

ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 7 September, 2010. – Minute of Meeting of the ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor McCaig, Convener; and Councillors Adam, Boulton, Clark, Cormack (as a substitute for Councillor Dean) Cormie, Crockett, Greig, Hunter (as a substitute for Councillor Allan), Jaffrey, Milne, Penny, Robertson, Kevin Stewart and Yuill (as a substitute for Councillor Clark).

Councillor Graham was in attendance for article 6 only.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Prior to considering the matters before the Committee, the Committee resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting for article 26 only, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraphs 8 and 12 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION

2. The Committee had before it, in accordance with Standing Order 10(1), a request for deputation from Dr. Paul Arnell in relation to item 9.5 (Osborne Place culvert structural improvements) on the agenda.

The Committee resolved:-

to hear the request for deputation, along with the accompanying report.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 31 May, 2010.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to article 6 (Motion by Councillor Graham – Option for the Haudagain Roundabout) to replace Councillor Cormie with Councillor Crockett as voting for the motion; and
- (ii) to approve the minute as an accurate record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to delete items 3 (Guild Street – Church Street (Woodside) – Powis Place – Urquhart Place – Wellington Road – Craigshaw Road – Shepherd Place – Maberly Street), 4(ii) and (iii) Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009), 7 (Grampian Road/Glenbervie Road – Accommodation Road/Beach Esplanade – Park Brae, Cults – Queens Road/Hazledene Road – Inchgarth Road – Kingswells Bypass/Access Road to Fairley Road – Adelphi Lane – North Deeside Road, Cults), 8 (Strategic Transportation Projects), 12 (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), 17 (Community Transport Scheme), 18 (Multi-operator and Through Tickets for Aberdeen City), 21 (Pan Grampian Radio Network - Tender for the Replacement of the Two Way Radio System), 22 (2009/2010 Revenue Budget Monitoring), 23(Albyn Terrace – Canal Road – Dee Street – Don Terrace – Esslemont Avenue – Harriet Street – Holland Place – Powis Circle – Rubislaw Terrace – Westburn Road – Lane to the west of Loanhead Terrace – Loanhead Terrace (Rutherford Church) – Whitemyres Avenue – Union Square (Guild Street) – Union Square (Palmerston Road), 25 (Financial and Performance Monitoring and Reporting to Committee), 27 (Aberdeen City Centre - Developing a Vision for the Future), 32 (Central Torry Parking Management Measures), 33 (Fonthill Road/Greenfern Drive (service road)/Greenfern Road/ Hareness Circle/Malcolm Road- Crombie Circle-Johnston Gardens/Margaret Street/Market Street/New Pier Road/Quarry Road-Cairnlee Crescent North/Schoolhill/Upper Kirkgate/Willowpark Crescent/Windmill Brae/Woodend Crescent/Whinhill Road), 35 (Winter Maintenance Operation 2009 – 2010) and 36 (Glashieburn Flood Prevention Scheme) subject to the matter being dealt with on today's agenda; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the updates contained within the statement.

MOTIONS LIST

5. The Committee had before it a statement of outstanding motions under the Committee's remit, which had been prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the updates contained therein.

OSBORNE PLACE – STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS TO CULVERT

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure recommending a course of action to protect the structural integrity of a culvert in Osborne Place.

This was approximately 24 metres in length and carried the Denburn watercourse under Osborne Place. The structure comprised a 3.7 metre single span culvert and a steel beam and concrete jack arch deck with concrete abutments and a concrete culvert.

An assessment had been carried out in 2000 and had revealed corrosion of the steel beams which were no longer able to sustain heavier loading. Accordingly a three tonne weight restriction had been introduced on the road (between Blenheim Lane and Blenheim Place).

On 25 May 2004, the former Environment and Infrastructure Committee had considered a report on the matter and the officials had been requested to carry out preliminary statutory consultation on a proposal to establish two build-outs covering the culvert section of the road. However, this had been set aside in the face of objections from local residents who were concerned about the loss of car parking potential.

On 10 March 2009, a confined space inspection had been carried out which had identified significant delamination and separation of layers affecting approximately 50% of the main steel beams, particularly at the bearings, resulting in a loss of section.

Osborne Place was in one of the controlled parking zone and featured a mixture of residential and pay and display bays. In the relevant section between Prince Albert Street and Blenheim Place, there were approximately fifty-three exclusively residential spaces and eighteen pay and display ones.

The report recommended:-

the resumption of the plan to use build-outs, with one to be located on the south side of Osborne Place outside Nos. 109-111 and the other on the north side outside Nos. 152-154. This would cause the loss of three exclusively residential spaces in the first case and two in the second case. This could be ameliorated by redesignating five existing pay and display spaces as residential ones (between 113 Osborne Place and Blenheim Place and between 152 Osborne Place and Blenheim Place).

The estimated cost of this scheme was £18,000, for which there was sufficient funding in the 2010/2011 Weak Bridges Capital Budget.

However, the report also outlined two other options, one involving the replacement of the complete structure at an estimated cost of £160,000 and the other contemplating the removal of the fill and the construction of a thin reinforced concrete slab at an estimated cost of £120,000.

As agreed at the beginning of the meeting (see Article 2 above), the Committee then heard from Dr. Paul Arnell of 113 Osborne Place who emphasised that he understood why the Council might feel drawn towards the recommendation. Nevertheless he argued strongly that the construction of build-outs merely postponed the fateful day when larger-scale works would become inevitable, and that, notwithstanding the high cost at £160,000, the long term solution of replacing the structure altogether was a more responsible choice.

Councillor Jennifer Stewart, one of the local members, supported this view. A cheap option now might cost all the more later. Five important on-street car parking spaces were being lost.

After hearing from the officials that the recommended solution would increase the lifespan of the culvert, the Convener, seconded by Councillor Yuill, moved:-

that the recommendation be accepted and the build-outs be established in association with the designating pay and display parking spaces as exclusively residential ones.

As an amendment, Councillor Hunter, seconded by Councillor Crockett, moved that the scheme to replace the complete structure at a cost of £160,000 be referred to the Budget process.

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

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

MOTION BY COUNCILLOR GRAHAM – CONVERSION OF THE EXISTING ZEBRA CROSSING FACILITY ON PROVOST FRASER DRIVE TO A PUFFIN CROSSING

7. The Committee had before it the following motion by Councillor Graham, for consideration:-

“That the Committee considers the conversion of the existing zebra crossing facility on Provost Fraser Drive to a puffin crossing. The funding for the conversion to come from the 2010/2011 Non-Housing Road Safety and Traffic Calming budget or some other future budget.”

Councillor Graham was in attendance and spoke to his motion, explaining the rationale behind his request.

The Committee resolved:-

to request officers to submit a report on the terms of the motion to the next meeting of the Committee.

PERFORMANCE, MONITORING AND TARGET SETTING, 2009/2010

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which provided an update on the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service’s performance as at June, 2010.

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 indicators balance scorecard and detailed information supporting those indicators being considered this cycle; (3) a monitoring statement for the Non-Housing Capital Programme 2009/2010 as at 25 June, 2010; and (4) a table providing additional information on the performance of road defect repairs.

In relation to EPIP101 (Average Number of Sickness Days Lost in the Past 12 Months), the Director advised that since the report had been compiled a section of the Service had been transferred the Housing and Environment Service and this had resulted in a reduction in sickness absence figures for the Service from 14.4days to 12.7days. The Service continued to work with Human Resources to develop a plan to address and reduce sickness absence. Members emphasised the importance of this area being addressed.

With regards EPIP302 (% of Road Category 1 Defects Repaired Within 2 Working Days), the Director was asked to clarify what category 1 defects included and advise why the divergence between the current value (42.2%) and the target value (92%) for this area was so great. The Director advised that category 1 road defects included all road defects and explained that the figure of 42.2% represented the position at the end of June, 2010 however, during July there had been a significant increase; as such the current value as of today was 92%. Thereafter, an explanation of the procedure for reporting, inspecting, prioritising and sorting potholes and other defects was provided.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that figures for long term sickness absence within the Service be included within future performance reports submitted to the Committee; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the information provided and the performance of the Service to date.

CAPITAL BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT - EPI/10/203

9. The Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure and the Head of Finance which provided an update on the progress made on various projects within the Non-Housing Capital Programme previously approved by Council (now aligned to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Services).

Appendix A to the report outlined the Non-Housing Capital Programme Projects aligned to the services and provided, for each project, the budget for 2010/2011, spend to date to the end of June, 2010 and the forecast outturn position. Comments on particular projects, where appropriate, were included in the narrative.

The report advised that the spend to the end of June, 2010 only reflected payments made and processed and therefore excluded any commitments that had been made which would be due to be paid by the end of the year. Such commitments would be reflected in the forecast position.

It was highlighted that at the time of writing, the carry forward position from 2009/2010 was the subject of a corporate exercise that was looking at potential slippage across all projects. Until this exercise was completed it was not possible

to confirm the total approved cost of the project. Once completed Appendix A would be updated with the final value for the next committee.

The Committee resolved:-

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

2010/2011 REVENUE BUDGET - EPI/10/197

10. The Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure and the Head of Finance, which highlighted the current year revenue budget performance to date for the services which related to the Committee and advised on any arrears of risk and management action.

Appended to the report was a summary monitoring statement for the revenue budget 2010/2011 which outlined the budget for the year, detailed the actual spend to end July, 2010, and explained variances. It also outlined whether or not there were any cost pressures that were immediately identifiable from the expenditure incurred to date and the actions being undertaken to manage these.

At this time the following areas of risk were highlighted together with the management action being taken. Planning application fee income was £76,000 below budget to date and was expected to remain below budget for the remainder of the year. The current estimated shortfall was £330,000 for the full year. In addition, a budgeted income of £187,000 from the Neighbour Notifications would not be realised due to the necessary increase in planning application fees not being implemented by the Scottish Government. Three of the budgeted savings proposals, totalling £320,000 had not yet been achieved. Managers were working to ensure that the savings were achieved but it was not yet certain that they would be realised to their full extent. To mitigate the effect of these risks, the management of vacant posts was being actively pursued and savings of £140,000 had been realised to date.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request officers to include notes on anomalies within future finance reports submitted to the Committee;
- (ii) to note the forecast out-turn and the information on risks and management action that was contained herein;
- (iii) to instruct that officers continue to review budget performance and report on service strategies as required to ensure a balanced budget; and
- (iv) to instruct officers to report, in due course, on the actual out-turn compared to budget following completion of the 2010/11 financial statements.

DRAFT INTERNATIONAL TRADE PLAN 2010/2012

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which sought approval for the Council's planned international trade development activities for 2011/2012.

The report advised that it was the vision of ACSEF was for Aberdeen City and Shire “to be recognised by 2025 as one of the most robust and resilient economies in Europe with a reputation for opportunity, enterprise and inventiveness that would attract and retain world-class talent of all ages”. To achieve this vision, and ensure sustainable growth and prosperity for the region Aberdeen City and Shire’s public and private sector organisations needed to work in partnership to deliver on the following seven strategic priorities in the four key industry sectors of energy, life sciences, tourism and food and drink:-

1. Deliver a fully integrated transport network
2. Maximise our intellectual capital – people and expertise
3. Anchor the oil and gas industry
4. Deliver city centre redevelopment
5. Attract and develop skilled people
6. Improve the efficiency of planning decision-making
7. Location of choice for company headquarters

The report outlined how the Council’s international trade team would contribute to the delivery of these priorities, particularly items 2, 3, 5 and 7.

The planned international trade development programme for 2011/2012, (which was appended to the report) detailed the key international trade development activities and corresponding budget for 2011/2012. It was highlighted that as a result of the current staffing resource for the team, market prioritisation had been considered carefully to ensure that the resources were targeted where they could deliver most value and benefit to local companies. A detailed overview of the activities to be undertaken within each of the four sectors was provided.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) that the Lord Provost only attend the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston on 2-5May, 2011;
- (ii) to approve the report, including the 2011/2012 draft international trade plan, (attached at Appendix 1 of the report) subject to its approval by the Scottish Government in the normal manner;
- (iii) to request officers to submit a bulletin report to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee on each event undertaken in the international trade plan; and
- (iv) to receive a report on the fully detailed and finalised international trade plan 2011/2012 once budgets and staffing had been finalised, consultation had taken place with external partners and an approach to new ways of working in accordance with resource availability had been determined.

APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TWINNING BUDGET 2010/2011 – EPI/10/119

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which presented applications for financial assistance from the 2010/2011 International Twinning Budget.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve a contribution of £3,770 from the 2010/2011 International Twinning Budget towards the cost of Kincorth Silver Surfers' educational visit to Regensburg; and
- (b) to approve a contribution of £4,275 from the 2010/2011 International Twinning Budget towards the cost of an inward visit from Gomel's Museum Director and veterans for the Gordon Highlanders exhibition launch and further collaboration in February, 2011.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

BI-ANNUAL SECTOR SKILL NEED AUDIT – EPI/10/121

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which presented the "Draft 2010 Sector Skill Needs Audit".

The report advised that the audit had commenced in late spring 2010, and through a survey which had asked respondents to highlight problem areas, areas of predicted growth, impact of economic downturn on recruitment and general recruitment and skill issues, had identified the current and predicted skill shortages within the local economy, across thirteen key sectors. The audit had also provided an opportunity to evaluate how shortages in some sectors had increased/decreased since the last audit, and also provided an insight into the changing employment trends as well as the employment opportunities and restrictors for graduates and school leavers linked to the current economic climate.

To date fifty-three companies employing over 27,248 staff had responded to the survey.

The objectives of the audit were represented/defined under the following three main headings:- economic impact, skill shortages and sector trends, and utilisation of local skills. An overview of the objectives and information sought in relation to each of the three headings was provided.

A detailed overview of the findings of the audit was provided, wherein the following issues were identified as the main points:-

- Business confidence had decreased
- Only 28% predict an increase in employee numbers over the next 12 – 18 months
- 34% of businesses reported an increase in part-time working
- Dramatic increase in ratio of contract/temporary staff to permanent staff 2.15:1 (2010) from 5.44:1 (2006)
- Only 33.96% had recruited (May 2009 – May 2010) – 98% recruited in same period of the 2008 audit
- Key recruitment difficulties for Engineers, Technicians and Craft and skilled trades
- Increase in number of businesses recruiting graduates
- Decrease in number of businesses recruiting school leavers

Further details on each of the above were provided.

In conclusion, the audit had confirmed that the current economic climate had had a major impact on the majority of sectors across the city. This had manifested itself in reduction of vacancies, increased part-time working, increased contract working, increase in graduate opportunities and decrease in school leaver opportunities. The key skill shortage areas remained within engineering, technical and craft occupations, which would be further emphasised in the medium term by demographic change. Finally, sectors outwith the oil and gas sector were having difficulties recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled and qualified staff due to the high salaries attainable within the oil and gas sector. A copy of the Sector Skill Needs Audit was appended to the report.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to support the production and circulation of the audit as a robust tool that was reflective of the current local skill situation;
- (ii) to agree to the use of the audit to inform partners on the current position regarding skills locally,
- (iii) to support the use of the audit to develop future skills development and employability programmes;
- (iv) to request officers to circulate a breakdown of migrant workers arriving in the city to all members of the Committee;
- (v) to request officers to provide details of future meetings of the Inward Migration Working Group to Councillor Crockett; and
- (vi) to commend Heather Farquhar for her work in this area.

CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – EPI/10/186

14. With reference to article 13 of the minute of the meeting of Council of 19 May, 2010, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which presented the draft City Centre Development Framework for approval for public consultation as Supplementary Guidance to the new forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

By way of background, the report advised that the draft City Centre Development Framework was informed by a number of national, regional and local documents, including the Scottish Government's Designing Places – A Policy Statement for Scotland. This stated that successful places had a distinct identity; were safe, pleasant and easy to move around; and welcoming to visitors, and as such these themes underpinned the draft Development Framework.

The Development Framework sought to:- complement and enhance Aberdeen's unique identity; develop clearly defined character areas; ensure future development understands the existing context; complement the wealth of existing urban design qualities; celebrate the quality of architecture present in the city centre; and ensure a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the future development of the city centre.

In doing that, the Framework was consistent with the guiding principles of the Council's Masterplanning Process adopted in November, 2008. These concentrated on understanding the key themes of context, identity and connection. An explanation of each of the key themes was provided. It was advised that based

on an analysis of these factors, the draft Development Framework was founded on the following five key objectives:-

1. The principal focus of the Framework was Union Street; as the most important and identifiable street in the city it should be promoted as the commercial, vibrant heart of the city centre;
2. Character areas and urban quarters were developed to capitalise on the distinctive merits of their surroundings and reinforce Aberdeen's unique identity;
3. Legible transport hubs were introduced to the central area with car parks on the approaches to ensure an efficient and understandable relationship between character areas, Union Street and public access to facilities in the city centre;
4. Street surfaces were of a high quality at first points of contact with the city centre (public transport hubs, rail station, car parks and around important public and historic buildings);
5. A range of vibrant connected squares were developed to ensure the best use of space to enhance city life.

The Framework proposed that the unique identity of the city centre be enhanced and reinforced through the clear definition of a number of urban quarters and character areas. Each of these had a distinct character and purpose and the Framework explored their context, identity and connection, along with a number of key issues and opportunities that must be considered when developing these Quarters. The key characteristics of each area were summarised.

Finally, in terms of consultation, it was advised that as part of the series of consultation events about the Main Issues Report 54 sources of comment on the City Centre and retailing topic had been received. Comments recognised the importance of the City Centre and the need for a plan-led response, and there was support to for a City Centre Development Framework and/or masterplan to guide development, with an emphasis on taking a joined up approach which looked at the City Centre as a whole.

As the draft Development Framework was expected to form supplementary guidance to the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan, it was proposed that public consultation relating to the Framework be carried out as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan consultation programme in the final quarter of 2010 as agreed by Council on 18 August 2010. This would be supplemented by contacting key stakeholder and community groups. Feedback from the public consultation will be evaluated and incorporated in the final Development Framework which will be reported to Committee in due course.

Councillor Hunter raised concerns regarding the current walking surface at the Castlegate Quarter and requested that walking surfaces be included within the Framework as part of the consultation.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve the final draft City Centre Development Framework Supplementary Guidance for public consultation as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Proposed Plan consultation, the results of which to be reported back to Committee in due course; and

- (ii) to request officers to include and consider Councillor Hunter's comments regarding the Castlegate Quarter as part of the consultation.

RESOURCING A HIGH QUALITY PLANNING SYSTEM - EPI/10/205

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which advised that the Scottish Government had recently published a consultation document entitled "Resourcing a High Quality Planning System". The document explored how planning could be resourced more effectively in the context of public sector constraints and slower rates of development, as well as alternative delivery options and proposed fee structures that were more proportionate in the longer term. A proposed response to the consultation paper was provided.

By way of background the report advised that the Scottish Government recognised the importance of planning as a key driver to building economic success and to achieving its central purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth. Over the past two years the planning system in Scotland had undergone significant change with the implementation of the new Planning Act and the introduction of e-planning. In line with this the Scottish Government was working with CoSLA, local authorities, key agencies and the development industry to ensure there was a modern, future-facing planning system which was properly resourced to deliver quality outcomes. In addition the report provided an overview of the existing policy regarding planning application fees.

As part of that process the Scottish Government had recently published the above-named consultation paper. The consultation paper stressed the Government's commitment to ensuring that issues relating to resources and quality were linked and emphasises the expectation that planning authorities would continue to improve beyond their existing performance level (although it did not specify what this means). It also sought views on how the planning system should be best resourced to deliver a quality service that supported the delivery of sustainable economic growth.

The consultation document was presented in three sections relating to effective use of resources, reviewing performance and a review of the fee structure with a number of specific questions asked in relation to each of these. Thereafter, a brief summary of each of the consultation issues, along with a proposed response to the questions raised was outlined. It was also highlighted that the Heads of Planning Scotland had organised a meeting to help planning authorities formulate their responses to the consultation. This meeting would take place following today's meeting; therefore, it was proposed that any amendments to the response presented today, be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee along with this report.

The Committee resolved:-

to agree the response contained within the report and to refer it to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval for submission, along with any further comments made following the Heads of Planning Scotland workshop, to the Scottish Government.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Prior to consideration of the following article Councillor Corall declared an interest in the subject matter of by virtue of being the Council's appointed representative on KIMO. Councillor Corall did not consider it necessary to withdraw from the meeting.

KIMO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 8 – 10 OCTOBER 2010 – LITHUANIA

16. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure seeking approval for an elected member to attend the forthcoming 20th anniversary of KIMO International Conference and Annual General meeting to be held in Palanga and Klaipeda, Lithuania from 8 – 10 October, 2010.

The report provided information on KIMO as an international association of local authorities working towards clearing up pollution in the North Sea, the Irish Sea, the North East Atlantic and the Arctic Sea. The report advised that the cost of attending this event would be approximately £1,000 which could be met from within existing budgets.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee grant approval for an elected member to attend the KIMO International Conference and Annual General meeting from 8 – 10 October, 2010.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendation and to authorise Councillor Corall to attend the event as the Council's representative on this body;
- (ii) to review elected member attendance at KIMO's International Conference and Annual General meeting in future years and to request officers to write to KIMO International asking them to consider changing their constitution to enable Council officers to attend and represent the Council at future AGMs.

VARIOUS TRAFFIC ORDERS – EARLY STAGE - ALBYN LANE (REPLACEMENT OF PAY AND DISPLAY WITH DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – BEACH ESPLANADE (PROPOSED WIDTH RESTRICTION) – CLAYMORE DRIVE (PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF PARKING ON FOOTWAY) – DON STREET (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – HAZLEHEAD CRESCENT (REVOCATION OF ONE WAY) – HAZLEHEAD ROAD/MORTIMER DRIVE (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – HOLLYBANK PLACE AND HOWBURN PLACE AT THEIR JUNCTIONS WITH HOLBURN STREET (PROPOSED PROHIBITIONS OF WAITING, MONDAY – SATURDAY, 8.00AM – 6.00PM) – INTOWN ROAD (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – KIRKHILL ROAD, DYCE (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – MORNINGFIELD MEWS (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – MOUNT STREET (PROPOSED 45 MINUTE WAITING IN PARKING BAYS) – NETHERVIEW ROAD (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – VICTORIA STREET, DYCE (PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – WEST BANK (PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL PARKING BAYS) – ELMBANK TERRACE (PROPOSED REVOCATION OF WAITING RESTRICTIONS) – NORTH DEESIDE ROAD (PROPOSED PART-TIME 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT IN THE VICINITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL) – FORMER MILE END PRIMARY SCHOOL (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP

CLEAR MARKINGS ON BEECHGROVE PLACE AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY RESIDENTIAL AND VOUCHER PARKING BAYS) – FORMER MARCHBURN INFANT SCHOOL ON PROVOST RUST DRIVE (REMOVAL OF PART-TIME 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT ON PROVOST RUST DRIVE AND OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKING ON MARCHBURN DRIVE) – FORMER SMITHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS) – FORMER BANKHEAD ACADEMY (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS ON BANKHEAD AVENUE, AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY DOUBLE YELLOW LINES) – FORMER BALGOWNIE PRIMARY SCHOOL (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS ON TARBOTHILL ROAD) – FORMER BRAESIDE INFANT SCHOOL (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS ON BRAESIDE PLACE AND BRAESIDE TERRACE) – FORMER BYRON PARK NURSERY INFANT SCHOOL (REMOVAL OF SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS ON SPRINGHILL ROAD AND CRUDEN PARK) – CONTROL ZONES X AND M extension (INCREASE IN PAY AND DISPLAY AND PERMIT CHARGES

17. 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.

The Committee resolved:-

to request the officials to carry out the necessary legislative procedures for these schemes and report back (other than in relation to zones X and M where the procedure was merely notificatory). Also, arising from discussion of the report, and as suggested by Councillor Boulton, it was agreed to request a report back on the means by which existing speed limits on North Deeside Road might be regularised.

VARIOUS TRAFFIC ORDERS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES – SUMMER 2010

18. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Governance dealing with the objections received after statutory advertisement of the following traffic orders and traffic management schemes:-

The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 1) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – two objections

The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 2) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – no objection

The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 3) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – two objections

The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 4) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – three objections

20mph speed limit on Hazledene Road, with associated speed cushions – two objections

20mph speed limit on Elphinstone Road and Meston Walk, with associated speed cushions and speed table (also new build out at Meston Walk/Bedford Road) – no objection but constructive dialogue with Old Aberdeen Community Council was acknowledged in Section 6

The Aberdeen City Council (Torry Parking Management) Order 2010 – one objection

20mph speed limit on School Road and Golf Road – no objections

The Aberdeen City Council (Queen's Road between Hazledene Road and Hazlehead Avenue) (Redetermination of the Means of Exercise of Public Right of Passage) Order 2010 – no objections

The summer advertisement process had removed a great deal from the outstanding business statement and had brought the Committee largely up-to-date with traffic orders and traffic management schemes. The proposals had been advertised in the usual way and it was obviously pleasing that so many advertisements had attracted so few objections. However, those that had come in now had to be treated seriously.

(1) *The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 1) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – two objections*

Mr. Alan Carter was a resident of Powis Circle who felt that the proposed one-way would be of no particular value but would present a great deal of inconvenience for some residents who would have to travel along the entire length of Powis Circle to exit at its eastern junction with Powis Crescent. The roads officials were of the opinion that this objection was well-intentioned, but that there could be no getting away from the fact that Powis Circle was a narrow street with a large volume of parking along its entire length, and that a one-way regulation would reduce vehicular conflict (and indeed increase parking potential for residents). The street was already traffic calmed and therefore Mr. Carter's concern about an increase in vehicular speed should not be an issue. The scheme had first emerged after an approach by Councillor Robertson to whom local residents had actually suggested a one-way. Under these circumstances, the recommendation was that the objection be overruled and the order made as originally advertised.

Keith Runcie and Lesley Fettes, residents of Don Terrace, had submitted an objection to intended waiting restrictions at that location (8am – 5pm, Monday – Friday). The restrictions were intended to apply on both sides of a narrow section of the road (between Don Street and Don Gardens) where refuse vehicles found difficulty negotiating parked vehicles. The roads officials had carried out observational parking surveys during the week beginning 8 February 2010 (two during the afternoon and one after 7pm in the evening), and one vehicle had been parked in the problematic section at the time of the afternoon surveys and six at the time of the evening survey. Accordingly, it seemed clear that such low numbers would be unaffected by the new proposals.

Also, the Waste Collection Team had indicated that refuse vehicles did not ordinarily enter this area until after 8am, and so the current proposal had been confined to 8am – 5pm on weekdays, thereby maintaining existing residential parking potential during evening hours when demand was highest. Otherwise, alternative on-street parking was available in Don Street

and Don Gardens. Taken together, these points suggested minimal difficulties for residents, and it was recommended that the objection in this case also be overruled, and the order made as originally envisaged.

(2) ***The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 3) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – two objections***

Dr. S.J. Cuddy of 378 North Deeside Road had written to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to say that he believed it was an excellent idea to reserve part of the carriageway for loading and unloading between 7am and 8am (especially as a new nursery would be opening soon at the end of the row of shops) but that he would also like to ensure that the unloading did not start any earlier than 7am. At present, apparently, Tesco deliveries woke up local residents as early as 5am. The problem was one of moderate vehicular noise but unacceptable associated scraping noises (metal crates being dragged over metal interiors of lorries).

The objector did not oppose the traffic order – indeed, he saw it as well-intentioned and hoped it would encourage better practice – but he recognised that creating a loading bay for the one hour period between 7am and 8am did not actually prohibit activity earlier than that.

Operations at five in the morning would not contravene any planning condition, and so Tesco could theoretically look forward to their privileged hour at 7am but yet also do what they wanted earlier than that if they so choose.

However Tesco had now written to Legal and Democratic Services to say that they saw themselves as committed to being a good neighbour, and that, if the proposed loading bay were to be established as advertised, they would then have guaranteed access at 7am (which they did not have as things stood) and therefore would have no need to take the precaution of arranging much earlier deliveries because of the fear of inaccessibility later on. Of course this was not a contractual arrangement, but it was a public promise. Breaking it would hardly sit well with “a commitment to being a good neighbour”. Under the circumstances, this public undertaking, in conjunction with the operational weather window provided for by the order, looked reassuring. Clearly, the situation would be kept under close review, but, as things stood, the recommendation was that the order be made with the loading bay retained.

Mr. Andrew McKenzie, a resident of Fonthill Terrace, had objected to alterations in on-street parking provision on Whinhill Road, precipitated by the redevelopment of the property at 20 Whinhill Road. The objection had been founded upon the supposed loss of residential parking potential, a perceived reduction in visibility at the Fonthill Terrace junction, and the handing over of kerbside space to Grampian Police for on-street parking of police vehicles outside a police station.

However, parking surveys undertaken by consultants representing the developer in this case had indicated ample parking capacity during the day and in the evening, and so the loss of some residential parking bays was calculated to be unlikely to have much effect. As regards the issue of

visibility for traffic exiting Fonthill Terrace, technical analysis had confirmed that there would be no encroaching upon minimum permissible visibility splays at the location.

As regards the positioning of the intended police parking bays, the objector had suggested that they be located further south but, as one might expect, Grampian Police saw considerable merit as having them as close to the front door of the police station as possible, to improve response times and minimise the distance that detainees were required to walk (if being taken under duress from a police vehicle to the station).

Again, the report suggested that the objection be overruled and the order implemented as originally advertised.

(3) ***The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 4) (Traffic Management) Order 2010 – three objections***

There were three quite separate objections to different aspects of this order: one relating to Shepherd Place, one relating to the intended prohibition of left turns from Esplanade into Accommodation Road, and one relating to Blackfriars Street/Schoolhill/St. Andrews Street. The recommendation here was to defer consideration of the Citywide 4 order until the November meeting, by which time it would have been possible to meet with the objectors in the first two cases. In the third case, the proposals for Blackfriars Street, Schoolhill and St. Andrews Street would be readvertised altogether as a small-scale order providing exclusively for those provisions (this to take account of concerns on the part of Robert Gordon's College that the recent statutory process had run during the summer, outside term-time).

(4) ***20mph speed limit on Hazledene Road, with associated speed cushions – two objections***

There were two objections to this proposal, these being from a local resident (Alison Fraser) and a non-resident (Mr. Eric Murdoch) who used the road on a regular basis.

An advisory 20mph speed limit was already in place in Hazledene Road but had had little effect on vehicular speeds. The 85 percentile speeds were still in excess of 30mph in both directions, and so the intended traffic calming features would make a significant difference.

It had been suggested that there might no longer be a significant problem here as a result of the recent closure of Dobbies Garden Centre, but the thoroughfare was still used by school children crossing towards Hazlehead Primary School, still bore the burden of significant commuter use during the morning peak, and also attracted traffic from the golf course (exiting Hazlehead Park). Accordingly, the recommendation was to overrule the objections and go ahead with the proposal.

One of the local members, Councillor Greig, agreed with this recommendation, emphasising that he knew of residents of Hazledene Road who were very supportive of the plan, but did draw the attention of the elected members to the objection from Mr. Murdoch, which, at his request,

had been circulated in its original form to all members of the Committee the previous Friday. Councillor Greig sympathised with Mr. Murdoch but concurred with the roads officials in seeing traffic calming at this location as being of clear virtue.

(5) ***The Aberdeen City Council (Torry Parking Management) Order 2010 – one objection***

The only objection here had been from King Foods, 15 Crombie Road, who had been concerned that allowing vehicles to park at the kerbside during business hours would have a detrimental impact on loading operations. The roads officials had agreed, and were now of a mind to abandon four new parking bays on the south side of the road, and also to reduce the proposed loading ban on the north side so that it would extend from Victoria Road for thirteen metres instead of thirty-eight metres. This cured the objection.

(6) ***20mph speed limit on Elphinstone Road and Meston Walk, with associated speed cushions and speed table (also new build out at Meston Walk/Bedford Road)***

There was no objection on file but there had been constructive dialogue with Old Aberdeen Community Council who were generally supportive of the proposal but felt the extended speed table could prove to be an undesirable feature for buses. As requested, the roads officials had checked that the arrangements were acceptable to First Bus, and the company had confirmed that they were indeed happy with the proposal and had no intention of cancelling the No. 20 route.

The Community Council had also noted that the number of speed cushions in Meston Walk had been reduced, but continued to feel that the eastmost cushion would serve no purpose because of its proximity to the Elphinstone and College Bounds junctions. However, this cushion was unavoidable in terms of the statutory specifications.

The Committee resolved:-

except where cured by relaxation or adjustment (or proposed for deferral as in the case of The Aberdeen City Council (Various Roads in Aberdeen) (Citywide 4) (Traffic Management) Order 2010), to overrule the objections, make the orders and implement the schemes.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SCHEME - EPI/10/207

19. With reference to article 25 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 23 February, 2010, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which provided an update on the progress of the Community Transport Services within the City which launched on 29 March, 2010.

The report provided an overview of the service provided and highlighted that since the service had commenced, it had grown from carrying 18 passengers in week one to 40 passengers in week 8. The service continued to increase in membership each week with currently 80 members.

In terms of marketing the service, it was advised that prior to the service commencing publicity materials were distributed to GP surgeries and other healthcare surgeries, community centres and sheltered housing complexes. Requests for publicity material regarding the service continues.

With regards feedback, it was advised that to date all feedback had been positive, with many indicating that they would feel isolated without it, primarily due to the high costs of taxi services in Aberdeen, which some pointed out was a barrier to the ability to get out and about. However, the only negative feedback received relates to the operating times of the service. A number of people have said the service would be more beneficial to them if it operated in peak times. Details of the limited teething problems were provided. The views of the Community Transport Steering Group, as well as the Disability Advisory Group were listed wherein it was highlighted that both Groups had aspiration that the operating period of the service could be extended into peak times and if possible at weekends.

Thereafter, the report advised of the key destinations and provided a route by route analysis wherein it was advised that Route 2 - Northfield / Mastrick / Sheddocksley / Summerhill / ARI / Berryden / Midstocket / Rosemount had been the busiest to date.

Finally, the report advised of the implications of further growth of the service, wherein it was highlighted that as the service continued to grow, more passengers would be declined whether due to time restrictions or due to capacity issues. It was highlighted that as the service grew and patronage increased there might be a need to review the scheme in the future. The report reminded members that the funding would be reviewed in 2010 to establish whether a community transport scheme would be more cost effective than the current arrangement with regards to bus service 93 (Peterculter/Garthdee/City Centre) which was supported by Aberdeen City Council, Asda and Sainsburys (through development contributions at Garthdee) and served the Lower Deeside area. On the basis that this service was performing well and continued to grow there would be little benefit of introducing a community transport scheme in its place which would be a less frequent service and would carry far fewer passengers.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:-

- (a) request officers to report back progress with the Scheme to future meetings of the Committee, by way of bulletin; and
- (b) note the contents of the report.

The Convener moved, seconded by Councillor Yuill moved that the recommendations be approved.

As an amendment, Councillor Adam, seconded by Councillor Hunter, moved:-

That the recommendations be approved, and to request officers to explore all possible options to enable the expansion of the current operating hours of the service.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (12) - the Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Corall, Cormack, Cormie, Grieg, Jaffrey, Milne, Penny, Robertson, Kevin Stewart, and Yuill; for the amendment (3) – Councillors Adam, Crockett, and Hunter.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

ABERDEEN CITY MULTI OPERATOR TRAVELCARD - EPI/10/208

20. With reference to article 26 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 23 February, 2010, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which advised of discussions with First Aberdeen, Stagecoach Bluebird, Bains Coaches and Aberdeenshire Council in relation to a voluntary Multi-Operator Travelcard for bus services within Aberdeen City and sought approval to introduce the scheme.

The report provided a detailed overview of the discussion held to date regarding the introduction of a multi-operator travelcard and the decisions made by the Committee in this regard.

Further to the discussions held and the previous decision of the Committee, a secret vote regarding the prices of the Travelcard was held in June, 2010, and this had initially resulted in a tie. Following negotiations to resolve the tied vote, it was agreed by the operators to sell adult day tickets at £5.00. Under the terms of the agreement, ticket prices were subject to review after three months operation. The vote resulted in the following prices being set:

- Adult Weekly - £20.00 (not to be introduced initially)
- Child Weekly - £10.00 (not to be introduced initially)
- Adult Day - £5.00
- Child Day - £3.50

First Aberdeen at this stage advised of their unwillingness to sell weekly tickets at the introduction of the scheme, noting that this position would be reviewed at a later date. Officers from Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans all noted their disappointment at these arrangements, highlighting that the proposed £5.00 fare and the omission of weekly tickets was not in line with what had been discussed and agreed previously. Aberdeen City Council made strong representations that support for the scheme from the Council might not be forthcoming as it would be extremely difficult to market a product of £5.00.

Council officers had since made numerous attempts to negotiate on the adult day ticket fare, however First Aberdeen had indicated that they were not prepared to take the commercial risk of selling the ticket at a lower price and indeed, on 2 August 2010 the company increased the cost of their own adult day tickets to £4.20 (all-day) and £3.50 (off-peak).

In conclusion, the report advised that it considered that the proposed multi-operator adult day ticket was priced too high to have any real benefit to the travelling public and was therefore unlikely to be popular. This negated the possibility to test the market, with a view to introducing similar products on cross-boundary corridors into Aberdeenshire. In addition, Aberdeen City Council had withdrawn the offer to administer the Travelcard from 16 August, 2010 pending Committee consideration of this report and had notified all operators that continued involvement would be subject to Committee approval.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:-

- (a) introduce the Multi-Operator Travelcard with an adult day ticket fare of £5.00; and
- (b) that the scheme be reviewed after 3 months and the results reported back to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to reject implementation of the Multi-Operator Travelcard with an adult day fare of £5.00 at this stage, on the basis that the £5.00 was prohibitive and the absence of any weekly ticket provision was unacceptable, and
- (ii) to request officers to hold further discussions with First Bus to negotiate the introduction of the travelcard on the basis of a reduced fare and the introduction of a weekly ticket, and to report back to the Committee in this regard, in due course.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jaffrey declared an interest in the following matter by reason of her having one of the current Disabled Persons' spaces outside her home.

DISABLED PERSONS' PARKING PLACES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2009 - EPI/10/194

21. With reference to minute of meeting of the Committee of 1 September 2009 (Article 17 refers), there had now been circulated a new report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure on the duties placed upon the Council as a result of the above-named legislation.

The narrative went into a great deal of close analysis, of which the central import was that the new Act contained much to welcome but other aspects that were of considerable concern.

First of all the legislation obliged local authorities to do something which Aberdeen City Council had actually done of its own accord several years ago; namely, inviting the owners of private off-street car parking areas (most obviously supermarkets and large shops) to consider allowing the Council to manage blue badge parking bays in those areas by including them in off-street car parking legislation, with the effect of making them enforceable by the City Wardens.

The Council had done this with the John Lewis car park, which had been given over exclusively to blue badge holders. John Lewis had invited the Council to manage the area by putting it into the off-street traffic order. Unfortunately, the car park had been obliterated subsequently in the course of road realignment.

Now, under the new Act, every local authority was obliged to approach not only major supermarkets and large shops but any owner of off-street car parking areas in which disabled spaces had been established.

Even if the Council's invitation was turned down, there was an obligation to go back every two years to try again.

The report now recommended a procedure for making contact with external agencies in this respect. This was modelled on the approach taken by Edinburgh City Council and would take as its point of departure the distribution of hundreds of questionnaires to businesses throughout Aberdeen. These questionnaires would clarify the implications and obligations involved, and the responses would allow the Council to have a much clearer picture of what it was dealing with in this respect.

Moving to the on-street aspects of the new legislation, the fundamental significance here was an alteration in the current position vis-à-vis the familiar individualised (but advisory) bays established outside the homes of people with disabilities. Aberdeen City Council had around 1,300 of these, but they were common in other cities and towns throughout Scotland. The new legislation would actively *outlaw* such bays in their current form.

In other words it would be illegal to continue to have advisory individualised bays; instead, there would be an obligation to replace them with non-individualised bays, accessible to any other blue badge holders, but regulatory.

An individual resident would still be the precipitant of the process to establish a bay. But he or she would not have privileged or individualised access to it once it had been established.

This meant that the Council would have to promote traffic orders to provide the authority for the new on-street spaces and the current report suggested that this change over be dealt with in a rolling programme in which a reasonable number of locations would be reported to Committee each cycle as part of the usual reports on small-scale traffic management.

This would of course be cumbersome, and would also beg questions about how realistically autonomous the Council would be able to claim to be if it had to hear statutory objections to orders. Broadly speaking, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services was of the view that this aspect of the new legislation was not really the stuff of traffic orders at all, and brought into disrepute the impartiality with which objections should be addressed.

Also, each on-street bay (and indeed all off-street arrangements set up under that aspect of the legislation) would have to be marked and signed in conformity with the statutory specifications, which would entail an enormous administrative and financial burden. Residents would have to be approached and a street-by-street audit would have to be carried out.

The existing budget for all of this was £40,000. This sum was sufficient to deal with the number of applications for on-street bays currently received annually, and did not cover off-street bays and car parks maintained by the Housing Department. These were funded from a separate budget. £40,000 was insufficient to allow the Council to carry out its duties outlined in the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009, and it would be insufficient to meet either the demand for new parking places *or* the promotion of traffic orders to shift existing on-street spaces from advisory to regulatory, and also from individualised to public. To date, no additional resources had been provided to carry out the duties set out in the Act and the mounting costs would place considerable pressure on the revenue budget. Early estimates of the real impact of the work outlined in the report were such that costs as high as £550,000 were feared quite realistically. Also, based on the figures given in the report, and assuming no new applications and no change in level of funding, the timescale to formalise the existing regime (again, to move it from advisory to regulatory and from individualised to public) would be in the order of 9-12 years. This did not take into consideration existing off-street parking arrangements in car parks operated by the Housing Department, the number of which was unquantified at the time of writing.

Also, the initial burden would be placed on the City Wardens as a great deal of the existing disabled persons' spaces were in residential areas with very few other restrictions attracting obvious enforcement needs. Finally, if supermarkets, etc. took up opportunities to enter into agreements with the Council, the wardens would have to turn their attention to parking bays in supermarket car parks, etc. which would result in more pressure in existing resources.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to reiterate its original view that, although some aspects of this legislation were well-intentioned and welcome, other aspects appeared to be misconceived, and likely to make things worse for people with disabilities rather than better; and
- (ii) to approve the overall approach and recommended procedures in the circulated report, and to approve the first batch of locations for new on-street spaces for incorporation within a traffic order (as outlined in the report).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Prior to considering the following item the following members declared an interest in the matter by reason of their involvement with the North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (Nestrans):- Councillor Boulton as Board members of Nestrans, Councillor Kevin Stewart as Chair of Nestrans and a resident of the Middlefield area; and the Convener and Councillor Yuill as substitute Board members of Nestrans. None of the members involved considered it necessary to leave the meeting during the Committee's deliberation on the report before it.

STRATEGIC PUBLIC TRANSPORT - EPI/10/201

22. With reference to article 17 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 26 November, 2009, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which advised of recent progress in undertaking evidence based assessments to identify areas on the City's road network where adjustments might contribute to the reliability and punctuality of buses, thereby encouraging greater use of this more sustainable mode of transport. In addition, the report identified the need to progress the identification of a new location for the Bridge of Don Park and Ride facility.

By way of background the report reminded members that the Council had been successful in securing NESTRANS funding for 2010/11 to investigate reports of delays to buses on the routes 1 and 2, particularly at the north and south ends of this route at Bridge of Don and Holburn Street, respectively. The problems were identified by First Aberdeen as significant in reducing their ability to achieve appropriate reliability and punctuality as required by the Traffic Commissioner for all scheduled bus services. The locations and nature of the most concerning problems to the bus operators were as follows:

1. Balgownie Road / The Parkway (Northbound)
2. Scotstown Road / The Parkway (Northbound)
3. North Donside Road / Ellon Road (Eastbound)
4. Holburn Street (Northbound)
5. Broomhill Road / Holburn Street (Eastbound)
6. Holburn Street / Bridge of Dee roundabout (Southbound)

The King Street/Castle Street/Union Street section of the route had previously been identified as an area for potential bus priority measures and was the subject of a separate study., the findings of which are detailed below.

The findings of the study in relation to each of the above 6 routes as well as proposed alterations to the existing layouts were outlined.

In summary, it was advised that it had become apparent that, as a result of the current road geometry, carriageway width, residents' parking and the proximity to buildings, there was little that could be done in terms of implementing meaningful bus priority at the Broomhill Road/Holburn Street junction. It was also the view that there would be significant difficulties in extending the existing bus lane on North Donside Road and that initial consideration should be given to improvements at the other four locations (1,2,4 and 6 above), where it was considered that there was greater scope for implementing improvements. The proposed improvements and potential benefits at each of these locations were listed within the report. It was also advised that further reports on each of these would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Separately, in relation to the King Street/Castle Street/Union Street Bus Punctuality Improvements, the report advised that a recent study commissioned by the Council prior to the start of the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (BPIP) corridor study had identified opportunities for public transport improvements through the East North Street / King Street junction. The report provided an overview of the characteristics of traffic behaviour over this area in both the AM and PM peak periods, as had been identified by the traffic model. From the model it was clear

however, that there was significant queuing and congestion over the model area, as well as significant variability of bus journey times.

A range of possible options were identified and tested and evaluated on the model, with the following two options providing significant benefit for public transport, and no adverse impact on all other traffic:

1. Creation of a peak time bus lane – King Street/Castle Street

This proposal sought to introduce a peak time south bound bus lane from south of the King Street/East North Street junction, within the existing kerb line to Castle Street, then localised widening as the bus lane turns into Castle Street, terminating on Union Street prior to the lane splits in advance of the junction with Broad Street. A provisional design for Option 1 was attached as Appendix A.

2. Union Street/Market Street Bus Lane Reduction

In this proposal, the west bound bus lane on Union Street would be curtailed before Adelphi Lane rather than close to the junction with Market Street. This was to provide more capacity for lane interchange which was perceived to cause inefficiencies at the junction for all traffic, including buses, trying to get into the appropriate lane.

In conclusion, the report advised that both options provided significant benefits to bus journey times and reliability at what were known key congestion hotspots. All bus companies operating on this corridor would benefit, including park and ride services as well as taxis and bicycles. It was also important to note that the model results showed no net detriment to other traffic as a result of these measures, in fact it shows that the average journey times for all traffic routing from King Street to Union Street were slightly improved with the bus lane scheme in place. Other than a localised widening around the corner at Castlegate, these options could be physically undertaken by simple adjustments to on street lining and signing, with no impact on bus stop locations.

In support of the options identified above, it was also proposed that work include the appropriate signing and road marking improvements required to support the improvements identified and the re-affirmation of the existing banned right turn out of Marischal Street. This was already in place, however road markings and signage here require refreshing. It was proposed that monitoring of any implemented scheme would take place over the period of a year and if improvements to bus journey times were confirmed then officers would expect the bus operators to provide matching improvements to services, such as increased service frequency. Based on the initial design, the estimated cost of options 1 and 2 detailed above and shown in Appendix A was approximately £200,000.

Councillor Yuill raised a query on behalf of Councillor Reynolds regarding the benefits of the works in relation to queuing buses at Castle Street.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to acknowledge the assessments undertaken to date on bus Routes 1 and 2 and instruct officers to report back to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee as soon as the remainder of this work was concluded;

- (ii) to agree, in principle, that there were journey time, punctuality and reliability benefits to be achieved by the installation of a new peak hour bus lane on the King Street/Castle Street/Union Street corridor (as indicated on the appended plan) and reduce the length of bus lane on Union Street as recommended in Section 2.10;
- (iii) to instruct the appropriate officials to commence the necessary legislation for the required Traffic Regulation Order to implement the proposals referenced in resolution (ii) above, and if no objections were received at the Initial Statutory stage then instruct officers to continue with the public advert;
- (iv) to acknowledge the lack of progress to date of possible development opportunities to deliver a new location for the Bridge of Don Park and Ride facility and the need to accelerate this;
- (v) to instruct the appropriate officers to commence the necessary work to identify a preferred location for a new Bridge of Don Park and Ride site, subject to the successful allocation of future Non-Housing Capital funding through the budget process;
- (vi) that none of the works listed within the report take place at the time of the Walker Cup and Offshore Europe; and
- (vii) to request officers to contact Councillor Reynolds regarding his queries in relation to the queuing of buses at Castle Street and the potential benefits of the works in that regard.

ROADS WINTER SERVICES PLAN - EPI/10/212

23. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which presented the proposed Winter Service Plan and explained significant changes contained within the Plan for 2010/2011.

The report explained that the Council's Winter Maintenance Specification and Winter Maintenance Plan had evolved over many years and had been amended to reflect both national and local requirements. This year's amendments had been made to reflect:-

- (a) monitoring of salt use/stock;
- (b) resources available over the holiday period; and
- (c) provide information through the Zone

A detailed summary of the changes made for each of the above was provided.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve the Roads Winter Service Plan for 2010/2011;
- (ii) to request officers to ensure that a clear statement detailing the procedure for winter maintenance calls was placed on the Council's website and that a statement regarding the legality of residents clearing pathways also be made available; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

PAN - GRAMPIAN RADIO NETWORK – TENDER FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE TWO WAY RADIO SYSTEM - EPI/10/211

24. With reference to article 31 of the minute of the meeting of the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 23 February, 2010, the Committee had

before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which presented a further option for improving overall communications throughout the Council by using a replacement radio network.

The report reminded members that the estimated useful life of the current radio system was now limited as more of the equipment became obsolete and spares were no longer available. At present, through the Pan Grampian tender, Grampian Fire and Rescue Services managed and maintained the Local Authorities Pan-Grampian Radio Transmission system. However, the Council had looked to obtain best value from the tender by forming a standalone system. By sharing the costs of the revised system between Roads and Waste the cost of the operation per service had been reduced.

The proposed new radio system would be a 4 channel system with vehicle tracking. This system would not be as sophisticated as currently used by the Council's winter maintenance and gully cleaning operations but would provide the time, location and emergency response. The radio system would have the provision for direct dialling to a Council establishment. This would increase the ability to communicate between the on site staff and the office without any further charges.

With regards requirement of such a system, it was advised that whilst mobile telephone networks now provided more comprehensive coverage they were often jammed in a major emergency and retention of a privately operated radio network would provide continuity in these circumstances. Therefore, it was felt that with current legislation on mobile phone usage and the Council's approved Policy on the use of mobile phones when driving meant the provision of mobile phones on vehicles could not be considered

In terms of finance, it was advised that the capital cost of providing the necessary hardware and radios for the replacement system was £191,000. There would be no ongoing site rental as it was proposed to site the aerial on the roof of a suitable tall Council building providing citywide coverage. However, running costs for the system would be £19,000 per annum, with costs shared equally between Waste and Roads. This cost would be met from existing budgets. Overall costs for the Council would therefore be £381,000 over 10 years. This was in comparison to the original tender costs of £909,601 over the same period.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee:-

- (a) refers the report to the Finance & Resources Committee for consideration as a project within next years Capital Programme; and
- (b) notes the contents of the report.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to take no action in this regard; and
- (ii) to request officers to report back on how the Council would now proceed without the replacement of the radio network.

OPTIONS FOR RELOCATION OF INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS - EPI/10/199

25. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure intimating the measures that require to be put into place to facilitate the relocation of the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Unit to a new office within a Council-owned building.

Office space had still to be identified for this and, also, a suitable location needed to be found for the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) radio antenna, radio base station, and system server.

The ITS Unit was at present located on the second floor of St. Nicholas House and was responsible for the operation, maintenance, design and installation of the city's traffic signal infrastructure. The Unit played a vital role in the daily management of the road network and also had responsibility for the RTPI system, the Car Park Guidance System (CPGS), and other Variable Message Signs (VMS).

Prior to the redevelopment of the St Nicholas House site, the Unit would have to be relocated within a Council-owned building, as would also be necessary for the Urban Traffic Control (UTC) systems which were of course highly important to the sufficient management of the city's road network, controlling as it did the majority of traffic signals in the city centre and consisting of a control PC located in the ITS office at St. Nicholas House (and connected to a communications hub in the basement of Woodhill House).

The report outlined in detail three options for relocating the UTC system and suggested that roads officials continue to liaise with First Aberdeen vis-à-vis the relocation of RTPI. CPGS and VMS would also have to be relocated from St. Nicholas House and the options here appeared dependent on decisions taken in relation to UTC and RTPI. As regards UTC, the report recommended option 2 (the installation of a new PC in-station in a new office facility, subject to funds being available in future capital budget allocations for the upgrading of traffic signal installations (a report back to Committee being necessary should such funding not be available) and, as regards RTPI, continue to liaise with First Aberdeen to identify a suitable location for the aerial and communications hub.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to UTC, to approve option 2 (the installation of a new PC in-station within a new office (to be funded from the services capital budget 2010/2011); and
- (ii) to refer to the budget process continuing work in partnership with First Aberdeen to identify a suitable location for the relocation of the RTPI aerial and communications hub.

In accordance with the decision recorded under article 1 of this minute, the following item only (article 26) was considered with the press and public excluded.

GLASHIEBURN FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEME - EPI/10/192

26. With reference to the minute of meeting of the Committee of 31 May 2010 (Article 27 refers), there had been circulated a further report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure on the flood prevention scheme to deal with a long-standing flooding problem in Lochside Drive. This scheme had now been put out to tender and it was now recommended that the lowest return (£200,415.05) be approved and accepted from Balfour Beattie Civil Engineering Limited (all as outlined in the circulated papers).

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

- **COUNCILLOR McCaig, Convener.**