

**Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 29 February 2016 at 3.30pm**

Present:

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

Apologies:

M Stout

In Attendance (Officers):

N Grant, Director of Development Services
M Sandison, Director of Infrastructure Services
J Belford, Executive Manager – Finance
C Symons, Executive Manager – Estate Operations
P Wishart, Solicitor
L Gair, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr S Coutts, Vice-Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None

04/16 **Management Accounts for Environment and Transport Committee:
2015/16 – Projected Outturn at Quarter 3**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-006-F), which enabled monitoring of the financial performance within its remit to ensure that Members are aware of the forecast income and expenditure and the impact that this will have with regard to delivering the approved budget.

The Executive Manager – Finance introduced the report and in responding to comments regarding the sustainability of the budget and the underspends achieved, the Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the Infrastructure Services budget had benefited from unforeseen circumstances including income waste from the extra workforce in Shetland and construction waste. She said that this income was never guaranteed and had not been foreseen. She also explained that whilst there had been savings on fuel budgets there were projections that fuel prices would go up when the budget was being set. She explained that the income from Total for Roads Repairs had been a one off and service cuts had been necessary to achieve the sustainable position. The Director of Infrastructure Services cautioned that in forecasting what income may be achievable, Officers had to be mindful that BP is moving to a seasonal workforce meaning that waste income is not guaranteed in future years. The Executive Manager – Finance added that part of the income this

year had been expected last year and as a result the Infrastructure budget made a loss on the budgeted income last year.

(Mr Bell attended the meeting)

Officers also provided explanations on the mechanism for internal ferry terminal charges between service budgets; the need for maintenance on the Westside mainline bus service confirming that there was a need to hire in a replacement bus and assurance was given that future solutions would be progressed using the building better business cases process.

It was noted that the cost for additional staff cover, reported in period two, was not included in this report as some staffing matters had been resolved.

During further discussions attention was drawn to the cost of repairs to the Geira and the Director of Infrastructure Services provided a detailed explanation of the repairs required following an inspection of the metal work, during a scheduled dry docking of the vessel. Members were also advised that it would not have been possible for staff to have picked up on this issue as this inspection looks at a hidden part of the structure that is inspected at certain intervals. She said that this demonstrates the importance of these routine periodic inspections.

Mr Sandison made reference to the transfer of funds to cover the shortfall on the bus contracts and at this point declared an interest as a Member of ZetTrans. The Executive Manager – Finance advised that the Policy and Resources Committee has jurisdiction to approve the transfer of extra funds to cover this cost and confirmed that no recommendation was required of the Environment and Transport Committee.

There being no debate Mr Robinson moved that the Committee note the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Sandison seconded.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee **RESOLVED** to review the Management Accounts showing the projected outturn position at Quarter 3.

05/16 Infrastructure Directorate Performance Report 9 Month/3rd Quarter 2015/16

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-04-16-F), which summarised the activity and performance of the Infrastructure Directorate for the reporting period above.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report and advised that two actions would not be progressed through the year as the Scottish Government were developing a national waste and recycling strategy and waste brokerage scheme. Officers had taken the view that it was better to hold off until the code of practice was available so that the Council's scheme can fit in with the overall national picture. She advised that Officers would meet with the Scottish Government and Zero Waste to discuss this in March. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the marine modern apprenticeship external funding had been applied for and was not successful. The intention is now to create a career graded deckhand post from which an individual can work towards achieving their tickets and progress their career onwards within the service. She said that this would be good for the community and opened opportunities for Island residents providing a more flexible

approach to recruitment and advised that the Unions were happy with this development.

The Director of Infrastructure Services provided an overview of the remaining performance indicators explaining that these show delivery on target and drew attention to the APSE Performance report which is used as a benchmarking tool for various Infrastructure's services. She explained that previous APSE reports had been reported on other areas but this focussed on Estate Operations and Building Services and compares its performance with other Council's services. The APSE report also allows Officers to see trends on previous years but this data indicates that despite reducing resources these are improving services that continue to hold their position in the National picture.

In referring to the table in paragraph 3.2 of the report Dr Wills declared an interest as a Member of the Shetland Charitable Trust but confirmed this was not a personal interest. He asked if further analysis, of the Council's future role in the Port of Sullom Voe, would include an independent valuation and what the industrial real estate might be on an open market. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised this work would look at the operation of the port and not the terminal and would be coordinated through the Harbour Board.

DP102 External Funding In responding to further questions the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that external funding was being sought for the ferry replacement programme. The programme will look at moving ferries into a relief position before their disposal. She advised that she had a teleconference with the Scottish Futures Trust on the replacement ferry programme as part of the process of exploring funding sources. She said that the best funding solutions were being considered, and a key element of the replacement programme is working with the community to discuss their needs. The Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed to Dr Wills that she had passed on the report he had provided on chain ferries to the Consultants and confirmed that every option, including fixed links, was being considered at this stage and the replacement solutions would not necessarily be like for like. She said that Officers would be discussing with Community Councils the analysis of community needs and confirmed that there is a plan in place covering the timeframe for this project. There is proposal for which vessels will be replaced first.

The Director of Infrastructure Services responded to comments regarding the creation of a career graded deckhand post and agreed that it was important to consider the gender balance on ferries. She said that she was proud to have a female employee on the ferries but it was important to ensure engagement with schools early to make it clear that this is not gender specific work and could lead to a secure career with development opportunities. The Director of Infrastructure Services said it was too late leaving this discussion to senior school pupils and that encouragement to consider employment in Ferries Services should start much sooner.

DP094 Burial Ground and amenity grass cutting. The Director of Infrastructure Services responded to a query on the burial ground grass cutting and advised that Officers had been to the Association of Community Council and confirmed that Community Councils do want to explore the options available for a community based solution. She advised that the project also included all grass cutting with partner organisations. Consideration was being given to community choice and co-production allowing communities to take on the service with the money going into the

community rather than continuing with the Council provision or use of contractors. She said that she was open to any proposals on whether this would be carried out by community councils or each individual community development group.

During debate it was noted that the APSE report was the strongest validation a service could get particularly at a time where budgets were under continual pressure. It was also recognised that challenges lay in the dispersed island based population and the Director of Infrastructure Services was asked to relay the Committee's support to staff involved.

On the motion of Mr Robinson and Mr Sandison, the Committee noted the report.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee discussed the contents of the report, commenting on progress against priorities to inform further activity within the reminder of this year, and the planning process for next and future years.

06/16

Development Services Directorate Performance Report
9 Month/3rd Quarter 2015/16

The Committee noted a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-09-16-F), which summarised the activity and performance of the Development Services Directorate for the reporting period above.

The Director of Development Services introduced the report advising that this Committee had responsibility for the Transport Planning Service information provided in the report. The Director of Development Services provided an update on the Northern Isles Ferry Contract and the Shetland Inter Islands Transport Study which would be delayed by the election purdah period. In the meantime he explained that dialogue would continue and engagement was ongoing. The Director of Development Services also commented on the ferry passenger numbers by route and the recruitment of a new Policy and Planning Officer who took up his post last week.

The Leader responded to a question regarding the 10 week delay affecting the Shetland Inter Islands Transport Study and explained that there was an issue around the STAG process and Transport Scotland did not want to start without the funding being in place but the money had now been separated to allow the study to progress to conclusion.

During discussion Members commented on the transport provision for the islands and the importance of focussing on the Scottish Government but also to see what views other political parties have. In terms of the Our Islands Our Future Campaign it was also noted that the Leader of the Western Isles Council met with Stewart Hosie, Scottish National Party (SNP) and there was also an outstanding invitation to meet with Kazia Dugdale, SNP with transport high on the agenda. The Committee noted that dialogue was ongoing, and it was important to ensure that all parties are aware of the issues raised.

Comment was made regarding the ferry passenger numbers and the impression that these figures had dropped because fares had gone up and those most affected were individuals who could least afford the service. Members acknowledged that the current situation could not be maintained but that there was unlikely to be an

announcement from the Scottish Government on this matter until the completion of the Shetland Inter Islands Transport Study.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee discussed the contents of the report, commenting on progress against priorities to inform further activity within the remainder of this year, and the planning process for next and future years.

07/16 **Traffic Regulation Orders, Etc – Annual Progress Report**

The Committee noted a report by the Team Leader - Roads (RD-01-16-F), which informed of the Traffic Orders etc. made in the past year.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report and in responding to questions she confirmed that the changes to the disabled space layout would be as a result of national recommendations. She said that the spaces have to be recognisable nationally and the Council would have to adopt these changes. The Director of Infrastructure Services also confirmed that disabled spaces are removed when advised they were no longer required or when officers undertake a review of those in place.

Decision:

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

08/16 **Environment and Transport Committee Business Programme – 2016/17**

The Committee approved a report by the Team Leader – Administration (GL-10-16-F), which informed of the planned business to be presented to Committee for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, and sought discussion with Officers regarding any changes or additions required to that Programme.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee considered its planned business for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 and RESOLVED to approve any changes or additions to the Business Programme.

The meeting concluded at 4.20pm

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Chair