

- approve that the Director of Infrastructure Services proceeds to promote an improvement scheme to install a splitter island on the A970 to Scalloway at the Brig of Fitch junction; and
- Note that any funding requirement for the works to the A970 Brig of Fitch junction will require to be addressed in line with the normal capital programme budgeting procedures under the Council's Gateway Process.

24/14

Scottish Government Grant Scheme: Fuel Poverty/Carbon Reduction Home Energy Scotland Area Based Scheme: Programme 2014/15

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Estates Operations (ES-08-14-F), which informed of the submission made to the Scottish Government setting out the disbursement strategy of the £820,000 grant funding allocated to Shetland Islands Council to tackle fuel poverty and carbon reduction in 2014/15.

The Executive Manager – Estate Operations introduced the report.

In responding to a query the Team Leader – Carbon Management advised that there were 397 properties on a waiting list. She explained that the arbiter for homes is based on £7.5k per house and with the money available that would cover 50 houses. It was also noted that Officers hoped that 150 homes would be improved following the additional £1m allocated by the Scottish Government. The Director of Infrastructure Services added that there is now a 10 year Scottish Government programme so similar funding can be anticipated. It is still hoped that some level of eco funding will be levered in.

The Executive Manager – Estate Operations responded to questions regarding the number of initial applications and advised that house are prioritised. Training has taken place on in-house surveyors and efforts made to attract local contractors to carry out the work. Members noted that a Management Agent would be put in place and one role was to teach local contractors to achieve their Pass22 accreditation. The Executive Manager – Estate Operations advised however that the training requirement and administrative burden was dissuading local contractors from being part of this initiative.

During further discussion, concern was expressed that the priority scheme was targeting those households receiving benefits or properties with a lower rates band. It was felt therefore that this could exclude those in fuel poverty, living in higher valued houses and it was important not to overlook these households. The Executive Manager – Estate Operations explained that with any scheme there are always sections that fall outwith the criteria. He explained that the reason for the “A”, “B” and “C” Bands was to save a huge amount of work assessing properties. It was noted that if someone in Band “D” applies, they would be supported to identify other areas of assistance. The Executive Manager – Estate Operations advised that the bid had already been submitted based on “A”, “B” and “C” Bands.

A Member commented that the scheme was a good example of how to take advantage of available funding. He said that this was a well researched piece of work and asked if it would be possible to apply to LEADER which concentrates on poverty reduction and whether there were other resources that could be sourced. The Team Leader – Carbon Management confirmed that this was possible and said that another suggestion from the Scottish Government was to look at using community benefit funds.

The Executive Manager – Estate Operations also advised that the deadline for spending the funds for 2013/14 is September 2014 when works are to be complete. Assessing will begin in September 2014 for 2015/16, however he cautioned that there was a low interest from local contractors and he was concerned that it may be necessary to call upon contractors from the mainland.

A Member noted that this scheme represents good value, provides the best outcome and sets out a good approach, however he would like to see participation by local companies. He added that there had been a huge effort from the Team Leader – Carbon Management as well as other staff.

Mr Ratter moved that the Committee approved the recommendation in the report, seconded by Mr Sandison.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the disbursement strategy.

Dr Wills declared an interest in the last item “Energy Recovery Plant and SHEAP Agreement”, as the Vice-Chair of Shetland Charitable Trust, however this was not a financial interest.

Mr Stout moved that in order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, the Committee resolve to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following items of business. Mr Coutts seconded.

25/14 Energy Recovery Plant and SHEAP Agreement

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which informed of a request received from the Shetland Heat Energy and Power (SHEAP) Board that the agreement between the Council and SHEAP be reviewed due to concerns that the financial viability of SHEAP was being jeopardised by the current charging regime.

On the motion of Mr Ratter seconded by Mr T Smith the Committee approved the recommendation in the report

Decision:

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

- jointly commission consultants with the Shetland Charitable Trust to undertake an evaluation considering the ERP/SHEAP as a single entity, to develop an expert assessment of the current business model, improvement opportunities and service rationalisation which would continue to sustain the district heating scheme in Shetland; and
- secure the derogation from the Scottish Government to enable the Council to continue using the ERP as the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) for Shetland's waste treatment.

The meeting concluded at 3.20pm.

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Chair