

MINUTE

AB - Public

Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 25 May 2015 at 3.30pm

Present:

M Stout	M Bell
S Coutts	R Henderson
G Robinson	D Sandison
G Smith	T Smith

Apologies:

D Ratter
J Wills

In Attendance (Officers):

M Sandison, Director of Infrastructure Services
J Belford, Executive Manager - Finance
M Craigie, Executive Manager - Transport Planning
P Wishart, Solicitor
M Mullan, Performance and Improvement Officer
B Kerr, Communications Officer
L Adamson, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr M Stout, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None.

18/15 **Management Accounts for Environment and Transport Committee:**
2014/15 – Draft Outturn at Quarter 4

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-023-F), which enabled the noting of the financial performance of services within its remit.

The Executive Manager – Finance introduced the report, where he advised on the outturn revenue and capital position for services in this Committee's remit and reported on the carry forward proposals.

(Mr Bell and Mr T Smith attended the meeting).

A typo was noted in Section 1.4 of Appendix 1, where 'seabox' should read 'gearbox'.

In response to a question relating to the additional costs for ferry staff, the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that there has been a number of staff leaving, in particular engineers, and when staff were not prepared to undertake higher duties there was a need to employ staff from the mainland.

The Executive Manager – Finance highlighted to Members the significant difference in reporting on income at the Scord Quarry being a result of delayed projects at the Total Gas Plant. In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Finance confirmed that the anticipated income will form part of the 2015/16 reporting.

(Mr Robinson attended the meeting).

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services reported that the savings achieved on the ferry ticketing machines related to the chip and pin element of the project. She went on to advise that there were security issues using the current network, and therefore that part of the project will no longer be implemented.

In referring to the savings reported on the bridge replacement programme, Mr Henderson enquired on any progress for works to the bridge at Cullivoe. The Director of Infrastructure Services reported that proposals for safety improvements to the bridge will depend on the outcome from the accident investigation report.

In response to a question relating to the savings reported across administration staffing, the Director of Infrastructure Services reported that these mainly relate to Building Services where recruitments to cover for maternity leave have not proved successful. The Director advised that existing staff have been undertaking additional and flexible working, however she acknowledged this was not a long-term solution.

During the discussion and in response to comments from Members, the Executive Manager – Finance undertook to improve future reporting on one-off and recurring savings and on commentary on income to services. A Member requested a fairer means of allocating unforeseen costs being attributed to the Services, and the Executive Manager - Finance undertook to improve the presentation and clarify between financial and performance reporting to better illustrate the impact or otherwise on the Service. Members also noted that the Spend to Save scheme, which forms part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, would be reviewed to ensure the best outcomes for the Council.

On the motion of Mr Henderson, seconded by Mr Robinson, the Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

Decision:

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

- Note the Management Accounts showing the draft outturn position; and
- Note the proposed budget carry-forwards which will be included in the overall Draft Outturn Report to be presented for approval at Policy and Resources Committee on 27 May 2015.

19/15

Development Services Directorate Performance Report 12 Month/4th Quarter 2014/15

The Committee noted a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-15-15-F), which summarised the activity and performance of the Development Services Directorate for the reporting period above.

The Chair made a request for an improved means of reporting whereby only relevant information is reported to each of the functional Committees.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning summarised the main terms of the report. He provided an update on the three projects currently ranked as Amber, where it was noted that reports on the Ferry Fares Review and the refresh of the Shetland Transport Strategy would be reported to Committee in June. In regard to the external ferries provision, he reported on the positive progress being made. In response to comments from Members that factually incorrect and negative comments have been reported in the media, assurance was given that efforts are being made and will continue to be made to achieve a single approach.

In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised on progress being made to restructure and recruit to the Transport Planning Service, where it was hoped to achieve a fully resourced Service by the end of August.

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services informed on the importance for communities to respond during the inter island air and ferry consultations. She added that the outcome of the surveys will be critical to determine the service levels to the island and a high response rate will lead to better informed decision making. The Chair made comment on the need to make sure communities are aware that representations on the inter island air and ferry consultations will be in addition to the information gathered during the Ferry Fare review. In that regard, he advised on the need to reassure communities that no data has been lost, and that further comments made will be fed into the ongoing process.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning then provided a summary from the Performance Indicators and the ferry passenger numbers as included in the appendices, where he advised that bus passenger data would form part of future reporting.

During the discussion, reference was made to the declining use of the ferries with there being a noticeable downturn on certain routes. A Member advised on situations whereby young people in the isles have been in transport poverty where they have had to move to live on the mainland. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised that further work would be carried out to establish reasons for the declining use of the ferries in order to inform future decisions and budgets.

In response to comments from a Member, the Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised that he had some concern in regard to the integrity of the budgets and income from bus fares, where he confirmed that further work would be carried out in these areas. The Executive Manager – Finance commented that the disparity related to a particular part of the budget and should not be looked at as across the board. He went on to assure Members that the integrity of the budget remained and the Council operates with a range of assumptions built into its budget and a value as a contingency.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee noted the contents of the report.

The Committee noted a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-14-15-F) which summarised the activity and performance of the Infrastructure Services Directorate for 2014/15, the 12 months up to 31 March 2015.

The Director of Infrastructure Services summarised the main terms of the report. She informed on the delays to progress the two projects ranked as red, being the viewing tower at Tingwall airport and the Burra Bridge. In regard to the projects ranked as Amber, she advised that apart from the ferry ticketing scheme project, the slippage on these projects relate to the timing of reports within the agreed timeframe. In reporting from the Performance Indicators at Appendix 1, the Director of Infrastructure Services highlighted the reduction in the percentage of the Food Hygiene inspection programme completed, which she advised had mainly been the result of unsuccessful recruitment to cover for maternity leave which requires specialist skills and certification. She advised on the unplanned activity from fish health certification in relation to the Chinese salmon market which although had resulted in increased income has placed additional and unexpected work on the small team. In reporting from the ferry availability statistics, the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that most lost sailings were due to poor weather conditions, with disruption also due to industrial action and the decision to review the propulsion unit for the Linga. She added however that it is hoped that a new design propulsion unit will reduce disruptions in the future and improve the integrity of the ferry service.

The Chair made reference to the Council's recycling commitment reported to an earlier meeting of the Committee, and asked for an update in regard to the proposals for a can and glass doorstep collection. The Director of Infrastructure Services reported on progress to date where officers have been exploring best practice in other Local Authority areas to ensure the best solutions locally, where she confirmed that a further report would be presented to Committee in June.

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services informed that representatives of the CAA will be in Shetland at the end of June, where discussions will take place on the requirements for Tingwall airport.

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed the inclusion of the Trondra Bridge project in the Action Plan with works planned during the summer months.

The Chair made comment on the significance of the Council's Carbon Management Plan, and the importance that the targets are embraced across all Council areas. The Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that comprehensive and regular reporting on the carbon management plan will ensure the targets are being taken onboard across the whole Council.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee noted the contents of the report.

21/15

Infrastructure Services Department Directorate Plan 2015/16

The Committee noted a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-13-15-F) which presented the final edit of the Infrastructure Services Department Directorate Plan for 2015/16 aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Director of Infrastructure Services briefly introduced the report.

An error was noted on page 24 of the Directorate Plan, where the entry relating to the Tingwall airport should reflect a high risk score of 15, rather than 10 as indicated in the table.

On the motion of Mr Bell, seconded by Mr Sandison, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to approve this version of the Plan for further sharing with partners, staff and the community.

22/15 **Environment and Transport Committee Business Programme 2015/16**

The Committee noted a report by the Team Leader – Administration (GL-18-15-F) which informed of the planned business to be presented to Committee for the financial year to 31 March 2016 and sought discussion with Officers regarding any changes or additions required to that Programme.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning confirmed an addition to the Business Programme, whereby the Ferry Fares Review report would be reported to Committee in June.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee considered its business planned for the financial year to 31 March 2016 and **RESOLVED** to approve the Business Programme, as amended.

The meeting concluded 4.25pm

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Chair