

NET ZERO, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 31 October 2023. Minute of Meeting of the NET ZERO, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Yuill, Convener (for articles 1 to 15); Councillor Radley, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Al-Samarai (as substitute for Councillor McRae), Ali, Blake (for articles 1 to 13 and 15 to 16), Bonsell (for article 16), Fairfull (for articles 7 to 16), Farquhar, Greig (as substitute for the Convener for article 16), Henrickson, Hutchison, Macdonald (as substitute for Councillor Bonsell for articles 1 to 15), Malik (as substitute for Councillor Blake for article 14), Massey, McLellan and Mennie (as substitute for Councillor Fairfull for articles 1 to 6).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Convener began the meeting by advising Members of a number of recent successes for the Council.

- At an award ceremony for the Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom awards on 23 October, Aberdeen won a Gold Medal and were crowned City Winners.
- Following the success in the Scottish Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) awards for Planning Excellence, the Council had also been shortlisted in the UK-wide RTPI Awards, in two categories, namely Planning Authority of the Year, and Excellence in Plan Making Practice – Net Zero Aberdeen.
- The results of the Climate Emergency UK's Local Authority Climate Action Scorecard, had also been announced, and Aberdeen City Council had received a score of 55%, to take joint second place in Scotland, alongside Glasgow. It was noted that the Scottish average was 34%. This score had also put the Council at tenth place for single tier local authorities across the UK, with the highest score in the UK sitting at 62% for Westminster City Council.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to the Britain in Bloom success, to congratulate the Environmental Manager and his team, and the many volunteers who had played a part; and
- (ii) to thank officers for their efforts which had led to the above successes in the Local Authority Climate Action Scorecard and the RTPI awards.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

2. The Convener reminded Members that item 10.1 (Aberdeen City Council Travel Plan) had been withdrawn from the agenda. He further advised that it was his intention

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to take item 11.5 (Traffic Management Measures at TECA site) prior to consideration of item 11.4 (Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Parking).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest or transparency statements in respect of the items on the agenda, thereafter the following were intimated:-

- Councillor Blake advised that she had a connection in relation to agenda item 7.1 (School Streets – Notice of Motion by Councillor Blake) by virtue of her being a volunteer for Bikeability, however having applied the objective test, she did not consider that she had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.
- Also in relation to item 7.1, the Convener advised that he was a member of Cycling UK, however he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would require him to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of this item. The Convener further advised that the same connection also applied at item 11.2 (North East Scotland Active Travel Network Review).
- Councillor Al-Samarai advised that she had a connection in relation to item 8.1 (Low Emission Zone – Time-Limited Exemption for Taxis and Private Hire Cars), as she was Convener of the Licensing Committee which had referred the matter on to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee, but she did not consider this amounted to an interest which would require her to withdraw from the meeting during that item.
- The Convener advised that he had a connection in relation to item 10.3 (Low Emission Zone Penalty Charge Notice – Net Surplus Income Policy), as his current vehicle would not be compliant with the Low Emission Zone, however having sought advice from Legal Services, he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which require him to withdraw from the meeting during that item of business.
- Councillor Blake advised that she had a connection in relation to item 10.4 (Biodiversity Duty Report), as her husband worked at NatureScot, but she did not consider this amounted to an interest which would require her to withdraw from the meeting during that item of business.
- Councillor Blake advised that she had a connection with item 11.4 (Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Parking) as she was a member of UNISON, however she did not consider this amounted to an interest and would be remaining in the meeting during consideration of the item.

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- Finally, the Convener declared an interest in item 11.4 (Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Parking) by virtue of being a member of the NHS Grampian Board, and having applied the objective test, he advised that he would be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of this item.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 29 AUGUST 2023

4. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 29 August 2023 for approval.

In relation to article 10 (Roads Winter Service Plan 2023-2024), and the areas of the city not covered by the plan, Councillor Blake asked whether the information requested had been circulated by officers.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services had advised that he would ask officers to circulate some additional information to Members in relation to winter maintenance and that this information could also be shared on the Council website; and
- (ii) to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

5. The Committee had before it the business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal).

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to agree to remove item 13 (A92 Bridge of Don to Bridge of Dee Multi-Modal Transport Corridor Study) and item 16 (Various Small Scale Traffic Management – Stage 2);
- (ii) to note the reasons outlined in the planner for any delayed reports;
- (iii) in relation to item 50 (Aberdeen Cross City Connections - Active Travel Scheme Development), to note that officers would provide some additional detail in respect of the funding to clarify where funding had been sought in 2023/24 for this project, and circulate this to Members outwith the meeting;
- (iv) to otherwise note the business planner.

SCHOOL STREETS - NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BLAKE

6. The Committee had before it a notice of motion by Councillor Blake in the following terms:-

That the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee:-

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- (1) agrees the importance of active travel on health & mental wellbeing of school pupils and that this has a positive impact on readiness to learn;
- (2) notes that in the October 2022 active travel survey all primary schools in the city offered Bikeability level 2, bike/scooter parking and encouraged park and stride amongst the school community;
- (3) notes that the Sustrans Hands Up Scotland report published in May 2023 showed that the number of primary school pupils in Aberdeen City Council walking to school had declined from 65.1% in 2008 to 53.6% in 2022. 22.2% of pupils were driven to school;
- (4) agrees that Parent Councils across the city were regularly raising issues regarding pupil safety caused by inconsiderate parking and driving around drop off and pick up time;
- (5) agrees that School Street initiatives have had a beneficial impact across the UK. City of Edinburgh Council had been running School Streets since 2015 and currently operated at 12 schools in the city. Glasgow City Council and Dundee City Council also had several schemes in operation;
- (6) agrees that the report by Professor Adrian Davis of Edinburgh Napier University evidenced that active travel increased with street closures and that displaced traffic did not increase road safety issues in neighbouring streets;
- (7) notes the pilot schemes in operation in Fraserburgh South Park School and Moray, where initial results regarding air quality and increased walking and cycling to school were positive;
- (8) notes that funding for pilot School Street schemes was available to community groups including Parent Councils from Sustrans and Temporary School Streets Fund to fund a pilot for up to 12 weeks; and
- (9) instructs the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services following consultation with the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to report back to the next Committee on the necessary steps to undertake a School Street scheme including the likely resource and network implications.

Councillor Blake, seconded by Councillor Macdonald, moved:-
That the Committee approve the notice of motion.

The Vice Convener, seconded by the Convener, moved as an amendment:-
That the Committee:-

- (a) agrees the importance of active travel on health and mental wellbeing of school pupils and that this had a positive impact on readiness to learn;
- (b) notes that the Sustrans Hands Up Scotland report published in May 2023 showed that the number of primary school pupils in Aberdeen City Council walking to school had declined from 65.1% in 2008 to 53.6% in 2022. 22.2% of pupils were driven to school;
- (c) acknowledges that Parent Councils across the city were regularly raising issues regarding pupil safety caused by inconsiderate parking and driving around drop off and pick up time;

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- (d) notes that in the October 2022 active travel survey, all primary schools in the city offered Bikeability level 2, bike/scooter parking and encouraged park and stride amongst the school community; and
- (e) instructs the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, Interim Chief Officer - Education and the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to bring back a report on options for how to promote and improve active travel routes around schools.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (3) – Councillors Ali, Blake and Macdonald; for the amendment (9) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Farquhar, Henrickson, Hutchison, Massey, McLellan and Mennie.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the amendment.

LOW EMISSION ZONE - TIME-LIMITED EXEMPTION FOR TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS - REFERRED FROM THE LICENSING COMMITTEE OF 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

7. With reference to article 5 of the minute of the meeting of the Licensing Committee of 6 September 2023, the Committee had before it, by way of referral, a report which advised Members of the additional time-limited exemption from the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) granted to drivers of taxis and private hire cars (PHCs).

The Licensing Committee had resolved:-

- (a) to approve the recommendations contained within the report;
- (b) to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to circulate a Service Update to all members of Council in relation to the report; and
- (c) to refer the report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee for their information.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the report; and
- (ii) to request that the report to be presented to the Licensing Committee in June 2024 on the impacts of Glasgow's time-limited exemption for taxi operators be circulated to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee members for information.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS REPORT - COM/23/302

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which presented the annual effectiveness report of the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee to enable Members to provide comment on the data contained within.

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The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) provide comments and observations on the data contained within the annual report; and
- (b) note the annual report of the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) with reference to the mentions in the report about the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Terms of Reference, to note that officers had undertaken to identify whether there could be clearer links / definitions of business to net zero, environment and transport; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT 2022-23 - COM/23/329

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which sought approval of the statutory Climate Change Report (CCR) covering the period 2022/23. The report required to be submitted to the Scottish Government, to ensure compliance with the requirements of Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the Climate Change Report 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to submit the report prior to the deadline of 30 November 2023; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to publish the Climate Change Report on the Council's website.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

POLICY REVIEW AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN RELATING TO SINGLE-USE VAPES - COM/23/331

10. With reference to article 7 of the minute of its meeting of 9 May 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which set out the policy implications of a ban on single use vapes on the Council and presented a communications plan highlighting their environmental and health impacts.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the policy implications of a ban on single-use vapes on the Council; and
- (b) approve the Communications Plan as described in Appendix 1 of the report.

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The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that there was an error in the report at section 3.10, and that the percentage of those aged under 18 who were using vapes (single and reusable) was 14%, and not 22% as stated in the report;
- (ii) to note that Communications officers would liaise with Suez to ascertain if the video of the Altens East fire could be edited to be used on social media channels;
- (iii) to note the high levels of single-use vape litter around schools and instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education to design a targeted communication plan around the ban on vaping and the impacts of litter on the school estate; and
- (iv) to approve the recommendations.

LOW EMISSION ZONE PENALTY CHARGE NOTICE - NET SURPLUS INCOME POLICY - COM/23/327

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which sought approval for a policy for the use of any net surplus income arising from enforcement of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ).

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the policy proposed for the use of any net surplus income arising from Low Emission Zone (LEZ) enforcement; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to submit a report to this Committee in Summer 2025 identifying the costs and income associated with operation of the LEZ during the 2024/25 financial year, including a proposed programme for the use of any surplus income.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT 2023 - COM/23/333

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which presented the draft Aberdeen City Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2023 and sought approval for submission of the report to the Scottish Government, in line with the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the content of the draft report;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to finalise the report (minor corrections and design format) and submit it to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2023;

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- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to publish the finalised report on the Council’s website and circulate it as a Service Update to Committee in early 2024; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to develop and lead on two projects in partnership with other public bodies in the city to:
 - i) develop and monitor a suite of cross-organisation biodiversity and related data, i.e. land managed for nature, access to nature, engagement with nature, etc. to inform the Council and City’s strategic direction and required on the ground actions and investments now and in the future; ii) develop, implement and monitor a public and wider stakeholder awareness and engagement campaign on the value of nature to the City, its citizens and businesses, the risks to nature locally and the need for local action, what the Council and partners were doing and what others could also do in support of nature recovery across Aberdeen; and iii) report back to Committee within 12 months with the outcomes of these projects.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would add the review of the Local Nature Conservation Sites to the business planner for a future meeting;
- (ii) to note that officers would investigate how Members could be involved in the nature awareness campaign;
- (iii) to note that officers would circulate information to Members on grassland management to enable them to share information with constituents who contacted them with queries;
- (iv) to request that when new areas for grassland management were identified, that officers share information with Community Councils and wider communities;
- (v) to note that at the Beautiful Scotland 2022 Awards, Aberdeen City won the prestigious Rose Bowl, based on horticulture, environmental responsibility and community participation; and to further note the recent Gold Britain in Bloom medal won by Aberdeen City Council;
- (vi) to note that officers would include the Britain in Bloom success in the report prior to submission; and
- (vii) to approve the recommendations.

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK REVIEW - COM/23/332

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which provided an update on progress of the North East Scotland Active Travel Network Review, a strategic active travel project which was currently being co-ordinated by Nestrans.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the progress that had been made on the North East Scotland Active Travel Network Review pertaining to the Aberdeen City area (as the responsible Roads Authority);

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- (b) note that, subject to Nestrans Board approval, the initial outcomes of the Network Review would proceed to public and stakeholder consultation, and that this would be co-ordinated by Nestrans; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to report further progress to this Committee at an appropriate time following the public consultation process, within the next 12 months.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

FEASIBILITY OF CHANGING THE CURRENT PAY AND DISPLAY POLICY (NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR MALIK) - RES/23/328

14. With reference to article 6 of the minute of its meeting of 9 May 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which set out the feasibility of changing the current pay and display policy with options and estimated cost implications included.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note that Aberdeen City Council controlled parking zones and car parks did not have consistent operational hours on every day of the week;
- (b) agree that there were vehicle trips generated throughout a longer period of a typical Sunday, where greater use of controlled parking measures would be beneficial in terms of providing a turnover of parking, protecting residential parking amenity and encouraging sustainable travel alternatives; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to commence the statutory process to introduce charged parking times on a Sunday of 8am to 8pm, in all restricted parking zones and car parks where Sundays were currently charged from 1pm to 5pm, and to report back to this Committee with any objections raised.

At this juncture, Councillor Malik, as the originator of the notice of motion on which the report was based, advised that he wished to move an amendment to the recommendations. Having then had sight of the Partnership motion, Councillor Malik withdrew his amendment.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) note that Aberdeen City Council controlled parking zones and car parks do not have consistent operational hours on every day of the week;
- (b) note that people's reasons for visiting the city centre and public transport provision have changed significantly since the current on-street and off-street city centre parking arrangements were agreed; and

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- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services following consultation with the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to explore the feasibility of undertaking a review of on-street and off-street parking and report back with a timeline and resource implications, to the next Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

Councillor Massey, seconded by Councillor Farquhar, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) proposes to do nothing; and
 (b) instructs the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to carry out a detailed review of the ‘do nothing’ option to ensure the policy remained fair and up to date with current legislation and policies.

As a result of discussion which arose during the debate, Councillor Ali advised that he was a member of Aberdeen Mosque, however he did not consider that this amounted to a declaration which would require him to withdraw from the meeting.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (10) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Ali, Fairfull, Henrickson, Hutchison, Malik, Macdonald and McLellan; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Farquhar and Massey.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES AT TECA SITE - RES/23/238

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which provided an update on the functionality and success of the traffic management measures installed within and around the TECA site.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the actions taken to date; and
 (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to progress a permanent traffic regulation order for the area surrounding TECA based on the temporary traffic regulation order currently in place.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

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At this juncture, in accordance with the declaration made at article 3 of this minute, the Convener withdrew from the meeting and the Vice Convener took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

ARI PARKING (FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BONSELL) - RES/23/324

16. With reference to article 19 of the minute of the meeting of Full Council of 14 June 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which provided an update on the impact of changes in land use on the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) site on car parking for staff, visitors and the wider community; on the public transport opportunities to and from the ARI site; and the impact on parking within the wider community and any solutions required.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note that National Health Service Grampian (NHS Grampian) were preparing a new Development Framework and Transport Strategy for the Foresterhill Campus;
- (b) note the actions being taken by Aberdeen City Council and local public transport services in relation to active travel and public transport adjacent to the site; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to report to this Committee on any future impacts arising from the above recommendations or collaboration with NHS Grampian to improve accessibility to the site for patients and staff.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve recommendations (a) and (b) as set out above;
- (ii) to acknowledge NHS Grampian staff worked long, often anti-social hours and needed access to travel options which best met their needs, including adequate access to safe, free parking;
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to report to this Committee on any future impacts arising from the above recommendations or collaboration with NHS Grampian to improve accessibility to the site for patients, staff and visitors;
- (iv) to note the changes to the bus services implemented in recent months;
- (v) to note the significant work already underway by the North East Bus Alliance which included the operators and the local authorities to develop Aberdeen Rapid Transit including services that would serve the ARI site and link to the Park and Ride facilities;
- (vi) to instruct the Director of Commissioning to invite bus operators to a meeting including the Convener and Vice Convener of the Net Zero Environment and Transport Committee, and representatives from each political group, to discuss the impact the changes to the bus services has had on NHS Grampian staff and patients; and

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- (vii) to instruct the Director of Commissioning to report back to the next appropriate meeting of the Net Zero Environment and Transport Committee on the outcome of the meetings and any potential further steps.
- **COUNCILLOR IAN YUILL, Convener**