

Infrastructure Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Tuesday 14 June 2005 at 10.30 a.m.

Present:

J C Irvine L Angus
B J Cheyne A J Cluness
C B Eunson R G Feather
F B Grains B P Gregson
L G Groat I J Hawkins
J H Henry E J Knight
W H Manson Capt G G Mitchell
J P Nicolson W A Ratter
F A Robertson J G Simpson
W N Stove T W Stove
W Tait

Apologies:

J A Inkster

In Attendance (Officers):

G Spall, Executive Director, Infrastructure Services
S Cooper, Acting Head of Transport
A Hamilton, Head of Planning
G Johnston, Head of Finance
I Bruce, Service Manager, Transport Operations
M Craigie, Projects Unit Manager, Capital Programme Services
V Hawthorne, Development Plans Manager
D Macnae, Network Manager
B Barron, Planning Officer (Development Plans)
D Haswell, Committee Officer

Also:

Professor W Ritchie, Aberdeen Institute of Coastal Science and Management
L Kingham, Secretary, Sullom Voe Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory
Group (SOTEAG)
P Finch – FaberMaunsell
B Main – BM Consultants

Chairperson:

Mr J C Irvine, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 3 May 2005, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Members' Attendance at External Meetings

The following Members provided a brief synopsis of their attendance at the following meetings:

Mr J C Irvine - Reserve Forces and Cadets AGM, Stirling

Mr Irvine said that Members might be aware that the local TA platoon were making improvements in recruiting.

Mr J C Irvine - CoSLA Roads and Transport Executive Group, Edinburgh

Mr Irvine said that he was a member of the Task Group discussing the Transport Bill. The meeting had been very constructive as there had been discussion about what would happen at stage 3 of the Bill. Mr Irvine continued to say that because the Transport Minister had proposed an amendment to allow Shetland to submit their own transport proposals, CoSLA now supported individual authorities submitting their own transport proposals. Mr Irvine advised that one of his colleagues from the Western Isles, along with a small contingent from the CoSLA Transport Task Group had met with the Transport Minister last week and had restated Shetland's position.

Mr J C Irvine – Joint Shetland Islands Council/Orkney Islands Council Future of Air Services Group

Mr Irvine said that further information on this issue would be available as the contract proceeded to be put out to tender.

Capt G G Mitchell – 4th International Forum – Air Transport in Remoter Regions, Sweden

Capt Mitchell advised that he and the Executive Director had attended this conference which was centred on air services to peripheral regions of Europe and various peripheral regions had explained how they cope with this. Countries represented included Sweden, Greece, Norway and Brazil. Delegates agreed that PSOs were the best way of ensuring that air travel was affordable and available to everyone. Capt Mitchell said the only way forward was to pursue the HITRANS PSO network.

Capt G G Mitchell – Joint NESTRANS/HITRANS Meeting, Orkney

Capt Mitchell said that at the meeting there had been some discussion about the unsuitability of Aberdeen Harbour and it had been suggested that unless some improvements are made, Shetland might consider places further south, e.g. Rosyth. At the last joint meeting, Capt Mitchell had requested a bus service from Aberdeen Harbour to Aberdeen Train Station. NESTRANS had indicated that they have money available to provide a service and were looking at this link. Capt Mitchell said that the proposals for Shetland's own transport authority had to be lodged before 24 June 2005.

Capt G G Mitchell – HITRANS meeting with MSPs re PSOs, Edinburgh

Capt Mitchell explained that HITRANS are concerned that there appears to be a certain amount of blocking within the Scottish Executive to the PSO

network. However, HITRANS made the point that the HITRANS proposals have been proven to be feasible because a STAG appraisal had been done. This was not the case for other unproven ideas being mooted. HITRANS would be writing to all Highlands and Islands MSPs restating the case for PSOs. Capt Mitchell concluded by saying that another meeting about this issue would be held with the Transport Minister next week.

Acting Head of Transport – Northern Isles Livestock Shipping Group, Orkney
In the absence of the Vice-Chairperson who had also attended this meeting, the Acting Head of Transport said that various options had been discussed at the meeting. It had been agreed that the agriculture community would be better served with 2 new double-tier freight vessels. This recommendation would be submitted to the Scottish Executive for inclusion in the tender documentation.

Mr J H Henry – CoSLA Environment and Safety Executive Group, Edinburgh
This meeting had involved a presentation on recycling and also a presentation by an organisation that redesigned office layouts using the existing furniture and also proposed what lighting an office should have. After employing the organisation, Perth and Kinross Council had achieved savings of £80k. Mr Henry said that the Council should consider inviting the organisation to Shetland to see if savings could be achieved here.

Mr Henry continued to say that KIMO UK had approved their budget for the next 3 years and this would allow for the Save the North Sea Project Co-ordinator, Mr John Mouat, to continue in his post for a further 3 years. Mr Henry said that the Save the North Sea Project would become more important, particularly with decommissioning.

Mrs I J Hawkins – Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CORWM), Inverness

Mrs Hawkins advised that she, Mr B P Gregson and the Head of Planning had attended 2 meetings in Inverness, one involving local authority representatives and one the regular CORWM Board Meeting. It was clear from the remarks made by some of the representatives from the Caithness area that they would welcome the use of Dounreay for nuclear waste storage: they were looking at this from a community benefit point of view. Mrs Hawkins also referred to the recently released report indicating the areas identified in the NIREX study undertaken during the 1980s, which had suggested that nuclear waste might be stored there. However, this was not what the Council wanted as it was Council policy to have Dounreay deal only with its own waste, not material imported from elsewhere.

Mr B P Gregson – Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CORWM), Inverness and NIREX Workshop, Manchester

Mr Gregson advised that he had also attended the CORWM National Stakeholders Panel. The remit of CORWM was to advise Ministers on the most appropriate way of storing nuclear waste. CORWM and NIREX had pointed out that their work was quite different at the moment but would come

together in the future. Mr Gregson commended Members to view the NIREX website.

Mr F A Robertson – CoSLA Planning Executive Group, Edinburgh

Mr Robertson said that a lot of people appeared to be discontent with VisitScotland. However, there was good news from the meeting from a planning perspective. At present, large-scale electricity generation and transmission proposals are dealt with under Sections 36 and 37 respectively of the Electricity Act 1989. Despite the fact that the Scottish Executive makes the decision on such proposals, all the work and research had to be done by local planners and submitted to the Scottish Executive. From 1 July 2005, it has been agreed that all expenses incurred in the work and research will be reimbursed to local authorities.

A brief question and answer session followed on various meetings where Members and Officers noted the comments made.

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The Chairperson said it was hoped that there would be a report on the Inter Island Air Services on today's agenda. However, due to fog, meetings intended to take place in Fair Isle and Foula last week had had to be cancelled. The meetings had been rescheduled and, in order to consider the Inter Island Air Services, it had been decided that a Special Meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.30 a.m. on 29 June 2005, prior to the Council meeting at 10.30 a.m. The meeting would also consider part of the Transport Strategy which was on today's agenda if Members agreed today when item 4 was discussed.

32/05 **Sullom Voe Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group (SOTEAG)**

The Committee considered and noted a report by the Executive Director, Infrastructure Services (Appendix 1).

Professor W Ritchie, Aberdeen Institute of Coastal Science and Management kindly assisted by L Kingham, Secretary, Sullom Voe Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group (SOTEAG) gave the Committee a PowerPoint presentation. A copy of the presentation is attached as Appendix 1.

In response to a comment from Professor Ritchie that for Sullom Voe to be designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was an accolade, a Member questioned what advantages for Shetland this had. Professor Ritchie said that SOTEAG remained neutral on this issue but it was an accolade for a major oil terminal to be so clean so as to be designated a SAC.

The Chairperson thanked Professor Ritchie and Ms Kingham for the presentation.

33/05 **The Fladdabister and Ocrquoy Settlement Design Statement**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Planning (Appendix 2).

In introducing the report, the Head of Planning said a lot of work had gone into it, both by staff and by the community. In response to concerns from a Member regarding section 35, the Head of Planning said that whilst the concern was valid, the many meetings held with Community Councils suggested that there was consensus throughout the Shetland community that there should be some form of zoning system in place. Although the system might not be perfect, no system was perfect. The Planning Section was aware of areas that needed improvement and work was ongoing on those areas. The outcome of the zoning review would show that a lot of lessons that had been learned from the review and from the preparation work done on the Fladdabister statement. These lessons would be built into the zoning system.

Mr T W Stove said that it was a special situation in Fladdabister and Ocrquoy and he thanked staff from the Planning Section for the work they had put into this. Local people had taken this issue to their hearts, in particular, Mr Ewan McPherson, who had done a lot of work and research. Mr Stove said he wished to thank the local community for their input.

Mr T W Stove moved the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr L Angus seconded.

In response to comments from Members, the Head of Planning explained that although there was a policy in place with regard to overlooking properties, there was not a policy for the protection of private views and indeed the protection of an individual's view was not something that could legally be taken into account. However, there were a number of tools that could be used to prevent this problem arising, including use of the overlooking policy and the preparation of masterplans where that was appropriate. In relation to section 9.8 of the Design Statement and the reference to "significant applications", he said that this would come down to a judgement between Members, Officers and the local community. Planning Services staff would make that judgement as carefully as they could.

34/05 **Whalsay Links Project STAG 1 Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Projects Unit Manager, Capital Programme Services (Appendix 3).

The Projects Unit Manager introduced the report and said it highlighted the stage that had been reached in terms of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidelines (STAG) process. It also explained why the STAG process had been applied and the drivers

behind it. The report also proposed the next stages, the conclusion being that the future development of the appraisal should be included in the development of the Council's Transport Strategy for Shetland.

(Mr F A Robertson left the meeting).

Mr B P Gregson said that the Island Links Strategy Working Group and the Inter Island Ferries Board were in support of the proposals. As Chairman of the Working Group, he expressed thanks to staff from the Capital Projects Unit, Mr P Finch, FaberMaunsell, Mr B Main, BM Consulting and, in particular, the Whalsay community represented on the Working Group.

(Mr T W Stove left the meeting).

In moving the Committee approve the recommendations, Mr B P Gregson said that whilst it was important this project was included in the Transport Strategy for Shetland, it should not be put on the "back burner." Mr J G Simpson seconded.

Mr J G Simpson said that this had been quite a difficult exercise. However, in order to progress this, because of the colossal amount of funding that was required, external funding would have to be sought, either nationally and/or European and, in this regard, a lot of work still had to be done.

Members noted that in accordance with STAG, all 7 options would be considered, including fixed links and tunnels.

(Mr L G Groat left the meeting).

35/05

Transport Strategy – Proposals for Development

The Committee considered a report by the Acting Head of Transport (Appendix 4).

The Executive Director drew Members' attention to section 4.2 of the report and said that these were the four elements of work that needed to be done in order to state the Council's case for external funding. He said he was confident that good work could be done project by project but Officers needed direction from Members. The CPMT had approved the provision of funding but had stated that the report had not allowed for wider Member involvement. Therefore, what was being sought today was a recommendation to the Council for approval of the budget (as detailed in recommendation 8.1.3) but, in order to allow for wider Member involvement in the preparation of the Transport Strategy, this issue should be referred to a Special meeting of the Committee to be held on 29 June at 9.30 a.m.

Accordingly, Mr J C Irvine moved the Committee approve recommendation 8.1.3 of the report but, in relation to recommendations, 8.1.1 and 8.1.2, moved that these issues should be considered at a Special meeting of the Committee on 29 June. Mr B P Gregson seconded.

36/05 **Capital Rolling Programmes, Roads and Fleet Management Unit Schemes and Purchases 2005/2006**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Roads (Appendix 5).

The Network Manager briefly introduced the report following which he answered questions put to him by Members and Members noted the information provided.

Referring to Appendix 2 and, in particular, the A970 Sandwater Park and Ride, Mrs B J Cheyne said it would be ideal for a car park to be provided there. Mrs F B Grains agreed.

In response to serious concerns about the state of the footpath at Twageos, the Network Manager said that this project was included in the list of Revenue Programmes but was unsure if it would be done this year or next year.

A brief discussion ensued about road markings. The Network Manager explained that actual accident areas were assessed. Road markings had to be used sparingly (e.g. those indicating a blind summit) because drivers could often ignore these if there were too many. There were specific rules surrounding the provision of road markings and, with regard to the concerns about the blind summit at Collafirth Junction, he said he was certain that the Head of Roads would have had staff examining this area but would check up on this.

(Mr J G Simpson left the meeting).

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report, on the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Capt G G Mitchell.

(Mr W H Manson left the meeting).

37/05 **Shetland Structure Plan Monitoring**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Planning (Appendix 6)

On the motion of Mr J C Irvine, seconded by Mr B P Gregson, the Committee resolved, in terms of the relevant legislation, to exclude the public during consideration of the following item of business.

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(Representatives of the media left the meeting).