

Environment and Transport Committee
Room 16, Islesburgh Community Centre, Lerwick
Monday 3 October 2016 at 2pm

Present:

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| M Stout | S Coutts |
| R Henderson | D Sandison |
| G Robinson | G Smith |
| T Smith | J Wills |

Apologies:

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| M Bell | D Ratter |
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J Wills (lateness)

In Attendance (Officers):

M Sandison, Director of Infrastructure Services
D Coupe, Executive Manager - Roads
W Spence, Executive Manager – Environmental Services
N Hutcheson, Team Leader – Asset and Network
M Lisk, Team Leader – Carbon Management
B Robb, Management Accountant
P Wishart, Solicitor
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
L Gair, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr 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 Agenda Item 1 “Fuel Affordability Survey – Survey Results and Analysis” as his employer, Changeworks, delivers the Home Energy Scotland advice centre service and he had attended the Fuel Poverty Action Group in that capacity, as referenced in the report.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on i) 14 June 2016 were approved on the motion of Mr G Smith seconded by Mr Henderson; and ii) 29 August 2016 were approved on the motion of Mr Henderson, seconded by Mr G Smith.

22/16 **Fuel Affordability Survey – Survey Results and Analysis**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (EO-05-16-F), which informed of the findings of the Fuel Affordability Survey undertaken by the Council in December 2015 and sought approval of the Action Plan which identifies activity for the Council and its partners to tackle Fuel Poverty in Shetland.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report and advised that the issues in the Action Plan will be delivered and monitored by the Fuel Poverty Working Group.

(Mr Robinson attended the meeting)

In response to a question, the Director of Infrastructure Services advised that there were a number of activities in the Action Plan that are business as normal and are already being carried out under the Fuel Poverty Strategy. She said that one of the biggest pieces of work was to map the activities of each organisation to establish what is already being done and to identify where there are cross cutting relationships. The aim is to ensure that no one misses out on the advice and financial support they are entitled to.

In regard to Action 23, the Director of Infrastructure Services advised that as the procurement condition is developed and rolled out it will be a condition of involvement that employers will pay the full living wage and that appropriate sick pay is available to all employees. She added that given the inequalities strands the Shetland Partnership Board is looking at opportunities around the living wage.

The Director of Infrastructure Services responded to a question on collective fuel purchases, and explained that this was a new activity recommended as part of the Rural Fuel Poverty Taskforce. She advised that the Taskforce are preparing a report and Carbon Management Officers in Shetland have been working with them on the draft. The Director of Infrastructure Services went on to advise that as the Shetland Community is “off gas” it would always pay more for fuel, and officers will therefore always look to drive down fuel costs locally. She said that if there were opportunities for bulk purchase of fuel then a lower rate may be achieved for householders.

Mr Coutts moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Sandison seconded.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee noted the Affordability Survey results and **RECOMMENDED** that Policy and Resources Committee approve the implementation of the Fuel Poverty Action Plan.

23/16 Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Environmental Services (ES-01-16-F), which presented the Scottish Government Household Recycling Charter for adoption by the Council.

The Executive Manager – Environmental Services introduced the report.

(Dr Wills attended the meeting)

The Chair commented that the Council has a long standing and mutually beneficial relationship with Zero Waste Scotland, who understand that a one-size fits all solution does not suit all local authority areas.

During questions, the Executive Manager – Environmental Services explained that Zero Waste Scotland are to produce a Strategy for the Council, and come up with proposals, but it would be up to the Council to decide whether to follow the route proposed. He confirmed that officers would have extensive input into the proposals, and in past experience Zero Waste has taken onboard comments made about what is feasible locally.

Concern was expressed regarding the Orkney recycling system, and the problems they have with bins blowing away. Members were advised that Orkney chose to proceed with their own solution without engaging Zero Waste Scotland, therefore it was important for Shetland to seek the best expertise available through Zero Waste Scotland. The Director of Infrastructure Services added that the Council would benefit by learning from the mistakes of others. In that regard, she said that other areas had proceeded with schemes that did not see recyclates levels increase and it was important to introduce a system locally that would drive up the recyclate levels, but it would be a simple solution for householders to manage their waste.

In responding to a question on the level of waste required for the District Heating Scheme, the Executive Manager – Environmental Services advised on the average mega watts required for the scheme and explained that 23.5k tonnes of waste is adequate however he said that if waste changes there would be less calorific value requiring more waste. He said that the onus was on heat output rather than waste in. The Executive Manager – Environmental Services confirmed that waste is still shipped in from Orkney but is sorted for recyclates before it arrives in Shetland.

Reference was made to a potential risk whereby the new Anderson High School building will be dependent upon the District Heating Scheme. The Chair gave assurance that dialogue with Zero Waste Scotland would consider this matter together with a number of other issues. The Director of Infrastructure Services explained that during the work carried out with Zero Waste Scotland in 2014 a full explanation was given around the need for waste to heat scheme. She advised there is more understanding that Shetland is different but the challenge comes from meeting environmental legislation around the Energy Recovery Plant which can change at any time. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that Officers also work closely with SEPA who understand that challenges and have put on a condition to allow the burning of plastics, however EU legislation could change again so the key issue into the future is sustainability for district heating.

(Mr Sandison left the meeting)

Reference was made to the capital investment rate, to which the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that for some provision the capital grant offer could be for the full cost and there would be no need for match funding. She said that even if there was a strong option to fully fund a preferred Zero Waste option, evidence would have to be provided to do something different. The Director of Infrastructure Services went on to explain that in terms of the end disposal of recyclates, it was the aim of Zero Waste Scotland to drive up the value of the product across Scotland and one way is through a waste brokerage scheme. She said that she had requested that Zero Waste Scotland consider Island Proofing waste brokerage in terms of the cost of transportation. She said however that other local authorities were likely to feel that they would be subsidising the shipment of our waste. The Director of Infrastructure Services said that this issue was reinforced with Zero Waste Scotland after the seminar but she was not sure other local authorities would support this.

During further discussion the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that locally there is recycling of plastics and cans and one option would be to store up and “bulk up” when market prices increase but that would be dependent on having the space for storage. She said that there is also the matter of recovering the cost of shipping

and there could be benefit if brokerage schemes were based on “at the gate” not the quayside.

(Dr Wills declared an interest as a Trustee of Shetland Charitable Trust who owns SHEAP and as a Trustee of the Shetland Amenity Trust that carries out some recycling).

Comment was made in terms of the source of heat and that burning is not the only option and with the new Anderson High School in mind assurance was sought that heat would be provided come what may. The Director of Infrastructure Services made reference to the COWIE report that was commissioned in 2015 undertaken by Danish experts on the District Heating Scheme, where she said that one recommendation was to make the scheme less reliant on waste and become a heat source hub, taking in heat from a variety of heat sources. She explained that she has been working closely with SHEAP on how that report becomes a reality but sustainability of the district heating scheme would remain at the heart of the waste direction taken. The Director of Infrastructure also confirmed that officers continued to look at expansion as well as sustainability.

In terms of comparing costs with other heat sources, it was acknowledged that district heating remained cheaper than electric storage heaters as well as providing a better controllable heat experience. It was noted however that oil prices are currently low. The Director of Infrastructure Services also confirmed that there had not yet been an occasion where they had run out of waste and had to use oil as an alternative as waste is shipped in when required. She explained that oil is only used on scheduled shut down days when repairs and maintenance is undertaken at the Energy Recovery Plant.

During further discussion Members questioned what level of return the Shetland Charitable Trust expects and whether that would push prices up. It was suggested however that if the Trust's expected return drops that would mean that the help they provide would, in turn, also drop. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the issues around fuel poverty have been presented to the members of the Shetland Charitable Trust and she was meeting them again next week regarding the sustainability of the District Heating Scheme.

Reference was made to revenue support for waste and recycling collections the Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the offer of funding is primarily to look at capital costs however under the Charter the Council is able to set financial targets for its future waste and recycling service. One objective is to live within a no growth position for all services and to be delivering additional savings by 2020, there needs to be the most cost effective waste collection service in place.

Mr Coutts moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Robinson seconded. Mr Coutts went on to say that it was important that the Council does not rush ahead but learning from others was crucial. He said that Zero Waste Scotland was keen to understand Shetland's position but there was also Island Proofing and brokerage to be considered.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee:

- Adopted and signed the Charter for Household Recycling in Scotland; and

- Instructed officers to work with Zero Waste Scotland to develop an Options Appraisal and Transition Plan to deliver Shetland's household waste and recycling collection services in line with the new Code of Practice.

24/16

Audit Scotland – Maintaining Scotland's Roads: A Follow Up Report

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Roads (RD-04-16-F), which provided an opportunity to consider the key findings and recommendations made by Audit Scotland in their document "Maintaining Scotland's Roads: A Follow Up Report" published on 4 August 2016.

The Executive Manager – Roads introduced the report and responded to a number of questions, including the use of a Road Collaboration Scheme to help deal with the reduced staff and financial resources experienced in all areas across Scotland. The Executive Manager – Roads explained that a decision had been taken last year for the Council not to take part in that Scheme as there would be limited opportunities or benefit for Island communities due to the cost of transporting equipment or the cost of sending or receiving staff to work on specific projects. It was noted that a specific memorandum of understandings could be of more benefit and that the use of APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) allows all 32 Local Authorities to share areas of best practice.

Members acknowledged that this Council was doing well but the reality of the current position was that up to one third of Shetland's roads are not up to standard. It was suggested that CoSLA needed to relay to Transport Scotland that the resources needed to maintain Scotland's roads are not available, but this would be difficult as the Scottish Government have already indicated that resources will be spent on their priorities which are Health, Education and Social Care.

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

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee:

- considered the comments made in response to Audit Scotland's key findings;
- considered the detail given, within this report, of the progress that has already been made on a number of Audit Scotland's recommendations; and

RESOLVED to approve the implementation of the proposed actions planned to comply with the remainder of Audit Scotland's recommendations.

25/16

Road Asset Management Plan and Road Maintenance Manual

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Roads (RD-05-16-F), which presented the Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP) for Shetland's public road network.

The Executive Manager – Roads introduced the report and in responding to a question on the relationship between the RAMP and the Council's Gateway process, Members were informed that the RAMP deals with the maintenance of assets and looks at the whole life costing and best process. The Director of Infrastructure Services reassured Members that each project requires a business justification case before proceeding through the Gateway Process. She advised that there is a capital maintenance and replacement programme report presented to Members each year

and the RAMP assists with that activity. She advised that the RAMP and the Gateway Process are complementary to each other rather than separate.

Comment was made on the pelican crossing replacement programme and Members received an update on the process and issues that arose when undertaking to replace the first five of ten units. Members were informed that the remaining five units will be replaced over the next three years. It was also explained that zebra crossings were only considered safe in 20mph zones.

During discussion, the Executive Manager – Roads confirmed that he and the Director of Infrastructure Services would be visiting Yell to look at the road into Cullivoe with the local Member. Members also noted that the figures provided on pages 16 of the plan differed from those on page 17. It was explained that the historical figures shown on page 16 included capital funding which was not included on page 17, future funding.

Mr G Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr T Smith seconded.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee considered and commented on the Road Asset Management Plan and the Road Maintenance Manual, and **RECOMMENDED** that:

- The Policy and Resources Committee recommends, having taken account of any comments from the Environment and Transport Committee, that the Shetland Islands Council resolves to approve the Road Asset Management Plan [Appendix 1 to the report] as part of the Council's Strategic framework documents, as set out in Part A of the Council's Constitution, to be managed by the Environment and Transport Committee.

26/16 **Capital Maintenance and Replacement Programme**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-11-16-F), which set out for approval the projects which fall within this functional Committee's remit which form part of the Infrastructure Services Department's Capital Maintenance and Replacement programme.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report and explained that each of the projects listed had gone through the gateway process and all had a developed business justification case. She advised that this report would be presented each year to advise on what programme will be delivered.

During the meeting Members discussed a number of matters including:

Commercial Street Paving – An explanation behind the system developed locally for the commercial street paving works was sought and provided in detail. It was suggested that Officers provide a better understanding of the process, cost and timeframe for the paving works that can be shared with the public.

A970 Levenwick Road Improvement - An update on progress was sought, and the Director of Infrastructure advised that a report would be presented on the progress made in the design works by the end of February 2017.

Haggersta to Cova – Concern was expressed that this project had been designed and was ready to progress but did not sit high on the prioritisation list. The prioritisation scheme was explained, and Members were informed that the top 10 projects on the list would have design work done so they could progress as and when funding became available. Members were informed that having accessed external funding for the Millbrae Footpath in Scalloway, there was now an opportunity to consider the possibility of Sustrans funding for the footpath element of Haggersta to Cova road improvement scheme. It was agreed that this would be explored further and reported back to Committee. It was noted that Officers would only be able to report in line with Sustrans timeframe which was likely to be next year.

Burial Grounds – Officers heard statistics on the capacity of the two North Mainland Ward and one West Mainland Ward burial grounds. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the projects on the maintenance and replacement programme were already approved because the business justification case had already been considered by CMT and had been included in the AIP by decision of Policy and Resources Committee and Council. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the Service Committee does not make a decision on what is in the Asset Investment Plan. She went on to explain changes in the legislation from the Scottish Government that allows for authorities to reclaim unused lairs and advised on the current situation in regard to the three burial grounds mentioned. The Director of Infrastructure Services said that it was important to prioritise extensions to burial grounds based on needs and to take account of the future burden of maintenance. She said that she had carried out a piece of work, that she would share with Members, on the number of available lairs in all burial grounds and assured Members that this issue was not being ignored but it was not as pressing as people were led to believe.

On another matter, the Director of Infrastructure Services agreed to provide a briefing to Members on the detail of the legal agreement that allows access to the Lund Graveyard in Unst.

Mr T Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report, seconded by Mr Robinson.

Decision:

The Environment and Transport Committee approved the projects in the Infrastructure Services Department's Capital Maintenance and Replacement Programme for 2017/18.

The meeting concluded at 3.40p.m.

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Chair