

## ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN: Tuesday, 12 January 2010. Minute of Meeting of the ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Dean, Convener; Councillor McCaig, Vice Convener; and Councillors Adam, Allan, Boulton, Clark, Corall, Cormie, Crockett, Greig, Jaffrey, Milne, Penny, Robertson and Kevin Stewart.

Councillor Graham joined the meeting for article 3 only, as a substitute for Councillor Crockett.

### 1 REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION

The Committee had before it the two undernoted requests for deputations in relation to The Aberdeen City Council (Inchgarth Road/Westerton Road/ Primrosebank Avenue/Primrosehill Avenue/Primrosehill Road/Den of Cults/Station Road/Ashfield Road/Deeview Road South/Park Brae/Park Road/Loirsbank Road/West Cults Road) (20mph speed limits) Order 2009 (with associated speed cushions on Inchgarth Road) and The Aberdeen City Council (Golf Road, Bielside, and Pitfodels Station Road) (20mph Speed Limits) Order 2009 (with associated speed cushions on both roads) (Article 5 refers):-

- (1) Dr Shan Parfitt; and
- (2) Mr. Erik Dalhuisen

The Committee heard from the Convener who advised that a third request for a deputation had been received from Mr. T Campbell in relation to the emergency motion from Councillor Adam (Article 3 below), and explained that, in accordance with standing order 10(1), she had ruled the request incompetent.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

to agree to hear both requests for deputations prior to considering the report.

### 2 AGENDA ITEMS

The Committee heard from Councillor Allan who sought clarification as to whether a report on AECC Funding, which was to be submitted to the Committee every cycle, was on the agenda for today's meeting. In response, the Convener advised that an oral report on this item would be provided today by the Programme Director for Economic and Business Development at the relevant point on the outstanding committee business statement. She explained that there had not been a stipulation about whether this report was to be oral or written, and that the format of delivery would depend on the information available at the time of each Committee meeting. Councillor K Stewart

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advised that this item had previously been reported to the former Resources Management Committee where the practice had been to receive the item orally.

**3 EMERGENCY MOTION BY COUNCILLOR ADAM**

The Committee had before it the following emergency motion by Councillor Adam, which the Convener had accepted onto the agenda as a matter of urgency:-

"This Council condemns the total disregard the SNP/Liberal Democrat Administration has for the people of Aberdeen by making excuses rather than clearing the ice from City pavements. Seeks clarification on why people have been trapped in their homes. Seeks information on how many claims for injuries sustained by residents and tourists of the City are expected and the likely outcome of any claim following the Administration's inability to act in accordance with its statutory obligation. Seeks information why so many grit bins across the City were either empty or full of rubbish and to seek assurance from the Political Leadership of this Council that they provide Council with a full operating plan as to how they intend to ensure that this will not happen again and that the plan is published for public reassurance".

At the outset, Councillor Adam asked why no action had been taken on his original request that all members of the Council be invited to attend today. The Convener replied that this request had not formed part of the motion, which she had accepted on the understanding that it was the Committee, not the Council, which had been intended to consider the matter. However, the attention of all members had been drawn to the motion, and any member not on the Committee was now able to request that he or she be heard as local member.

The Convener also asked Councillor Adam if he wished to have his motion remitted to Council instead, to which he replied that he did not, and that he wished the Committee to consider the motion forthwith.

The Vice-Convener then expressed concern that the part of the motion referring to claims for injuries appeared to raise the question of how the Council would handle the financial burden of claims not yet known, a matter falling within the remit of the Finance and Resources Committee. The Convener concurred and asked Councillor Adam if he would be prepared to excise this element from his motion, which he confirmed he was prepared to do. Councillor Adam also confirmed that he would not wish to seek to

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include within the motion a proposal that the excised part be remitted to the Finance and Resources Committee.

Its terms having been adjusted accordingly, Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Allan, moved his motion, and also that the current background report be noted but that a full report on the entire winter maintenance operation be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

As an amendment, the Convener, seconded by the Vice-Convener, moved that the Council:-

- (1) thank all those staff from a wide variety of services who had been involved in snow clearing and gritting during this exceptional period of bad weather, particularly those who had given up holidays, and those who had undertaken roles over and above their usual ones;
- (2) praise the citizens, businesses and community groups who had cleared paths and pavements in their own area; and
- (3) instruct officers to bring back a full report in due course, detailing any suggested alterations to the winter maintenance plan and benchmarking this Council against other local authorities.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (3) – Councillors Adam, Allan and Graham; for the amendment (12) – the Convener; the Vice-Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Clark, Corall, Cormie, Greig, Jaffrey, Milne, Penny, Robertson and Kevin Stewart.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

to adopt the amendment and to request the officials to include within the eventual report proposals to encourage and support volunteer groups as part of the overall winter maintenance effort.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**During consideration of the following item the Convener declared an interest in the following article by virtue of being the Council's appointed substitute representative member on the Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group. Councillor Kevin Stewart declared an interest as the Chair of Nestrans and as a member on the Northern Isles Lifeline Ferry Services Tier 2 Forum. Neither Councillor felt it necessary to withdraw from the meeting.**

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#### **4 ABERDEEN HARBOUR BOARD PRESENTATION**

The Convener welcomed to the meeting Mr. Colin Parker, Chief Executive of Aberdeen Harbour and Mr. Keith Allan, Chairman of Aberdeen Harbour Board, who then delivered a presentation on the operation and economic activity of the Aberdeen Harbour.

Mr. Parker advised that this activity contributed around £420million annually to the local economy, helped to sustain over 11,000 jobs directly and indirectly, and represented a key component in the region's transport infrastructure. In terms of operations in 2009, 8,000 vessels (representing over 24 million vessel tonnes) had arrived at the harbour, as well as 141, 000 passengers and over 100,000 crew members. In addition 5 million tonnes of cargo had been handled. Graphs comparing the cargo tonnages, vessel tonnages and passenger numbers between 1980 and 2009 were presented.

With regard to income generated by the harbour, the biggest percentage (45%) came from oil related business, with the remaining income generated through commercial activities (25%), rent of land and buildings (24%), investments (5%) and fishing (1%).

In terms of the future operation of the port, there were a number future development plans, with £65 million expenditure already planned over the next five years. The main developments included providing deeper berths, creating more space for quayside operations, the development of nearby land for support of cargo operations, the redevelopment of Torry Quays and the possible widening and deepening of the entrance to the port to accommodate larger vessels.

Finally, Mr. Parker discussed the proposed wind deployment centre. The maritime sector and others had a number of key concerns regarding the proposal. In particular they felt that the proposed positioning of the centre was a navigational hazard in that it eliminated the safe anchorage at Aberdeen Bay, obstructed busy shipping routes, obscured navigation aids, interfered with radar, reduced sea room, and concentrated traffic into 'pinch points'. The maritime sector was supportive of the centre and had suggested a number of safe alternative locations. Mr. Parker emphasised that engagement with the sector was now required to resolve the issue.

Members of the Committee then asked questions about the future development of the harbour, and about external funding opportunities in particular. In response Mr. Allan advised that there were a number of matters to be clarified prior to the Board exploring funding sources, and that, accordingly, they had not begun to explore this aspect so far. Further to this, members asked whether the widening and deepening developments proposed would enable the harbour to accommodate cruise ships. Mr. Parker advised

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that the harbour was a member of Cruise Europe and Scotland, and that last year ten cruise ships had docked at the harbour. However most modern cruise ships were too big to dock at most UK harbours, so they were required to anchor offshore and ferry passengers onshore.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to thank Mr. Parker and Mr. Allan for their informative presentation.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The Convener and Councillor Kevin Stewart declared interests in the subject matter of the following article by virtue of their NESTRANS involvements. Neither considered it necessary to withdraw from the meeting.

**5 (1) THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (INCHGARTH ROAD/WESTERTON ROAD/PRIMROSEBANK AVENUE / PRIMROSEHILL AVENUE/PRIMROSEHILL ROAD/DEN OF CULTS/STATION ROAD/ASHFIELD ROAD/DEEVIEW ROAD SOUTH/PARK BRAE/PARK ROAD/LOIRSBANK ROAD/WEST CULTS ROAD) (20MPH SPEED LIMITS) ORDER 2009 (WITH ASSOCIATED SPEED CUSHIONS ON INCHGARTH ROAD)**

**(2) THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (GOLF ROAD, BIELDSIDE, AND PITFODELS STATION ROAD) (20MPH SPEED LIMITS) ORDER 2009 (WITH ASSOCIATED SPEED CUSHIONS ON BOTH ROADS) - CG/11/135**

There had been circulated a report by the Director of Corporate Governance dealing with objections received after the statutory advertisement of the above named traffic orders and associated speed cushions. The projects had been advertised separately but were closely related in terms of considering the value judgements raised in the objections. Accordingly, the report dealt with them as a unified set of proposals.

Also, a *third* traffic order – containing new waiting restrictions for Westerton Road – had also been drawn into the overall balance of value judgements. This order – The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in South Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 2009 – was actually “on standby” for confirmation, having been approved by the Committee in all respects other than the Westerton Road element.

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The recommendation was that the objections be overruled and the speed limit orders and associated speed cushions be introduced as originally envisaged, but that the intended new waiting restrictions for Westerton Road be abandoned in the meantime (i.e. dropped from the current order otherwise ready for confirmation) even though the need for them should be kept under consideration.

The report then went on to summarise the overall situation. An appendix, in the authorship of the roads officials, offered detailed commentary on the main points raised in the objections. Copies of the original communications were available for inspection.

There was one broad issue of public policy and public perception which needed to be clarified at the outset. Increasingly in recent years, objections to traffic calming had been able to be thematised in terms of a particular type of scepticism about whether the measures in question were being pursued out of piety rather than hard-edged traffic management rationale. This was an intellectually respectable debate which ought to be rehearsed when it was relevant, but it was not particularly apposite here. In the present case, recorded speeds were high – sometimes distinctively so.

In fact, the objections from Westerton Road were founded on the assumption that traffic calming *did* work, and, indeed, that it was precisely because it worked that the proposals for Inchgarth and Pitfodels Station Road would displace traffic back onto Westerton Road – even though it *already had* speed cushions.

So scepticism that the virtue of traffic calming was largely abstract, and lacked concrete conviction, was *not* at the heart of the representations from Westerton Road. To the extent that such scepticism had been expressed by objectors from Inchgarth Road, members needed to be aware that the 85 percentile speeds at the top end of that road had come in at 37 – 40mph. Accordingly, it did not seem to be particularly abstract to look at those recorded speeds and to imagine that it would be desirable to reduce them to something closer to 20mph.

The report represented the Westerton Road residents as critics of the bald proposal to establish traffic calming on *all* the relevant routes in this particular case, on the grounds that that would mean that motorists would have no choice but to use a road with traffic calming on it, and would therefore revert to *their* road to an unfair level.

Again, Westerton Road already had speed cushions on it. Before the installation of those cushions, a rough breakdown of traffic on the three routes used for rat-running

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between North Deeside Road and Garthdee/Altens had been (roughly) 20% on Inchgarth Road, 32% on Pitfodells Station Road and 48% on Westerton Road.

After the establishment of traffic calming on Westerton Road, the levels there had fallen back to 30% (Pitfodells 49% and Inchgarth 21%). Residents now feared that levels on Westerton would go back up again.

The roads officials accepted this, but believed that, once all the roads had been made the subject of traffic calming, motorists would experiment with the three options, and that, in a kind of natural selection, the vehicular burden borne in each case would end up being *at worst* 20% on Inchgarth and 40% each on Pitfodells and Westerton.

On the other hand, residents of Westerton Road believed that their road would look like the best option of the three, and end up suffering unfair disadvantages in a scheme predicated on the assumption of achieving a reasonable share of the burdens at stake.

Not only did the residents believe their road would end up being used much more heavily than at present, but, also, they thought that the physical setting of some of the houses on Westerton Road was such that the safety of pedestrians was actually going to be *more* compromised at their location - even though they had footways.

In contrast, Pitfodells Station Road, when walking southwards from North Deeside Road, had only a small section of narrow substandard footway on the west side, for a distance of approximately 105m. There were *no* footways over the remaining 240m to the junction with Garthdee Road, and the route was not only used by residents but also by students walking to and from the Robert Gordon University.

The observations of the roads officials here were fairly clear; experience dictated that, if a number of roads were treated by traffic calming, motorists might well choose the route that looked most like a main road, or the route that looked likely to be the quickest, but that, if that became a common perception, the favoured route would then become congested and attract tailbacks, *and those tailbacks would cause some drivers to move away again.*

Needless to say, the idea of a new road altogether at this location, although a well-known desire, was not at stake vis-à-vis traffic management measures under consideration in the here and now.

The report concluded by observing that it was by no means clear that pedestrians (residents and also students) walking on Pitfodells Station Road without the protection

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of footways were a lesser consideration than residents on Westerton Road who did have the protection of footways but who might live in properties that were distinctively close to the road. A sense of vulnerability in the latter situation – notwithstanding the existence of footways – was a concrete reality, and not in dispute. However, *driving* on a footway was a serious offence, and a footway continued to be a considerable and significant place of legitimate refuge. Parents told their children that on all accounts they should remain on the pavement. The feeling that a sense of vulnerability remained even when walking on a footway was an admissible and compelling idea, but it should not be exaggerated.

As agreed in article 1 above, the Committee had acceded to requests for deputations from (1) Dr. Shan Parfitt, Mr. Ian Roche and Mrs. Audrey Sheal (representing residents of Westerton Road) and (2) Mr. Eric Dalhuijsen, an objector from Inchgarth Road. The Committee proceeded to hear both deputations, in the course of which the objectors outlined and amplified their respective concerns.

In the former case, those concerns were as alluded to in the circulated report, but Dr. Parfitt, Mr. Roche and Mrs. Sheal wished to present them in a very different light. There were striking differences of opinion about the significance of footways on Westerton Road (but a continuing sense of vulnerability) and the absence of footways on Pitfodels Station Road (which the objectors believed had to be viewed in the context of distinctively limited pedestrian usage at the location).

There was also a difference of opinion between the roads officials and the objectors in regard to the assumption by the latter that, once traffic calming appeared on Inchgarth Road and Pitfodels Station Road, vehicular presence on Westerton Road would revert to its original high level and remain at that level. As the report had already indicated, this assumption took no account of the tendency of motorists to experiment with routes, and the inevitability that, if one route did indeed look like the most favourable, it would then become congested enough to become in turn less favourable. The objectors were sceptical about this speculation.

Finally, the roads officials believed that the objectors were placing far too high an emphasis on the imminent opening of Core Path 65, a footpath that would run parallel to Pitfodels Station Road and, in the words of the Core Path Team, “provide a safe alternative to ... Pitfodels Station Road”. As baldly stated, that did indeed suggest that pedestrian vulnerability on Pitfodels Station Road would be cured by the new footpath, but, whatever the virtues of the new track, it was in the judgement of the roads officials not remotely likely to serve as a pedestrian alternative in many circumstances – in particular, during bad weather or in hours of darkness. Accordingly, the assertion that



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Core Path 65 would mean that pedestrians on Pitfodels Station Road would no longer require to walk on a road without footways was judged by the officials to be artificial and unconvincing.

Mr. Dalhuijsen presented a different case that did to some extent express scepticism about the accountability of establishing traffic calming on his street. In particular, he expressed the opinion that a 30mph limit on Inchgarth Road was considered appropriate, the implication being that vehicles travelling as fast as that were appropriate. Indeed, he acknowledged that actual driving speeds were substantially higher – up to around 40mph – and that, in his judgement, this would probably be reduced by traffic calming to something around the legal limit of 30mph, but with elements of slowing down to 10mph or 15mph and then speeding up between bumps to around 40mph. This obviously came close to saying that the traffic calming would get speeds down to a lower level, but his caveat was that driving practices would become erratic, and that bursts of 40mph would still occur.

The roads officials' experience was that this overstated the erratic driving behaviour, and probably understated future speed levels, which it was hoped would be brought down to something closer to the intended 20mph.

Mr. Dalhuijsen also drew attention to what he characterised as “start-stop- accelerate” traffic that would increase noise, emissions and driver irritation, and pointed out that the main virtue of reducing speed was relevant only at peak times.

Expecting a significant police presence to enforce a speed limit without traffic calming was certainly unrealistic. The requirements vis-à-vis speed cameras were simply not fulfilled. Electronic speed reminder signage and traffic lights were not credible proposals, and the long-discussed possibility of an alternative route between Deeside and Garthdee/Altens was not at stake at the present time, and had no chance of being a concrete proposal in the near future.

After hearing the depositions, the Committee considered the circulated report in the light of all it had heard, and detailed discussion ensued.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice-Convener, moved the recommendations in the report; namely, that the objections be overruled and the speed limit orders and associated speed cushions introduced as originally envisaged, but that the intended new waiting restrictions for Westerton Road be abandoned in the meantime, but kept under review.

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As an amendment, Councillor Boulton, seconded by Councillor Milne, moved that no action be taken on the orders, or the associated speed cushions, and that the funding saved be invested in roving speed restrictions instead.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (10) – the Convener; the Vice-Convener; and Councillors Clark, Corall, Cormie, Greig, Jaffrey, Penny, Robertson and Kevin Stewart; for the amendment (5) – Councillors Adam, Allan, Boulton, Crockett and Milne.

**The Committee resolved:-**  
to adopt the motion.

## **6 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 26 November, 2009.

**The Committee resolved:-**  
to approve the minute as an accurate record.

## **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

**During consideration of this item the Convener and Councillor Milne declared an interest in the subject matter of the oral update provided on item 15 in the report (AECC Funding) by virtue of being the Council's representative of the Board of the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre. Neither the Convener or Councillor Milne considered it necessary to withdraw from the meeting.**

## **7 COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT**

The Committee had before it a statement of pending and outstanding Committee business, which had been prepared by the Acting Head of Democratic Services.

With regards item 15 (AECC Funding) the Committee received an oral update from the Programme Director of Economic and Business Development, wherein he provided an overview of the current economic position of the AECC and advised that a report

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regarding its future funding and development would be considered by Council at its meeting on 10 February 2010.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to delete items 2 (Lane Gating at the Adelphi), 7 (Car Parking Charges), and 18 (2009/2010 Revenue Budget Monitoring);
- (ii) in relation to item 13 (Midstocket and Rosemount Public Transport Review) to delete resolutions (i), (ii) and (iii), and to thank officers for their work in relation to the no. 25 service;
- (iii) in relation to item 15 (AECC Funding) to note the oral update from the Programme Director of Economic and Business Development, and that a report on this matter would be submitted to Council at its meeting on 10 February 2010;
- (iv) to transfer item 10 (Aberdeen City Council Nature Conservation Strategy 2010/2015 – Final Draft), and 21 (St. Fitticks Farmhouse Site, Torry) to the Housing and Environment Committee business statement; and
- (v) to note the updates contained within the statement.

## **8 MOTIONS LIST**

The Committee had before it a list of outstanding motions which had been prepared by the Acting Head of Democratic Services.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the update in relation to motion 1 (Councillor Cassie – Increased Parking Problems); and
- (ii) to note that a report on motion 2 (Councillor Donnelly – Trades Annual Parking Permit) was on today's agenda, and therefore to delete this motion from the list.

## **9 PERFORMANCE, MONITORING AND TARGET SETTING 2009/2010 - EPI/10/009**

The Committee had before it an update by the Director on the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure service performance up to September 2009.

The report presented the key management information and performance indicators for the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service which consisted of the following four sections:- (1) a progress report from the Director; (2) a summary in the format of a performance indicator balanced scorecard and detailed information supporting those

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indicators being considered this cycle; (3) a monitoring statement for the Non Housing Capital Programme 2009/2010 as at 30 November, 2009; and (4) a table providing additional information on the performance of road defect repairs.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to request officers to submit a detailed report detailing the spend to date with the capital programme, and outlining the programmes that would and would not be completed in the financial year; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the performance to date.

**10 2009/2010 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - EPI/10/021**

With reference to article 5 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 26 November, 2009, the Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure and the City Chamberlain advising of the revenue budget performance for the current financial year to date as at 30 November, 2009. The paper confined itself to services relating to the Committee, outlined areas of risk that were immediately identifiable, and explained the responses to these.

Appended to the report was a summary monitoring statement for the revenue budget 2009/2010 which outlined the budget for the year, detailed the actual spend to 30 November, 2009, and explained variances. The current position reflected a projected overspend of £478,000, representing an improvement of £529,000 since the last update to the Committee. The remaining overspend continued to be the subject of further targeted savings being identified by the service; progress on this aspect would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee on 23 February 2010. In particular the report highlighted that, in light of the current downturn in building work within the city, income from building applications was not expected to meet the budget for the year. Similarly, planning application income had shown a significant downturn to date. The current forecast income for the year for these two elements combined was £1.5million, compared with a budget of £3.1million. To offset the impact of this, the management of vacant posts was being actively pursued as a source of savings and the service was continuing to work with other Heads of Planning and COSLA to lobby the Government for increases in planning fees.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to request officers to submit regular update reports to the Committee advising of the impact of the recent bad weather on the winter maintenance budget, and detailing what actions the service was taking to address this;
- (ii) to note the information on management actions and risks that was contained in the report; and
- (iii) to instruct officers to continue to review budget performance and report on service strategies as required to ensure a balanced budget.

**11 CAPITAL BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT - EPI/10/014**

With reference to article 6 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 26 November, 2009, the Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure and the City Chamberlain providing an update on the progress made on various projects in the Non-Housing Capital Programme previously approved by the Council (and now aligned to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure services).

Appendix A to the report outlined the Non Housing Capital Programme projects aligned to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure services and provided, for each project, the budget for 2009/2010, spend to the end of November 2009, and the forecast out turn position. Comments on particular projects, where appropriate, were included in the narrative.

The report advised that the spend to the end of November 2009 reflected payments made and processed, and therefore excluded any commitments that had been made and were due to be paid by the end of the year. Such commitments would be reflected in the forecast position.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the content of the report in relation to the projects outlined at Appendix A.

**12 CAR PARKING INCOME - EPI/10/022**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure on the current position regarding income from car parking services, and steps being taken to balance the budget.

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The car parking service was split between three Directorates; the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure service held responsibility for the overall budget and also the policy and development of charging structures.

A number of factors affected income levels; in particular, charging levels, alternative modes of transport, increase in parking available, and the economic downturn. A detailed analysis of income for both on and off street car parking was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. A summary of the current position (up to the end of October 2009) for each of the income streams indicated that, while overall income was around £550,000 below the budgeted level, spend on staffing costs was well below the budgeted allowance, with administration and vacant posts for City Wardens accounting for an underspend of approximately £570,000. Given the potential for minor fluctuations, and also changes to VAT levels from 1 January, the service would have to monitor closely its expenditure throughout the remainder of the year.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the position regarding income from car parking and acknowledge steps being taken by officers to keep within budget; and
- (ii) to request officers to circulate to all members of the Committee the financial and operational details (i.e. the cost of a full staff complement) for the city warden service.

**13 APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TWINNING BUDGET 2009/2010 - EPI/10/003**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure outlining an application for financial assistance from the 2009/2010 International Twinning Budget.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee:-

- (a) approve a contribution of £1,150 to Aberdeen District Coaching Group towards the accommodation and subsistence costs of six participants at the Nordic Games in Stavanger.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

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**14 GREENFERNS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND MASTERPLAN - EPI/10/011**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, which outlined the new Greenferns Development Framework and Masterplan, which had been prepared as a guide for the future development on an area of Council owned land.

By way of background the report advised that the Development Framework had been prepared following approval of the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process, approved in November, 2008, and contributed significantly to the Council's Design Campaign's aims of raising design quality in new development.

With regards the Greenferns site, the report provided a comprehensive overview of current status of the site in planning terms wherein it was advised that part of the Greenferns site was zoned in the current Aberdeen Local Plan as Opportunity Site 2 (OP2), whilst the larger part was zoned as Strategic Housing Land Reserve (for an indicative number of 120 and 680 houses respectively). In relation to the OP2 site, this was included in the adopted Housing Land Release Supplementary Planning Guidance, which allowed the site to be released for development subject to planning approval and masterplan preparation. Whilst the larger part of the Greenferns site, was covered by Policy 30 of the Aberdeen Local Plan and was now being considered as part of the work being undertaken to prepare the new Aberdeen Local Development Plan. As such the site was identified as a possible development option and included in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Main Issues Report as a desirable option. It suggested that Greenferns could accommodate 750 homes in Phase 1 (2007-2016), 350 homes in Phase 2 (2017-2023) and 400 homes in phase 3 (2024- 2030). It was highlighted that members would have to consider all responses to the Main Issues Report before finalising the Proposed Plan which was expected to be published in September 2010; at that time it would become clearer whether the SHLR site was to be included in the new Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

In terms of the Development Framework and Masterplan, it was advised that the Framework set out a baseline or 2-dimensional spatial framework, for the way in which Greenferns should be developed, and was supplementary planning guidance for the Strategic Housing Land Reserve (SHLR) identified in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008, to be considered in the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Whilst the masterplan forms detailed 3-dimensional design guidance for the opportunity site OP2 as identified in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. The guidance had been developed for

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the OP2 Area, with the intention that it be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It ensured integration with the surrounding communities, illustrated what would be expected in future detailed design guidance, established an illustrative layout and ensured that future development of the OP2 area would have a clear identity.

An overview of the public consultation process carried out for the development of the framework and masterplan was provided along with a summary of public comments and responses to the documents. Further consultation opportunities would be available as part of the statutory pre-application consultation process for major developments, under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Committee:-

- (a) approve the Greenferns masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the site identified as Opportunity Site OP2 in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008; and
- (b) approve the Greenferns development framework as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Strategic Housing Land Reserve identified in the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008, to be considered in the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice-Convener, moved that the recommendations be approved.

As an amendment, Councillor Crockett, seconded by Councillor Allan, moved:-

that the Council await for the announcement of the Scottish Government's decision regarding improvements at the Haudagain roundabout; request officers to hold further consultation with the community, in particular the Community Council, regarding the Greenferns Development Framework and Masterplan; and otherwise note the report.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (10) – the Convener, the Vice-Convener, and Councillors Clark, Corall, Cormie, Greig, Jaffrey, Penny, Robertson and Kevin Stewart; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Adam, Allan, Crockett and Milne; absent from the division (1) Councillor Boulton.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to adopt the motion.



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**15 DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS - EPI/10/012**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which informed of the Design Review Panel Process.

By way of background it was advised that the design review process was part of Aberdeen City's Design Campaign and was included within the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009, as a way of meeting the target of improving design standards.

The Design Review Panel aimed to provide constructive and objective advice at an early stage in the planning process. This advice would draw on professional knowledge and experience within a local context, offering the opportunity for comprehensive comments on masterplans and development proposals.

With regards the composition of the Panel, it was advised that the Panel would consist of approximately six members selected from a larger pool of about twenty, with the Council's appropriate Head of Service chairing the meeting. It was expected that the Panel would be operational by April 2010 (with a review of the process to be undertaken after six months at which point an update report would be presented to the Committee).

**The Committee resolved:-**

that output from the design review document form additional material considerations in determining planning applications.

**16 SCOTTISH SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE - EPI/10/013**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure providing a detailed account of the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI) recommending that the relevant Council services participate in a forthcoming project at Grandhome and Whitestripes.

The SSCI was a Scottish Government initiative which aimed to create outstanding developments of high quality design that would then be used as examples of best practice. Such developments were also intended to meet the needs of local people, to protect and enhance the unique built and natural heritage and to contribute to a more sustainable future. A further part of the objective was to achieve more homes of mixed tenure, built to a higher environmental and design standard.

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Of sixty-eight SSCI submissions received by the Scottish Government, eleven had been awarded recognition, confirming that they were working towards 'Creating a Scottish Sustainable Community'. One of the successful proposals had been Grandhome and Whitestripes in Aberdeen.

The main focus was on partnership between the public and private sectors. Successful sites would have access to advice and support in the course of their development. There was no direct financial support from the Scottish Government.

Because of its scale, and its current stage in the overall process, the Grandhome and Whitestripes proposal would benefit from a national Charrette. The Charrette concept was an interactive public design workshop creating draft masterplan options through new public engagement and design techniques. It would include both large presentations to the public and smaller discussions with special interest groups.

The Grandhome and Whitestripes site was identified in the Aberdeen City Main Issues Report, as having the potential to contribute towards the numbers in the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan approved in August 2009. The proposals for the site were at a very early stage in the planning process, with timings that matched those set out in the Development Plan Scheme for the Aberdeen City Local Plan. The Charrette process would not prejudice or interfere with the planning process, and would produce supplementary planning guidance to be brought forward through the Local Development Plan (LDP).

As part of the Council's contribution to the SSCI there would be a requirement to cover the cost of venue hire, which was estimated in the region of £5,600. Additional venue hire would be required for evening presentations and community events. These costs would be met from the existing Design Campaign budget.

The Committee then heard from the Head of Planning and Infrastructure who confirmed that the Council's financial contribution could increase slightly but that, in her judgement, this involvement was an exemplar of progressive practice.

There were no current commitments to extra expenditure, however. As the report indicated, the entire process would inform - not pre-empt - the Local Development Plan process.

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**The Committee resolved:-**

to welcome the initiative and agree participation of the relevant Council services as outlined in the report.

**17 AUCHINYELL GARDENS - BROOMHILL ROAD - CAIRNVALE TERRACE - GLENHOME TERRACE - GROVE CRESCENT - RIVERSIDE DRIVE - SHEDDOCKSLEY ROAD - STOCKETHILL MULTI-STOREY FLATS - SUNERT ROAD - HOWES ROAD - HUNTLY STREET - PITMEDDEN ROAD - EPI/10/001**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure providing an account of traffic management measures considered necessary at the above locations. Waiting restrictions were proposed in all but the final three locations; in those three, a prohibition of driving was recommended at Pitmedden Road, a regulatory school keep clear restriction at Howes Road, and new loading restrictions at Huntly Street.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to request the officials to carry out preliminary statutory consultation on legislation to provide for these schemes *except* for the intended prohibition of driving at Pitmedden Road, which it was agreed be deferred for a cycle to allow the officials to report back on Councillor Clark's suggestion that the proposed closure at this location might be a prohibition of left turns instead.

**18 CONTROLLED PARKING AREAS WORKING PARTY - MINUTE OF MEETING OF 10 DECEMBER, 2009**

The Committee had before it the minute of meeting of the Controlled Parking Areas Working Party of 10 December, 2009.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute and all recommendations arising from it; namely:-

- (1) that the officials enter into discussions with motorcycle organisations on the possibility of seasonal use of existing on-street parking spaces for motorcycles (including additional locations compatible with this) and that, upon conclusion of these discussions, a report be brought back to the Committee with definitive recommendations, including observations on whether there might yet be realistic means of securing parking tickets (or permits) to motorcycles;

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- (2) to introduce an option allowing members of the armed forces to surrender three, six or twelve-month permits and receive refunds proportionate to the number of full months remaining;
- (3) to report back to the Committee on a trial variation of Edinburgh City Council's system of releasing trades parking permits which, in Aberdeen, would cost £50 a month (£100 in Edinburgh) and (again unlike Edinburgh) require neither vehicle-specificity nor that vehicles be liveried;
- (4) arising from discussion on a range of issues on the future development of on-street controlled areas, to take steps –
  - (a) to adjust the charges in the forthcoming zones M and X to bring them into line with other zones nearby;
  - (b) to re-engage with local retailers in Foresterhill to re-establish easy availability of vouchers for that zone;
  - (c) to review the priority of future controlled parking areas and report back to the Committee on this, with particular reference to the impact of Union Square on the Palmerston area, which might well now be able to be adduced as the highest priority;
  - (d) to investigate afresh existing zone boundaries and examine the implications of changing them;
  - (e) to review price structures throughout the zone;
  - (f) to investigate the possibility of introducing differential charging between zones; and
  - (g) to examine the implications of introducing emission-based charging.

### 19 RECENT FLOODING INCIDENTS - EPI/10/005

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure outlining flooding incidents that had occurred between September and November 2009, and various mitigatory and inspection measures planned as a result.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

to note the incidents listed in the report, to look forward to the forthcoming publication of the 7<sup>th</sup> biennial flood report, to welcome the development of a scheme being progressed to deal with the problem at Jack's Brae, to note that an initial inspection of open sections of water courses would commence in 2010 (subject to budget availability), and to note that work was under way on a regular basis to clear road gullies, drains and hecks, particularly at locations of known high risk.

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**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(B)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the paragraphs 8 and 12 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.**

**20 GLASHIEBURN FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME**

The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure providing an account of the failure of a recently-constructed flood prevention scheme to protect properties in Glashieburn in Bridge of Don from the effects of the storm of 4 September 2009, and proposing a solution in terms of corrective work and funding sources.

**The report recommended:-**

- (a) that the Committee note that an investigation of the scheme by Council engineers had revealed significant design failings, and that the conclusion had been reached that the scheme as built was not fit for purpose;
- (b) that it be noted that the installation of an auxiliary culvert at the location was considered by Council engineers to be the most straightforward and cost-effective way of resolving the problem;
- (c) that officers be instructed to progress the detailed design of the corrective scheme on the basis of costs of £175,000;
- (d) that it be noted that discussions were continuing with the company responsible for constructing the scheme that had failed;
- (e) that officers be instructed to report back on damages received from that company, either by negotiation or as a result of legal proceedings; and
- (f) that the matter be referred to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration of additional capital funding required to complete the scheme.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to approve these recommendations; and
- (ii) to refer the current report to the Finance and Resources Committee on 28 January, and to commend to that Committee the possibility that it might consider on that occasion a further and more up-to-date report (even if such a report were to be presented later than would ordinarily be desirable).

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**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(B)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the paragraph 1 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.**

**21 6 MONTH EXTENSION TO EXISTING FIXED-TERM CONTRACT - EPI/10/024**

The Committee had before it a business case prepared by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which sought a contract extension for an existing fixed term contract until 30 September 2010.

The business case advised that the fixed term post was shared and jointly funded between Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure's International Trade section and Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG). The extension was sought to ensure service continuity in delivering agreed priorities and activities until a permanent revised structure had been designed by the Programme Director for Economic and Business Development. It was highlighted that the current postholder had been employed continuously by the Council since 2008, and as such was now classified as a permanent employee. The postholder would therefore be entitled to redeployment rights in line with the Temporary Workforce Policy. The implications of not extending the contract were detailed. With the funding for the post being split 50:50, between AREG and Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, the actual financial impact for the Council of extending the post for 6 months was one quarter of the annual salary, or £9657 (including on-costs).

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the business case and grant the 6 month extension.

- **COUNCILLOR DEAN, Convener.**