

Infrastructure Committee
29 November 2005 Public Minutes
Infrastructure Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Tuesday 29 November 2005 at 10.30 a.m.

Present:

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

Apologies:

L Angus	A J Cluness
J A Inkster	W H Manson
J G Simpson	W N Stove

In Attendance (Officers):

G Spall, Executive Director, Infrastructure Services
S Cooper, Acting Head of Transport
A Hamilton, Head of Planning
I Halcrow, Head of Roads
M Dunne, Service Manager, Environmental Health
J Emptage, Cleansing Services Manager
V Hawthorne, Service Manager, Development Plans
E Patt, Capital Projects
D Haswell, Committee Officer

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 18 October 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	SOTEAG – Aberdeen
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(Mr W A Ratter attended the meeting)

Mr J C Irvine	Scottish Executive Explained Conference – Edinburgh
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Mr J C Irvine	Reserved Forces and Cadets North East Scotland &
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With regard to the information Mr J C Irvine had circulated to Members following the Reserved Forces and Cadets meeting, Mr T W Stove said he was pleased to note the Shetland Battery had come 3rd in the '[51 \(Scottish\) Brigade Military Skills Competition 2005](#)' and suggested that this award should be made known on a wider scale. Accordingly, the Committee agreed that the Executive Director should write to Major John Taylor congratulating the Shetland Battery on this award.

Mr J H Henry COSLA Environment, Sustainability and Community
Safety Executive Group – Edinburgh

Mr J H Henry KIMO – Edinburgh

Mr B P Gregson NLFA Annual Conference and AGM – Manchester

Mr B P Gregson advised that at the meetings, he had managed to get a resolution from the NFLA to support the concerns raised by KIMO in relation to maritime radioactive submissions. All local authorities had indicated their support.

Mr T W Stove Making the Planning System Work for Your Proposals
Conference – Edinburgh

Mr T W Stove Smoking Ban and Licensing (Scotland) Bill Conference –
Stirling

Further information can be obtained from the Members concerned.

62/05 **Petition – A970 South Lochside – Traffic Speeds**

The Committee considered a report by the Network Manager (Appendix 1).

The Head of Roads introduced the report. He advised that the Convener and the Chairperson had received a letter from Eleanor Scott, MSP writing in support of the campaign for a traffic speed of 20 mph in residential areas of Shetland. The Head of Roads reminded Members that the Council had previously decided to impose 20 mph speed restrictions in certain areas throughout Shetland and provided information as to where such restrictions were in place. Further, Members had previously agreed that there should be 20 mph speed limits applied at schools throughout Shetland and the Roads Service were currently working on this programme.

After a brief discussion, Capt G G Mitchell moved the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr W Tait seconded.

A Member was of the view that the amount of cars that were parked at Lochside which were advertised for sale caused a distraction to drivers and said that people should be stopped from parking their cars there. With regard to the proposed Environmental Measures, it was suggested that cobblestones could be used to provide a break in the road and off-road parking.

Mr W A Ratter complimented the author of the report for providing such comprehensive information.

63/05 **A970 Scord to School, Scalloway**

The Committee considered a report by the Network Manager (Appendix 2) and, on the motion of Mrs I J Hawkins, seconded by Mr F A Robertson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

64/05 **B9081 Mid Yell Link Road – Proposed Hillend Diversion**

The Committee considered a report by the Network Manager (Appendix 3) and, on the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Mr B P Gregson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

Mr B P Gregson complimented the Member/Officer Working Group for the work done on progressing this scheme.

65/05 **Response to Transport Strategy Guidance**

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

The Acting Head of Transport introduced the report following which a brief discussion ensued. A Member said that the Council were now in a position to do something imaginative and, although it might not be in the lifetime of this Council, Members would have to be prepared for significant changes.

With the exception of 2 minor typographical errors in the draft response, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report, on the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr B P Gregson.

66/05 **National Concessionary Travel Scheme**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Transport Operations (Appendix 5).

Referring to the proposed response to Question 5, Mr C B Eunson suggested that this should be strengthened to highlight that older and disabled islanders should be offered air travel as an alternative to ferry travel if they so wished and this should be for 2 trips per year. It was noted that in the response, the Council were insisting that the entitlement to 2 free return ferry trips to the mainland should include a berth.

Mr C B Eunson moved the Committee approve the recommendation in the report, incorporating his suggestion. Mrs I J Hawkins seconded.

Mr L G Groat said that if this suggestion was not acceptable, an alternative proposal would be for the entitlement to 2 free trips to the mainland by air to apply to those people who are registered disabled.

67/05 **Provision of the Foula Ferry Service**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Infrastructure Services (Appendix 6).

Mr F A Robertson provided some background information following which he moved the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr B P Gregson seconded.

In response to a comment from a Member, the Committee agreed that if, following the tendering exercise and, subsequently, the provision of the service proved to be successful, consideration could be given to applying the same principles on the Skerries and Fair Isle routes.

68/05

Provision of New Toilets for the Esplanade

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Environment (Appendix 7).

(Mr L G Groat declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as a Member of Lerwick Port Authority (LPA)).

Mr L G Groat advised that cruise liners would take up most of the area behind the existing public toilets and there was no land available there. As a Member of LPA, Mr Groat urged the Council to make a decision as soon as possible.

(Mr F A Robertson left the meeting).

In support of recommendation 10.1.2, Mr J H Henry said that this was an excellent opportunity to replace the existing public toilets which were an eyesore. In his view, new toilets could be built on the existing area without the need for any more space. Accordingly, Mr J H Henry moved the Committee approve recommendation 10.1.2. Mrs I J Hawkins seconded.

Supporting recommendation 10.1.3, Mr J P Nicolson said that there were so many advantages to demolishing the existing building and it would open up a vista which could be enjoyed. It would also avoid the need for temporary arrangements. In his view, the Council should not miss this opportunity because it would make significant impact on this area. Mr J P Nicolson moved as an amendment that the Committee approve recommendation 10.1.3. Mrs B J Cheyne seconded.

The Executive Director and the Cleansing Services Manager provided clarification on the cost of the whole Harbour House project. The project would cost £1.2M, the Council's share being £422k for the provision of a new facility as part of the redevelopment of Harbour House. The building would require to be completely demolished.

In response to concerns from a Member regarding the possibility of a delay in the project if recommendation 10.1.3 was accepted, the Head of Planning highlighted these concerns in regard to the involvement of Historic Scotland because Harbour House was a listed building. The Council would have to provide justification to Historic Scotland for the demolition. The Head of Planning stressed the point that not only might this result in a delay on the project, it could not in any case be assumed that consent for demolition would be granted. The Cleansing Services Manager said that the reference to Historic Scotland, as detailed in section 4.4.3 should be borne in mind.

A brief discussion ensued on the provision of toilets in rural areas during which the Executive Director advised that the Committee had previously agreed on a scheme for the provision of toilets in rural areas. The Cleansing Services Manager explained that this scheme had been allocated a budget of £45k per annum. It had also been agreed that consideration would be given to the use of toilets in public halls in rural areas.

(Mr W A Ratter left the meeting).

The Chairperson said that during the last Council, a Member/Officer Working Group had been set up to look at the provision of toilets in rural areas. The Shetland Charitable Trust had accepted that the Shetland Amenity Trust should provide this and funding of £1M from the Shetland Charitable Trust had been agreed. However, this funding had subsequently been withdrawn. The Chairperson requested that this issue should be revived. Members agreed.

After summing-up, voting followed by a show of hands and the result was as follows:

Amendment (J P Nicolson)	8
Motion (J H Henry)	4

69/05 **Legislation for Smoke Free Public Places**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Environmental Health (Appendix 8) and, after hearing the Service Manager introduce the report, approved the recommendation contained therein.

In response to a query from a Member, the Service Manager confirmed that Council owned bus shelters would be included in the legislation because they fell under the heading of “Airport passenger terminals and any other public transportation facilities.” In terms of the legislation, it would not be possible for bus shelters to be exempt. Adequate “no smoking” signage would be put up in bus shelters.

(Mr L G Groat left the meeting).

70/05 **Scottish Executive Consultation – Draft SPP4 – Mineral Working**

The Committee considered a report by the (Appendix 9) and, after hearing the Head of Planning introduce the report, approved the recommendation contained therein, on the motion of Mr B P Gregson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson.

(Mr L G Groat returned to the meeting).

In response to question from Mrs I J Hawkins in relation to section 4.5 of the report and the reference to the buffer zone, the Head of Planning advised that the Council could revisit this issue when the Shetland Local Plan was being revised but, in the meantime, it did not alter the content of the draft response.

71/05 **5th Biennial Flood Report to the Scottish Executive**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Planning (Appendix 10).

In relation to the Burn of Laxdale at Cunningsburgh, Mr T W Stove said that this issue had been very actively pursued. The Head of Roads had discussed the situation with the local community and the community wanted a 3rd culvert to be installed.

The Head of Roads advised that, as indicated in Appendix 1, a rain gauge had been installed in the Burn of Laxdale and initial flow data has been received. A Hydrologist employed by the Council, at minimal cost, had installed the rain gauge and the Hydrologist would be collating the data. He would also provide the Council with more information and advice with regard to the area, e.g. the level of rainfall needed to cause the water level to rise.

Mr T W Stove said he would like a report on this issue to the Committee as soon as possible.

Mr B P Gregson said that monitoring of this type was, generally, carried out by SEPA and this was the case throughout Scotland. Whilst he did not dispute the cost to the Council of employing a Hydrologist, he was concerned about the principle of doing so given that SEPA were the responsible agency. The Head of Roads explained that monitoring of this type in Shetland by SEPA was minimal. However, the data obtained from the rain gauge would be passed onto SEPA.

There followed a brief discussion on the maximum grant available in terms of the Coast Protection and Flooding Grant Scheme, the Service Manager, Development Plans agreed that the grant of £4,800 was inadequate. He said that the Planning Service had been looking at coastal protection throughout Shetland and it had been hoped to present a report to the Committee on this issue today. However, this had not been possible and it was proposed that a seminar be held in order to officers to obtain Members' views prior to a report being prepared.

Mr T W Stove said that since the floods 2 years ago, the response by the Council to the problems that had been faced by the people in Sandwick and Cunningsburgh had been tremendous. He said that this had been very much appreciated by the community.

At this point, Mr W Tait said he wished to express thanks to the contractor that had carried out works at 2 junctions in Levenwick. The works had been done without much disturbance and a very good job had been done.

72/05

Progress Report on Development of Shetland Transport Strategy

The Committee noted a report by the Acting Head of Transport (Appendix 11).

The Chairperson reminded Members of the great deal of work done on this issue by the Executive Director and the Transport Spokesperson, Capt G G Mitchell.

Capt G G Mitchell said it was very important for the Shetland community to have their say during the consultation process and to indicate what they think transport in the future for Shetland should be. Capt Mitchell said that the public meetings had been very well attended but urged members of the public to attend any future meetings. The Chairperson agreed and said he would encourage Members to attend the public meetings held in their areas.

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

(Representatives of the media left the meeting).

73/05

Bus Contracts

The Committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Transport Operations.

Referring to section 3 of the report, Mr B P Gregson said there was an assumption that very few people were using the service but he reminded Members that these changes to the North Isles Ferry timetables and the bus connection had only been in operation for a few weeks. Therefore, it was too soon to comment on usage. Mr Gregson said it would take a little time for people to fully appreciate the additional service and he hoped that more people would avail themselves to use the bus in the future.

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report, on the motion of Capt G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr B P Gregson.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON