

Environment and Transport Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday, 4 September 2019 at 2.00pm

Present:

P Campbell	S Coutts
C Hughson	S Leask
R McGregor	G Smith
R Thomson	

Apologies:

C Hughson (lateness)
A Manson A Priest
D Sandison

In Attendance (Officers):

J Smith, Director of Infrastructure Services
N Grant, Director of Development Services
A Inkster, Executive Manager – Marine and Airport Infrastructure
C Symons, Executive Manager – Environmental Services and Estate Operations
K Main, Team Leader – Port & Marine Operations
N Hutcheson, Team Leader – Roads
B Robb, Management Accountant
P Wishart, Solicitor
L Malcolmson, Committee Officer

Chair:

Mr Thomson, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interests

None

Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2019 on the motion of Mr Leask, seconded by Mr G Smith.

16/19 **Infrastructure Directorate Performance Reporting - Environment and Transport Performance Report Quarter 4 to 31 March 2019 and Quarter 1 to 30 June 2019**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-13-19-F) that summarised the activity and performance of the Infrastructure Directorate for Quarter 4 to 31 March 2019 and Quarter 1 to 30 June 2019

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the main terms of the report, and in responding to questions he provided clarity on the different figures in the Appendix compared to those in paragraph 4.10 of the report.

Reference was made to the replacement ferries for Whalsay and Fair Isle and Officers were asked for an update on the Business Cases for these projects. The Director of Development Services advised that the capital case had been submitted to the Scottish Government where Ministers would consider it in connection with the request for revenue funding. The Director of Development Services was however unable to advise on the date of any response from the Scottish Government. The Committee was advised that Officers had provided all information sought and Transport Scotland had also been involved in the process. The Director of Development Services reported also that additional analysis of the Whalsay Ferry would be completed soon.

During further discussion, reference was made to the Risk Register and the emergency plan in place to respond to animal or infectious diseases, and it was noted that the bespoke scheme in place in Shetland was the envy of the UK. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised however there was no further information available on Brexit but concern was then expressed that animal health issues could be less stringent following Brexit. It was noted that the Council would work closely with industry on all Brexit issues.

The Director of Development Services added that the Government is leading the Brexit process but the Council is part of that process as the country prepares.

During debate, reference was made to the fair funding for internal ferries and it was hoped that following the recent Scottish Parliamentary Campaign engagement would continue to ensure connectivity with the remote isles. The Chair said that through the Sounding Board it was clear that there was no more to be done at a local level, and lobbying was now political. He added however that he had been heartened by the pledge from the Scottish Government, to continue to work with the North Isles. He advised however that agreement had been reached on what "fair" means. He stated that Officers would continue to work with the Scottish Government to reach a conclusion and as the First Minister said, we will work to make a better service.

(Mrs Hughson attended the meeting)

During further debate, there was concern expressed that there had been a number of pledges some time ago and it was hoped these would be honoured. It was noted however that the new MSP for Orkney and Shetland would be better informed than her predecessors, and it was hoped that the pledges made would reach a conclusion.

Through the Chair a further question was asked regarding the recycling shed and the Director of Infrastructure Services confirmed that the work was nearing completion and he would advise specifically on a date in early course. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that the project had been delayed affecting some savings but when completed he would report back. He added that once the commercial recycling is implemented performance would be improved performance and he would also report in that regard and include how the project has been affected by the slippage.

In responding to a further question, the Executive Manager – Environmental Services and Estate Operations confirmed that the pool car scheme was achieving savings and the tracked vehicles are a benefit to staff whilst these savings are made. The Director of Infrastructure Services advised that once twelve months of data was available the pool car scheme performance would be reported to Committee.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** the;

- achievements of the Directorate during 2018/19,
- plans and progress in 2019/20 and
- proposals for 2020/21 activity and priorities

17/19

Development Directorate Performance Report 2018/19

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-04-F) summarising the activity and performance of the Development Directorate for 2018/19.

The Director of Development Services summarised the main terms of the report that related to the remit of the Committee, commenting particularly on Islands with Small Populations, Fair Funding of Internal Ferry Services, North Isles Ferry Services and the Inter Islands Air Services.

There being no question or debate, the Committee noted the report.

Decision:

The Committee NOTED the report and the achievements of the Directorate during 2018/19 and the progress against the priorities set out in the Directorate Plan.

18/19

Development Services Directorate Plan 2019-2022

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-10-F) that set out the actions to be taken by the Directorate between 2019-2022.

The Director of Development Services summarised the main terms of the report and drew attention specifically to the external transport links, internal transport networks and the three service redesign projects.

The Committee discussed the need for a better payment system on the internal ferries as the public, including tourists, may arrive without cash in the expectation that card or phone payment is possible. It was considered that a solution should be found and whilst acknowledging that the broadband connectivity was an issue on board the vessels it may be appropriate to have a shore based facility, and the crew could check that a ticket has been purchased. It would also be important to link ticketing facilities with the bus services, and the Committee urged that the matter be progressed. The Chair said that ZetTrans smart ticketing had not been progressed due to the cost and the specific software that is needed. He advised that in terms of funding it was not possible to progress smart ticketing until the end of this calendar year. The Committee agreed that this project should be pushed forward and the Director of Development Services agreed to provide a progress update on smart ticketing for ferries for the next meeting. Further comment was

made in regard to the need for card or phone payment facilities for inter islands transport.

A concern was raised in regard to bus transport, and the Committee heard from a Community Council meeting there had been discussion around how uncomfortable the low level buses are particularly on longer routes where the conditions of the roads may add to this discomfort. The Director of Development Services said that the new bus contract was an opportunity to influence the next set of contracts but there are some of the feeder services that do not have disabled access. The Committee were informed that Peter Brett Associates were working with Officers who would consider the different options whilst trying to keep the costs down.

During debate, comment was made on the condition of Shetland's roads and although it was acknowledged that the roads are better maintained than other areas of Scotland, within the resources available.

Decision:

The Committee ENDORSED the Directorate Plan, recognising that the Director of Development Services will make any adjustments required to ensure it is fully aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan.

19/19

Traffic Regulation Orders Etc. – Annual Progress Report

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader – Asset and Network (RD-03-19-F) that provided information on the Traffic Orders etc. made in the past year.

The Team Leader – Asset and Network introduced the report, and the Committee noted its content.

Decision:

The Committee NOTED the report.

20/19

Infrastructure Services Business Programme – 2019/20

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services (ISD-14-19-F) that provided information on the Business Programme of the Committee for the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 including items where the date is still to be determined.

The Director of Infrastructure Services introduced the report, and it was agreed that the matter of Smart Ticketing on Ferries Update would be added to the meeting scheduled for 20 November 2019.

Decision:

The Committee APPROVED the business planned in the financial year 2019/20, as amended.

The meeting concluded at 3pm.

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Chair