

# MINUTES

# A&B

**Shetland Islands Council  
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick  
Wednesday 3 July 2019 at 10 a.m.**

## **Present:**

P Campbell	A Cooper
S Coutts	A Duncan
A Hawick [by phone]	C Hughson
S Leask	E Macdonald
A Manson	A Priest
D Sandison	I Scott
C Smith	T Smith
R Thomson	B Wishart

## **Apologies:**

M Bell	M Burgess
J Fraser	R McGregor
G Smith	

## **In Attendance (Officers):**

M Sandison, Chief Executive  
C Ferguson, Director of Corporate Services  
N Grant, Director of Development Services  
M Craigie, Executive Manager – Transport Planning  
J Manson, Executive Manager – Finance  
J Riise, Executive Manager – Governance and Law  
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer  
R Barton, Transport Policy and Projects Officer  
J Belford, Legal Assistant  
J Clark, Projects Officer  
J Thomason, Management Accountant  
A Cogle, Team Leader - Administration

## **Also:**

A Mackie, Peter Brett Associates LLP  
H Sutherland, NHS Shetland

## **Chairperson**

Ms B Wishart, Depute Convener of the Council, presided.

## **Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

## **Ruling to Permit Participation by Telephone**

The Depute Convener ruled that, in accordance with Section 43(2) of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the attendance of Councillor Amanda Hawick during the Council proceedings be permitted by remote telephone link.

## **Declarations of Interest**

None

## **Minutes**

The Council confirmed the minute of meeting held on **26 February 2019**, on the motion of Mr P Campbell.

The Council confirmed the minute of meeting held on **17 April 2019**, on the motion of Mr S Leask, subject to the amendment of reference in the Sederunt from “A Westlake” to “A Hawick”.

The Council confirmed the minute of meeting held on **15 May 2019**, on the motion of Mr T Smith.

### **46/19      Performance Management Framework 2019-2024**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee, regarding a joint report by the NHS Head of Planning and Modernisation, the NHS Chief Executive, and the SIC Director of Corporate Services (CC-24-F), that proposed the implementation of a new Performance Management Framework which has been developed jointly with the NHS Board, Shetland Islands Council and the IJB.

Mr Coutts advised that the Policy and Resources Committee had fully discussed the report the previous day. He advised that the Director of Corporate Services was available for questions. Mr Coutts went on to say that the proposed framework was a collaborative effort from both public authorities, and whilst there may be some challenges expected during implementation, there was good support from both organisations.

In response to a question from Mr P Campbell, the Director of Corporate Services referred to the way in which access to services were being done through mobile apps and other technology, in the home or car for example. She explained that the speed of new technology changes meant that the Council had to keep up to speed with such changes, and this would require a cultural shift for the Council towards digital processes, referred to in the report as a “digital cultural paradigm”.

Mr Coutts moved that the Council approve the recommendation and approve the Framework. Mr A Duncan seconded, and the Council concurred.

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#### **Decision:**

The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee, and the Performance Management Framework 2019-2024 for implementation, and that it replaces the Commissioning and Procurement Framework 2016-2020 in the Council’s Policy Framework contained in Part A of the Constitution, to be managed by the Policy and Resources Committee.

### **47/19      ICT Strategy 2019-2024**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee regarding a report by the Executive Manager – ICT [ICT-02-F), to approve the ICT Strategy 2019-2024.

Mr Coutts said the Policy and Resources Committee had also considered this report the previous day. He added that it was worth reflecting that this was a five-

year strategy, and as mentioned earlier regarding the speed of change in technology, this would remain a live document and there would be opportunities to refresh the Strategy as time goes on.

There were no questions, and Mr Coutts moved that the Council approve the recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee and adopt the ICT Strategy 2019-2024. Mr S Leask seconded.

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**Decision:**

The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee, and adopted the ICT Strategy 2019-2024.

48/19

**Public, School and Adult Social Care Bus Transport - Strategic Outline Case**

The Council considered a report by the Transport Policy and Projects Officer (DV-21-F) which set out the Strategic Outline Case for the provision of a network of public, school and adult social care bus services after the expiry of the current contracts in August 2020. The report also sought authority for officers to proceed to develop an outline business case for the preferred way forward.

The Transport Policy and Projects Officer introduced the report, and explained the organisational responsibilities and duties for the provision of public transport, including the statutory responsibilities of the Council in terms of school, ASN and adult social care needs. The Transport Policy and Projects Officer also explained the programme management arrangements.

Mr A Mackie presented an overview of the Strategic Outline Case, including options and short listing, the process for which considered: service scope, solution, delivery, implementation and funding. He went on to illustrate the options shortlisting, which consisted of the Preferred Way Forward and further options to carry forward to the Outline Business Case. Mr Mackie advised on the next steps, including tendering and procurement with consultation and engagement featuring throughout the process. The Transport Policy and Projects Officer concluded with an overview of the decisions required.

Reference was made by Mr P Campbell to the information in Table 7-5 of the Strategic Outline Case, and the lack of detail relating to the criteria used to determine the scoring for each of the critical success factors made it difficult to understand. The Chief Executive noted this feedback, and confirmed that presentation and accessibility factors would be looked at in future reports.

With regard to the process of public consultation and engagement with user and operators, Mr D Sandison asked how this would be incorporated in to the process, in terms of building on the previous consultation that had resulted in a good outcome, and identifying areas for further improvement. The Transport Policy and Projects Officers advised that quite a large body of information had already been collected, through consultation as part of the Place Standard, Shetland Partnership Plan and the Transport Strategy Refresh, and this had informed on current services and where there were gaps. She added that this process would now look to validate whether the hierarchy of travel needs factors were still the highest priorities, looking at the primary importance of journeys for work, training, education and health care. The Transport Policy and Projects Officer said that the process would also look at the benefits and risks of making alterations to services, appraising the costs and benefits, and so consultation would be focussed and

specific. Final decisions, she said, would be based on a range of costed options with the benefits and risks of changes or opportunities to expand, being fully explained.

In response to further questions, the Transport Policy and Projects Officer advised that a separate piece of work on service user information was being collated through new ticketing machines and as these were collected on a daily basis, it would provide information to help the Council understand patterns of travel in order to maximise and encourage the usage of public bus services. She added that awareness was needed to influence the Scottish Government with regard to issues surrounding the subsidy for concessionary travel, particularly the financial impact that national decisions have at a local level.

Regarding the scope for making revenue savings, the Transport Policy and Projects Officer said that potential savings within the current network could be made by achieving 1 or 2% savings in different areas that would add up to the desired 10% overall. In this regard, work also would be done on looking at why some services were not performing well, and they would look at whether those services could be delivered in a different way, perhaps with an initial cost, but with the prospect of generating more revenue. She added that the potential for different solutions in different areas would be considered, which would need to come from the communities, and the Outline Business Case would be looking at service usage in more detail.

The Executive Manager – Transport Operations, in response to questions, added that the length of different contracts would be considered, and operators would be engaged with that process. He went on to say that there had also been a change in the school transport network in response to changes in school timetables, and so this would also be considered during the process. Regarding the possibility of having more buses on some routes at the expense of others, Mr Mackie said that individual routes would be looked at in terms of solutions that would generate savings or increase revenue, but the additional cost to bus operators could make it some proposals uneconomical.

Ms Hawick referred to current economic uncertainties and to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan to achieve future savings, and asked for reassurance that the proposals to achieve the projected savings as part of this project could be achieved. The Chief Executive advised that the next stage of the business case would involve working up different ways of how tenders could be packaged, with a view to identifying and maximising the resource that the Council contributes, and to deliver efficiencies. She added that there were challenges around managing growth and delivering as much as possible, but for less. She said that if contractors were unable to respond to this, then the Council would have to look at where reductions in services could be made. The Chief Executive added that with regard to any comparison with the bus services provided in Orkney, she explained that as well as other factors, geographical differences added to the costs for Shetland.

Mr S Coutts referred to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, and said that whilst the Council had significant challenges, the Council had approved service delivery plans, and he had no reservations as to the structured process being proposed to achieve desired outcomes and informed decisions.

Mr S Leask referred to future aspirations for carbon free status, and queried the impact of this on the cost of transport. The Transport Policy and Projects Officer

said that current fleet complied with the statutory minimum requirements, and that any move to increase the standard would have cost implications, not only for the operators, but the Council, unless financial support from the Scottish Government was forthcoming in terms of meeting climate change targets. She added that more funding was being made available for active travel, and to encourage car club development so perhaps more funding to 'greenify' public transport would be forthcoming in the future.

During debate, Mr R Thomson said that the report highlighted a number of challenges at this stage, including the timescale, and further detail would be forthcoming in future reports. Mr Thomson moved that the Council approve the terms of the report. Mr S Coutts seconded.

Mr D Sandison said that the Council did get a good set of contracts the last time, and by and large feedback is that it was a good service. He said that there were areas for improvement, and whilst there could be savings made through efficiencies, there was also scope for generating more income, but the cost to operators in this would have to be considered. Mr Sandison said that some further work was needed in encouraging people to use bus services more. He went on to highlight that the Lerwick Town Service in particular needed a full appraisal at the next stage as it did not meet the needs of its intended users.

Ms E Macdonald said it was difficult to pick up on individual services until the Outline Business Case was presented. However, she said that she understood how important the bus services were to many people, and agreed that more could be done to encourage usage, and that Councillors themselves could be challenged to use the service for a week to see what it was like for their needs.

Mr P Campbell said that one of the key areas he would like to see addressed is the timetabling for accessing education, in particular the routes and connections for Shetland College and the NAFC Marine Centre as the current service was highlighted by the HMIE as being inadequate for students to access higher education.

Mr Coutts asked that as part of the next stage, it would be useful for Members to have examples of the scoring matrix to illustrate why certain options had been discounted. He added that whilst it was a challenging timetable, it was very important that this project be delivered on time.

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**Decision:**

The Council **RESOLVED** to: -

1. **NOTE** that the Public and School Bus Transport Business Case (Min Ref 47/18) has been revised to incorporate Adult Social Care Transport, with Peter Brett Associates appointed to provide the additional resources required to support the Business Case Development.
2. **NOTE** that the preferred way forward for public, school and adult social care transport in Shetland detailed in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) in Appendix 1 comprises three components; namely: -
  - (a) For Public Bus Transport – a network of services based on the current network grounded in a hierarchy of travel needs factors established through public engagement, with refinements to take advantage of

opportunities for efficiency, and a framework to support any decisions to modify the network to meet financial constraints.

- (b) For School Bus Transport – a network of dedicated services and public transport based services that provides transport to entitled pupils in compliance with the Council's prevailing policy criteria described in the Council's School Transport Policy.
- (c) For Adult Social Care Transport – a range of services to meet entitlement for client travel requirements based on an assessment of need grounded in social care legislation; and

**3. DELEGATE AUTHORITY** to the Director of Development Services, working with the Lead Officer of ZetTrans, to take any decisions and action required on behalf of the Council to develop the Outline Business Case for the preferred way forward described in paragraphs 2(a), (b) and (c) above, for each of the Public, School and Adult Social Care Bus Transport Networks for consideration at the Council in October 2019.

49/19

**Notice of Motion - Free TV licences for over-75s**

In accordance with Standing Order 12, the Council considered a Notice of Motion, submitted by Councillor A Duncan, regarding free TV licences for over-75s, that "SIC writes to the UK Government to intervene with the BBC in this matter as a matter of urgency."

Mr A Duncan said, "The news that the BBC has confirmed plans to require most over-75s to pay the TV licence has been greeted with dismay and anger by many of the 2,000 people in Shetland affected by this imposition. 3 million UK pensioners would lose their free TV Licence as a result of this decision. The BBC will continue to provide licences to over-75s who can provide evidence that they claim pension credit. In Shetland we are aware there is traditionally a low take-up rate of these benefits and many in our rising elderly population are likely to be affected by this BBC pronouncement. Many Shetland pensioners have contacted their councillors and MP seeking SIC support to bring their concerns to the attention of government. Few have access to the internet, online social media or even daily newspapers and rely on TV to maintain contact with the wider world. SIC is well-placed to speak on behalf of those in our community affected by this move. Free TV licences started as a government initiative and remains a manifesto commitment; it surely must be to government that we turn to reverse this latest turn of the austerity screw." In conclusion, Mr Duncan moved that the "SIC writes to the UK Government to intervene with the BBC in this matter as a matter of urgency".

Mr R Thomson said that he was more than delighted to countersign the Notice of Motion and fully agreed with the statement made by Mr Duncan.

Mr Duncan urged Councillors that, if they knew of anyone not receiving benefits, to encourage them to contact the Citizens Advice Bureau to receive information and advice on full entitlements.

In conclusion, Mr Coutts added that he would undertake to liaise with Mr Duncan as to the terms of the letter, and that it would be copied to Alistair Carmichael MP. Mr Duncan agreed, and the Council concurred.

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**Decision:**

The Council **RESOLVED** to ADOPT the motion that “SIC writes to the UK Government to intervene with the BBC in this matter as a matter of urgency.”

The Council also **NOTED** that the Leader would undertake to liaise with Councillor Duncan as to the terms of the letter to the UK Government, copied to Alistair Carmichael MP.

The meeting concluded at 11.20 a.m.

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Convener