

MINUTES

B - PUBLIC

**Special Shetland Islands Council
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday 13 February 2020 at 2pm**

Present:

M Bell	P Campbell
A Cooper	S Coutts
A Duncan	S Flaws
J Fraser	A Hawick
C Hughson	S Leask
M Lyall	E Macdonald
A Priest	D Sandison
I Scott	C Smith
G Smith	T Smith
R Thomson	

Apologies:

A Manson
R McGregor
D Simpson

In Attendance (Officers):

M Sandison, Chief Executive
N Grant, Director of Development Services
M Craigie, Executive Manager – Transport Planning
J Manson, Executive Manager – Finance Services
P Peterson, Executive Manager – Executive Services
R Barton, Transport Planning and Projects Officer
E Park, Transport Contracts and Operations Officer
H Chapman, Trainee Senior Assistant Accountant
B Kerr, Communications Officer
L Malcolmson, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Mr Bell, Convener of the Council, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

None

17/20 Public, School and Adult Social Care Bus Transport – Full Business Case

The Council considered a report by the Executive Manager – Transport Planning (DV-05-20-F) that sought approval to award contracts for School and Adult Social Care transport and fund contracts for Public Bus Transport in line with the conclusions of the Full Business Case.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning introduced the report, providing an overview of the three stage process leading to the full business case and the outcome of the tender process. He commented on the savings achieved and the enhancements to services on bus routes 1 and 6. The Executive Manager –

Transport Planning advised that where there was removal of a public bus service this had been done through consultation with the community. He acknowledged that there were gaps in services in terms of days in the week and length of day but with the current financial constraints it was not possible to close those gaps. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised that Officers would continue to work on ways to close gaps by engaging with partners and sourcing alternative funding opportunities.

Officers were congratulated on achieving the £500k savings target whilst maintaining or enhancing current services. In responding to a question, the Executive Manager – Transport Planning confirmed that there were no external costs placed on the customers. He said that customers will continue to pay the same fares, but it was noted that the fares would be reviewed shortly.

Reference was made to individuals travelling by car from landward areas outwith Lerwick, and the potential for problems in regard to parking in the town to connect with public transport and the question was put forward whether consideration had been given to park and ride facilities. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised that this process did not allow for tackling such issues but officers would continue to work on ways to allow people to use public transport.

In considering the bus route to Sumburgh it was highlighted that Loganair had reported an 11% reduction in passenger travel, which related to the reduction in oil related passengers. It was questioned therefore how that would impact on bus journeys in the future. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning advised that through the business case process there had been engagement with Loganair and when discussing capacity it is their ambition to grow the passenger travel market.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning was asked what consideration had been given to detouring through Bigton and Robins Brae. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning said that this option could not be considered within the current scheme but would form part of the ongoing work to address gaps across Shetland.

In terms of previous discussion in regard to free bus or concessionary bus services, reassurance was sought that Officers were actively looking at options to enhance available bus services that are cost effective, in partnership with local and national bodies. The Executive Manager – Transport Planning confirmed that an application had been submitted for funding to carry out a fare study and he planned to report back to ZetTrans and the Environment and Transport Committee within the first two thirds of the next financial year.

In responding to a question on the Scalloway, Tingwall, and Lerwick routes, and the need for the public to access Scalloway without first having to go through Lerwick, the Executive Manager – Transport Planning confirmed that behaviour change was a feature of the work that would be undertaken. He advised that there would be Area Transport Forums held across Shetland where issues could be raised in order to get the views of the public.

During debate, Mr Thomson advised that concern had been expressed within the community when the £500k savings target for transport had been set. He said that through the efforts of the Executive Manager - Transport Planning and his team, this had been achieved and the service improved. Mr Thomson moved that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report, with the addition at

1.1.2 “that further work will be carried out to identify areas of need.” Mr Sandison seconded.

During further debate, reference was made to the earlier comment in terms of parking, and that it was important to be mindful of the many informal parking that takes place along the roadside and this could become an unintended consequence of enhancing the South Mainland bus service.

An issue of concern was raised in regard to the Mossbank and Firth services, where a higher number of low income families reside. It was noted that there had formerly been a 2pm service from Mossbank but having removed that service families were no longer able to spend a half day in Lerwick and return in time to pick their children up from School. The 3pm service had also been useful to attend appointments at the Brae Dentist and Health Centre but this had also been removed. Mr Cooper asked if reconsideration of these services could be incorporated into the motion. The Convener suggested that this point was covered in the addition made to the recommendation at 1.1.2. For clarity, Mr Cooper read what he intended to be put forward as an amendment namely “the addition of recommendation 1.1.3, Ask ZetTrans to investigate and incorporate a feeder service in the new contract between Brae, Toft and Mossbank connecting with the 1400 Lerwick to Hillswick Service. A report would be brought back to Council advising how the cost can be met.”

The Convener said that a number of suggestions had been made that he believed had been covered by the addition made by Mr Thomson in his motion. Mr Thomson said that he agreed with Mr Cooper and that specific and individual areas do need further work but he was hesitant to identify specific areas within his motion but sought to ensure that work would continue in terms of need that covers the whole of Shetland. In terms of timeline, Mr Cooper said he sought an answer by August this year but was concerned that this work may not be done for another 2-3 years. Mr Thomson said that he was confident that he would work with Officers to find a meaningful way forward.

Further comments were made in congratulating Officers for the efforts and for the enhancements to services that would better support Sumburgh airport and the Shetland College. In terms of raising matters relating to identified gaps in services, Members were advised that a series of public Area Transport Forums would be held and Members and the public would be encouraged to attend.

Decision:

The Council **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the award of contracts for school and adult social care transport to deliver Option 3 (Optimised Network: August 2020 Introduction) in line with the conclusions of the Full Business Case attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- **APPROVE** provision of finance to ZetTrans for the award of contracts for public bus transport to deliver Option 3 in line with the conclusions of the Full Business Case attached as Appendix 1 to this report and further work will be carried out to identify areas of need.

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mr Bell moved and Mr C Smith seconded, and the Council RESOLVED to exclude the public in terms

of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following item of business.

18/20

Inter-Island Air Services Full Business Case

The Council considered a report by the Executive Manager – Transport Planning.

The Executive Manager – Transport Planning summarised the main terms of the report and responded to Members questions.

Mr Thomson moved that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Leask seconded.

Decision:

The Council **APPROVED** the recommendations contained in the report.

The meeting concluded at 2.50pm.

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Chair