

**Special Shetland Islands Council
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday 31 October 2012 at 2.00pm**

Present:

M Bell	M Burgess
P Campbell	G Cleaver
A Cooper	S Coutts
B Fox	R Henderson
A Manson	D Ratter
F Robertson	G Robinson
D Sandison	C Smith
G Smith	T Smith
M Stout	J Wills
A Westlake	A Wishart
V Wishart	

Apologies:

D Ratter
C Smith (for lateness)
M Stout

In Attendance (Officers):

M Boden, Chief Executive
P Crossland, Director of Infrastructure Services
C Ferguson, Director of Corporate Services
N Grant, Director of Development
D Coupe, Executive Manager – Roads
M Craigie, Executive Manager – Transport Planning
J Riise, Executive Manager – Governance and Law
N Hutcheson, Team Leader – Asset and Network
C Manson, Resources Manager – Ferry Operations
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
L Gair, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr M Bell, Convener of the Council, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None.

97/12 Inter Island Ferry Service Review Update

The Council considered a joint report by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Development Services (Report No: ISD-10-12-F), which provided an update on progress regarding the Inter Island Ferry Service Review. In addition a supporting paper in the form of a joint Chairs' report (Development Committee and Environment and Transport Committee) was tabled at the meeting.

The Director - Infrastructure Services summarised the main terms of the report.

Both the Chair of the Development Committee and the Environment and Transport Committee referred to the Chair's report and confirmed the decisions that were made by each Committee.

The Convener referred to paragraph 2 of the report to Council and advised that he would take questions on each of the recommendations in turn. The following considerations were given:

- Comment was made on the level of savings required from within the Ferry Service and it was suggested that there appeared to be a larger proportion of savings to be made from ferries as opposed to other services.
- A request was made for a breakdown, by department, of income received from the public for the provision of services.
- Appendix 4 – Concessionary Fares. Members were advised that this was an option to come out of community consultation and drop in sessions. Thereafter a decision was taken on 9 February 2012 to introduce 50% concessionary fares and multi-journey tickets. Members were advised of the technical issues with introducing this 50% concessionary fare, which led to the amalgamation of the concessionary fare with an increased children's fare.
- Appendix 4 B(ii) – It was agreed that the descriptive for Option 8.6 be clarified and that the wording be changed from "Introduce a tourist fare for Fair Isle" to read, "Introduce a non-islander fare for Fair Isle", and to include the option to introduce a commercial vehicle, non-islander fare at £100 return. (The definition "non-islander" relates to anyone not a resident of Fair Isle).
- Appendix 4 B(ii) – 14.24 In response to a query, Members were directed to paragraph 3.15 of the report and advised that the multi journey ticket price would remain the same but the non-multi journey ticket price would increase.
- Appendix 5 C(i) – 4.4 What costings have been done to show that this is not feasible? Members were advised that work had been done prior to the review on a single mainland terminal and the cost was between £20-30m for the infrastructure required. There was a good knowledge of what capital investment would be required.
- Appendix 5 C(i) – 6.2 – What were the figures for a chain ferry to Bressay? Members were advised that comparing other chain ferries, it was estimated that the cost would be in the region of £150m, it would take 5 years to implement and there would be a 40 year payback period, therefore it would not meet the spend to save criteria and was outwith the Medium Term Financial Plan. It was also noted that to carry out a study on this option would be approx. £50-60,000 to bring to a conclusion.
- Appendix 5 C(ii) – 2.1 – What was prioritised in Yell, day sailings or overnight manning? Members were advised that during consultation priority was given to the length of the sea day ie. 18 hours per day and capacity at peak times. There was an acceptance that overnight manning may go but the community did not want to shorten the sea day.
- Appendix 6 D(i) – 2.6 – Officers were asked why there needed to be a delay in proceeding with the amalgamated options by carrying out further consultation. The list of options covered by the wording "amalgamated options" was explained to Members who were advised on the importance of consultation with the community to ensure that nothing is overlooked. This consultation would be carried out within a short timeframe and reported to Council in December. It was necessary to demonstrate to the Scottish Government that the options going

forward had been appraised taking account of finance, equalities and socio economics. Consultation would identify impacts on the community and was an important part of a robust transport review process rather than moving to a rushed decision. The Executive Manager – Governance and Law explained that prior to this Committee the Employees JCC had accepted that this process was necessary to take options forward. Officers confirmed that the community would be advised of the consultation process in advance of it taking place. The timetable for consultation was explained to Members and they were assured that the public, all businesses and community groups would be included in the consultation process.

- Appendix 6 D(i) - 3.1 – base Skerries ferry in Skerries: Members were advised that the costs provided were based on accommodating the existing crew in Skerries.
- Appendix 6 D(i) – 9.6 – Members were advised that annual season tickets would be considered during the review of the fare structure, which would include socio economic impacts and the introduction of new machines would improve the way in which tickets are sold. Members were informed that a tender process for new ticket machines was now underway. Work was being undertaken with Transport Planning and ICT to ensure that the machines are compatible across all public transport services including buses and ferries and it was expected that the introduction of the SMART Card would be used as a means of securing transport, although that technology would take 2 years to implement. It was also suggested that a higher fare price should be created for inward visitors not resident to that island, Officers confirmed that all options would be considered.
- Appendix 6 D(i) – 14.9 – Members were assured that no option had yet been ruled out, including the option of renegotiating with the Scottish Government for them to run the service, however these options do not need to be addressed at the same time as efficiencies are being made. It was important that the Council has a clear specification based on what is best for the Islands and who delivers that service an be debated at a later time.

During further consideration of the report, the Director of Development provided an update on the status of the Socio Economic study. Members expressed concern that this work was not yet complete and that the budget setting process would be undertaken without feedback from the study.

Mr Wishart moved that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report with the inclusion of amendments to those recommendations approved by the Development Committee and Environment and Transport Committee as set out on the Joint Chair's report. Mr Cooper seconded.

Mr Henderson moved as an amendment that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report and the Joint Chair's report with the amendment that Option 1.6 of Appendix 7 be withdrawn, namely that the option for Bluemull Sound be removed and no further time be spent on this option as this would mean the closure of Unst and Fetlar. Mr Cleaver seconded.

Mr Coutts gave notice of a further amendment.

Following summing up, voting took place with a show of hands and the results were as follows:

Amendment (Mr Henderson)	6
Motion (Mr Wishart)	13

Mr Coutts moved as an amendment that the wording at recommendation 2.1.2 be amended to read “Ulsta be retained as the centralised booking office unless a more cost effective option is identified, and in such case a report would be presented to Council”. Mr Wishart with the support of his seconder agreed to include, within the motion, the amended wording provided by Mr Coutts.

Decision:

The Council **RESOLVED** to:

- i. Note the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures already in place or in the process of being implemented, shown in Table A (Appendix 3).
- ii. Note the progress and implementation of the various savings measures, which will be introduced as soon as possible, shown in Table B (i) (Appendix 4), but Ulsta be retained as the centralised booking office unless a more cost effective option is identified, and in such case a report would be presented to Council.
- iii. Approve the implementation of the savings measures shown in Table B (ii) (Appendix 4), with the addition that the descriptive for Option 8.6 “Introduce a tourist fare for Fair Isle” is changed to read, “Introduce a non-islander fare for Fair Isle”, and to include the option to introduce a commercial vehicle, non-islander fare at £100 return. (the definition “non-islander” relating to anyone not a resident of Fair Isle).
- iv. Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this Review, given in Tables C (i) and C (ii) (Appendix 5).
- v. Note the options summarised in Tables D (i) and D (ii) and detailed in Appendices 6 and 7, which require further detailed appraisal in accordance with the programme given in Appendix 8, prior to a final report to Council on 19th December 2012.

(Mr Cleaver left the Chamber)

98/12 **Winter Roads Maintenance Review Report**

The Council considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (Report No: ISD-12-12-F) that sought a decision on proposals generated as a result of the Infrastructure Roads Winter Maintenance Review; and informed of steps that have already been implemented, or are in the process of being implemented, as a result of the Review. In addition a supporting Chairs’ report (Environment and Transport Committee) was tabled at the meeting.

The Director - Infrastructure Services introduced the report.

(Mr Cleaver returned to the Chamber)

Members were advised that the Environment and Transport Committee had approved the removal of the words “18 or less” from Appendix 4 option 5.1, it was unanimously agreed that this would be included within the Council decision today.

Officers were informed that there had been concern from the Delting Community Council regarding the reliability of the gritting fleet following the suggestion that a number of vehicles had recently experienced technical problems. The Executive Manager - Roads advised that every year the fleet experiences problems on its first time out. He explained that the intention was to remove the most unreliable and oldest vehicles from the fleet. The Executive Manager - Roads assure Members that two spare vehicles would be retained.

The Executive Manager - Roads also assured Members that grit bins would be provided where needed in consultation with the communities. In response to concerns for the public getting to buses the Executive Manager - Roads explained gritters would still meet the timings for bus loops.

In response to a comment regarding one-man gritter operations, the Director - Infrastructure Services explained that a review process was carried out as the two man operation was put forward as a waste of resources by the public. He explained that following the review, one man operations were introduced on routes that did not require reversing or manoeuvring and this was implemented in line with health and safety. He said that two man operations was still necessary on some routes.

At the request of a Member an explanation for the definition of post treatment and pre-salting was given and it was explained that it was beneficial to pre-salting to provide a barrier prior to a snowfall. Post treatment is done once ice has formed. Pre-salting will only be carried out on mainlines and loops to provide this barrier and help take off snow. A Member suggested that the pre-salt be dropped in favour of doing extra post treatments to ensure that essential workers such as care staff could still access lower priority roads. The Director - Infrastructure Services explained that the best combination had been put together in the report. Members agreed that more reassurance needed to be given to the public.

Officers also explained that agricultural tractors/outside contractors were not being used for regular planned snow clearing. He explained that to do so would mean that the Local Authority would have to purchase the necessary equipment, training would have to be provided and operators would be retained on contract. He said that it was impossible to predict the weather and it was important to have a cost effective risk based system. In terms of real emergencies it would be possible to use agricultural tractors and other vehicles through a dispensation with resilience measures put in place to keep the public moving.

When considering Appendix 4 – Option 5.1 - Dr Wills requested that the lower Gulberwick road be changed to priority 1 as it had one of the steepest braes in Shetland and the Community Council had requested that it be pre-salted for school buses. Ms Manson expressed concern that the gritting of the A970 stopped at the Hillswick/Ollaberry Junction and therefore did not reach the Hillswick surgery or the two doctors that live at the end of the road. She asked that the last 4 miles of the A970, into Hillswick, be included in the same priority 1.

Some Members commented that there were sections of road in every ward area that could be argued for reprioritisation. However this report was about equality and Officers had followed the necessary criteria to provide a more efficient and cost effective service.

(Mr C Smith left the meeting)

In considering Appendix 8 Members asked that a leaflet be provided to the public giving safety information, links to maps and highlighting a driver's responsibilities. It was also suggested that a timetable be provided as a guide to the public that sets out the gritting route plan with approximate times. Officers assured Members that the public provide information on the weather and snow fall in their area but it was agreed that this two-way communication should be encouraged using the instant technology available. The Executive Manager - Roads agreed to provide maps highlighting priority three routes.

Mr Wishart moved that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report, incorporating the comment within the Environment and Transport Committee Chairs report noting that the Unions had been consulted and were content with the proposals. Mr G Robinson seconded.

Ms Manson declared an interest in that her business was located in Hillswick, but stressed her deep concern that the road to the Hillwick Surgery and Doctor's residence had not been given priority 1 status. Ms Manson moved as an amendment that the remaining 4 miles of the A970 into Hillswick be given priority 1.

Following summing up voting took place with a show of hands and the results were as follows:

Amendment (A Manson)	14
Motion (A Wishart)	4

Decision:

The Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- Note the progress and implementation of the various defined savings measures already introduced, given in Table A.
- Approve a range of proposals, given in Table B, to be carried forward and implemented, (noting that the Unions had been consulted and were content with the proposals), with the removal of the words "or less" in column 4 of option 5.1 and the inclusion of the remaining section of the A970 into Hillswick to be re-categorised as a Priority 1 route.
- Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this Review, given in Table C.

99/12 **Street lighting Review Report**

The Council considered a report by the (Report No: ISD-11-12-F), which sought a decision on options generated as a result of the Infrastructure Streetlighting Review; and informed of options that have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented as a result of the Review. In addition a supporting Chairs' report (Environment and Transport Committee) was tabled at the meeting.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report.

In response to questions, Officers explained that the provision of streetlights was not a statutory duty but where they are provided they have to meet the standards laid down. Members were advised therefore that it was not possible to turn off every second light as the Council would be in breach of these standards. The Executive Manager – Roads advised that the temporary makeshift repairs to the access box covers would be addressed when they are removed or replaced. In referring to L4

in Table A, the Director of Infrastructure Services explained that through consultation the view had been taken that more people would be out later on Friday and Saturday evenings and into early the next morning.

New technology was discussed, that switches off lights depending on the mid point of a dark night. This technology would be more expensive and was considered to be inconsistent for the public. On balance it had been deemed more appropriate for the public to know when lights would be switched off.

With regard to the lighting of speed limits, the Executive Manager – Roads explained that the removal of these lights would be carried out when the signs are replaced or removed. To carry out this work sooner would not be cost effective.

Mr Wishart moved that the Council approve the recommendations contained in the report. Mr Cooper seconded.

Decision:

The Council **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the changes that have been made to the street lighting inspection regime;
- Approve the options, given in Table A, paragraph 4.16, to be carried forward and implemented; and
- Note the options that have been discontinued from consideration within this review.

The meeting concluded at 4.10pm.

Chair