

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

BUCHAN HOUSE, PETERHEAD, 20 AUGUST, 2015

Present: Councillor D Aitchison (Chair), S W Smith (Vice Chair), P J Argyle, C Buchan (as substitute for Councillor S M Lonchay), J B Cox, A Gardiner, J Latham, C R McKail (as substitute for Councillor W A Agnew), F McRae (as substitute for Councillor R Merson), I J Mollison, C H Nelson, H Partridge, M Roy and B H Stuart.

Apologies: Councillors W A Agnew, S M Lonchay and R Merson.

Officers: Director of Infrastructure Services, Head of Service (Planning and Building Standards), Head of Service (Transportation), Head of Service (Roads and Landscape), Head of Service (Economic Development), Community Economic Development Co-ordinator, Legal Services Manager (Governance), Chief Accountant, Senior Auditor (C Harvey), and Senior Committee Officer (N David).

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

Councillor Aitchison declared an interest in Item 4 as a member of SDPA and in Item 5 as a board member of NESTRANS;

Councillor Argyle declared an interest in Item 4 as a member of SDPA and in Item 5 as a board member of NESTRANS;

Councillor Cox declared an interest in Item 12 as a member of Banffshire Coast Tourism Partnership;

Councillor Latham declared an interest in Item 5 as a board member of NESTRANS;

Councillor Mollison declared an interest in Item 5 as a board member of NESTRANS;

Councillor Roy declared an interest in Item 12 as a member of Banffshire Coast Tourism Partnership.

2. RESOLUTIONS

A. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the undernoted paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Item No	Paragraph No of Schedule 7A
16	1, 12 and 14
17	6, 8 and 9

PRESENTATION

3. COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Chair introduced Mr Reid Hutchison, Community Economic Development Co-ordinator who was in attendance to provide the Committee with an overview of the work of Economic Development in Aberdeenshire. The presentation included information on what economic development was; complimentary areas; organisations and projects involved; and future developments in the Community Economic Development in Aberdeenshire. There followed a question and answer session.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed** to thank Reid Hutchison for his very informative presentation and also to commend him for the huge contribution he had made to the success of Economic Development in Aberdeenshire over a significant period of time.

PLANNING, POLICY AND ENVIRONMENT

4. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE – STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FUND

There was circulated a report dated 17 August, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services which explained that, on 25 June, 2015, the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) had agreed new statutory supplementary guidance relating to the Strategic Transport Fund to replace the current non-statutory guidance on the same topic. The SDPA had also agreed that the new statutory supplementary guidance be referred to the Infrastructure Services Committee of Aberdeenshire Council and also the Communities Housing and Infrastructure Committee of Aberdeen City Council for ratification. In this regard, a copy of the SDPA report to the meeting on 25 June, 2015, was included as an appendix to the report, with the supplementary guidance and the minute of that SDPA meeting included as further appendices.

The SDPA report provided an outline as to why the statutory supplementary guidance was required to assist with the provision of infrastructure related to the substantial land releases contained within the Strategic Development Plan, particularly in and around Aberdeen itself. The new Supplementary Guidance replaced the current non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance. The intention was always to review this non-statutory guidance following approval of the Strategic Development Plan and to adopt it as statutory guidance which would, therefore, formally form part of the Development Plan.

Thereafter, the proposed Supplementary Guidance had been submitted to the Scottish Ministers who directed that a sentence be added to the proposed guidance, as detailed within

the report. The Scottish Ministers had since confirmed that with this change made they were content for the SDPA to adopt the guidance. It has also been agreed by the SDPA that the new Supplementary Guidance could come into force on 28 August, 2015 following approval from both Aberdeenshire Council at this meeting and Aberdeen City Council at their meeting on 27 August, 2015.

In presenting the report to the Committee the Head of Planning and Building Standards highlighted that a legal challenge had been lodged in the Court of Session by the Elrick Development Company against the newly adopted Statutory Supplementary Guidance. The SDPA had an initial 21 days to respond to the challenge, but it was not clear how long it might take for the case to be heard and determined. In the meantime, the new guidance would come into force on 28 August, 2015 with existing guidance continuing to be used until then.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the decision of the Strategic Development Planning Authority on 25 June, 2015, as detailed within Appendix 3 to the report, and
- (2) ratify the use of the new Statutory Supplementary Guidance Strategic Transport Fund with effect from 28 August, 2015.

TRANSPORTATION

5. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 14 May, 2015 (Item 8), there was circulated a report dated 20 August, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services which provided the Committee with an action update for the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) for the period May to July 2015 and which sought agreement that further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy, as appropriate.

The Head of Service (Transportation) introduced the report and advised the Committee that all updates for the Local Transport Strategy for the period May to July 2015 were presented in Appendix 1 to the report.

During discussion the Committee made reference to Inch Station and in particular the lack of access to the south platform which restricted access to people with mobility difficulties, buggies, and luggage. NESTRANS had repeatedly raised the issue with Transport Scotland, most recently with the suggestion that Transport Scotland should give consideration to the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders since valuation over a section of land was the issue stopping progress to permit full access to the platforms at Inch Station. Transport Scotland had confirmed that they were currently not pursuing the project. Members were in agreement that the Chair of the Committee should write to Transport Scotland, with the support of NESTRANS, expressing extreme disappointment at their decision to not pursue this project and requesting that they reconsider that decision.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to endorse the progress and developments taken through NESTRANS and to acknowledge the activities and developments being taken forward by external agencies and stakeholders as detailed in the report,
- (2) to accept further updates on the progress of both the implementation and delivery of the Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy as appropriate, and

- (3) that the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, and with the support of NESTRANS, write to Transport Scotland expressing extreme disappointment at their decision to not currently pursue the project to improve the access to the south platform at Inch Station and to ask that they reconsider this decision.

6. SMARTER TRAVEL ACTION PLAN

There was circulated a report dated 7 August, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services which sought approval of the consultation process on the draft Smarter Travel Action Plan and the programme of capital works for 2015/2016.

The report reminded members that since 2009 the landscape for Active Travel had changed significantly in many respects. The report outlined various documents which had been published and the initiatives which had been developed in this period. The report also highlighted that for the period 2009 – 2014, the focus of work, budget and resource in Aberdeenshire on Active Travel was largely on the Peterhead Cycling Demonstration Town. In late 2013, Transport Scotland confirmed that significant funding would be made available to local authorities to install physical cycling infrastructure to link communities. Local authorities bid to access funds which had to be matched by Aberdeenshire Council or other funding partners. The funding was for two years covering financial years 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. Aberdeenshire Council took the opportunity to seek funding for the development of master plans in five towns across Aberdeenshire and this bid was successful. These towns were Ellon, Fraserburgh, Huntly, Inverurie and Portlethen. Aberdeenshire Council was also successful in obtaining funding for a series of physical infrastructure measures. Aberdeenshire was allocated £428,750 for 2014/2015 and £270,000 for 2015/2016 capital funding from the Scottish Government under the Community Links Programme to develop cycling and walking infrastructure. Thereafter, in late 2014 a separate funding source became available via the Paths for All charity. The allocation again had to be match funded and because of how closely the objectives of this funding stream matched what Aberdeenshire Council was trying to do the full allocation of £236,000 of revenue funding was accepted. Given the short timescales to pull together a programme of work by the submission date in January 2015 the programme was evolved to include all works in the latest version of the programme detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report concluded by explaining that a further report seeking to finalise the Smarter Travel Action Plan would be submitted to a meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee in January 2016.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed to:-**

- (1) to approve the consultation process on the draft Smarter Travel Action Plan as outlined within the report, and
- (2) to approve the programme of capital works for 2015/2016 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.

7. ACCESS TO LAURENCEKIRK – FINALISED STUDY REPORT

There was circulated a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services which explained that the Nestrans Board, at the meeting on 17 June, 2015, had considered the Finalised Access to Laurencekirk Report. The report explained that Nestrans endorsed the key findings of the study and had remitted its findings to both Transport Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council for their consideration. The final report had now been published via the Nestrans website. An executive summary of the report was included as Appendix 1.

The report reminded members that, in December 2013, NESTRANS had commissioned a robust evidence case for a preferred option for access to Laurencekirk. The principal outcomes of the study were that there would be benefit in upgrading the A90/A937 south junction at Laurencekirk to improve network efficiency, safety and to help enable economic development. The study also found that a northern grade separated junction would be required if the full Development Plan build out was completed at the north of Laurencekirk, although this would most appropriately be funded from developer contributions related to the site.

Since publication of the final report, early discussions had been undertaken with Transport Scotland and Angus Council on the core issues associated with the delivery of the new junction and in particular the processes now required and the potential funding options to enable the project to be delivery. The report highlighted that further discussions would be held over the next few months and key issues and decisions brought back to members through appropriate committees.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) endorse the principal findings of NESTRANS' Access to Laurencekirk Study,
- (2) approve the scoping work by Aberdeenshire Council officers on options which could mitigate any resultant impacts on Laurencekirk High Street, and
- (3) instruct officers of Aberdeenshire Council to continue to work with officers at Angus Council and Transport Scotland on the key design and delivery issues associated with the A90/A037 Laurencekirk junction.

ROADS AND LANDSCAPE SERVICES

8. MAPPING FLOOD DISADVANTAGE IN SCOTLAND 2015 WORKSHOP – MEMBER ATTENDANCE

On a circulated report dated 28 July, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, the Committee **agreed** to delegate to the Director of Infrastructure Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Infrastructure Services Committee and Group Spokespersons, the attendance of a member of the Committee at the Scottish Government's Mapping Flood Disadvantage in Scotland Workshop to be held in Dundee on 31 August, 2015.

9. FORMATION OF THE NORTHERN ROADS COLLABORATION FORUM

There was circulated a report dated 20 July, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the formation of the Northern Roads Collaboration Forum.

The report explained as background that Aberdeenshire Council, along with other Roads Authorities, had for many years sought and introduced a range of local and national collaborative and shared service capacity initiatives to recognise the value of working with others to improve resilience and to reduce costs. Although collaboration existed, particularly amongst neighbouring councils, local authorities were in some cases struggling to overcome barriers to fully benefit from increased collaborative activity, due in the main to the perceived complexities of EU procurement law.

The Northern Area Governance First Group comprised service managers and heads of service responsible for road services in their constituent authorities. They had been meeting for the previous six months to explore options to share or collaborate in the areas of the road service where optimum benefits could be anticipated. From its initial options appraisal the Northern Area Governance First Group had concluded that at some stage a joint committee was likely

to be the most appropriate and beneficial option for this geographic area. However, in order to give elected members the opportunity to form new partnership relationships to work with officers to undertake more detailed consideration of the initial set of collaborative activities officers recommended that as a first stage, a Northern Roads Collaboration Forum be established. It was recommended that this should comprise of up to two Elected Members from each participating authority and to meet quarterly for up to one year. The Forum would establish an appropriate formal governance structure to allow the sharing of a range of services to begin properly.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the development of the North Area Governance First Group, and the methodical approach undertaken to develop the case for creating a new governance body to oversee the development of collaborative activity within the Road Service,
- (2) participate in the formation of the Northern Roads Collaboration Forum to further develop appropriate collaborative governance arrangements,
- (3) delegate authority to the Head of Roads and Landscape to become involved in making arrangements for the formation of the new forum on behalf of the Council, as detailed within the report, and for the Head of Roads and Landscape to agree member representation of the forum, following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Group Spokespersons of the Infrastructure Services Committee.

10. CONSULTATION ON SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION (SCOTLAND) CHARGING SCHEME 2016

There was circulated a report dated 22 July, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the consultation on the Scottish Environment Protection Agency Proposed Environmental Regulation (Scotland) Charging Scheme 2016.

The report explained that the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's new Environmental Regulation (Scotland) Charging Scheme was proposed to come into effect on 1 April, 2016 and the proposals would replace five of the current existing schemes with a single, fairer system which prioritised efforts on activities that had the potential to cause most harm and where poor practice was more likely. The report outlined the proposed responses to the consultation questions.

The Committee **agreed** to approve the proposed Council response to the consultation on the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's Revised Charging Scheme.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

11. NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND FOOD AND DRINK STRATEGY 2015 TO 2020

There was circulated a report dated 15 July, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the North East of Scotland Food and Drink Strategy 2015 to 2020.

The report explained that the Strategy had been developed on behalf of Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF) and the Grampian Food Forum. Extensive consultation with the food and drink industry had been carried out over the last nine months. The Strategy was in line with the National Food and Drink Industry Strategy and representatives from Scotland Food and Drink and Scottish Enterprise had been involved throughout its development. The ACSEF Board had considered the strategy at their meeting on 26 June, 2015 and had agreed to endorse it. A final draft of the strategy was included as an appendix to the report.

The Committee **agreed** to endorse the final draft of the North East of Scotland Food and Drink Strategy 2015 to 2020.

12. ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRATEGIC AND ORGANISATIONAL TOURISM REVIEW

With reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Committee of 26 June, 2015 (Item 10), there was circulated a report dated 24 July, 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic and Organisational Tourism Review.

The report reminded members that at the meeting of the Committee on 25 June, 2015 it had been agreed to authorise officers to engage in detailed discussions on the potential scope of the proposed new organisation to provide tourism marketing and related activities for Aberdeen City and Shire; Council resourcing; and Council representation on the board of the new organisation. The Committee had approved that officers could begin detailed discussion on the options to develop one body to provide these tourism marketing and related activities for Aberdeen City and Shire.

The report explained that the review had been led by the Aberdeen City and Shire Area Tourism Partnership (ATP), which was supported directly by Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Futures (ACSEF) and was chaired by Claire Bruce of Glen Tanar Estate and a Board member of ACSEF. The ATP tendered for an expert destination tourism consultancy to carry out the review and appointed destination consultants Blue Sail to advise on sustainable support structures for tourism based on a review of the opportunities for the area.

Thereafter, Blue Sail had considered the organisational options for the delivery of tourism support and marketing across Aberdeen City and Shire. An appendix to the report provided an outline of the options considered. In order for members of the Infrastructure Services Committee to fully understand the background to the review, its findings and the work being developed, it was recommended that a short life working group be set up. This group would be a member officer working group and would meet approximately twice in advance of the final report being presented to Aberdeenshire Council later this year. The working group would consider the strategic detail of the review and the work on the merging destination management organisation.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) note the options outlined in the appendix to the report that were considered for the delivery of tourism marketing as part of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic and Organisational Review of Tourism, and
- (2) approve the establishment of a short life working group, comprising substantive and substitute members of the Infrastructure Services Committee and the two Council Co-Leaders, on the Tourism Review.

BUSINESS SERVICES

13. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

There was circulated a report dated 17 July, 2015 by the Director of Business Services which requested that the Committee consider the nomination of members to various outside bodies and partnerships as detailed in an appendix to the report.

The Committee **agreed** to make a recommendation to Council that the matter be decided by the Council at their next ordinary meeting.

14. APPOINTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS AND INTER-AUTHORITY WORKING GROUPS

There was circulated a report dated 16 July, 2015, by the Director of Business Services which requested that the Committee consider the existing sub-committees and working groups which reported directly to that Committee and then provide nominations for the appointments to those that were to continue.

Councillor S W Smith, seconded by Councillor Cox, **moved** that a recommendation be made to Council that the matter be decided by the Council at their next ordinary meeting.

As an amendment, Councillor Argyle, seconded by Councillor Nelson, **moved** that the matter be deferred and brought back to the next meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee for decisions to be made.

The members of the Committee then voted:-

for the motion	(7)	Councillors Aitchison, Buchan, Cox, McRae, Partridge, S W Smith and Stuart.
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for the amendment	(7)	Councillors Argyle, Gardiner, Latham, McKail, Mollison, Nelson and Roy.
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There being an equality of votes the Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of the **motion which was carried** and it was therefore **agreed** to make a recommendation to Council that the matter be decided at their next ordinary meeting.

15. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

There had been circulated a report dated 10 August, 2015 by the Chief Internal Auditor which advised the Committee of the results of completed audits and of progress made by Infrastructure Services with implementing agreed recommendations.

After due consideration, the Committee **agreed** to note the issues raised within the report and the appendix to the report.

16. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

There had been circulated a report dated 10 August, 2015, by the Chief Internal Auditor which advised the Committee of progress made by Infrastructure Services with implementing agreed recommendations from completed audits.

After due consideration, the Committee **agreed** to note the issues raised within the report and the appendix to the report.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

17. UPDATE ON PROGRESS TOWARDS A JOINT SOLUTION FOR RESIDUAL WASTE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 14 May, 2015, (Item 19, Page 2075), there was circulated a report dated 23 July, 2015 which provided an update on progress towards a joint solution for residual waste treatment.

The report updated the Committee on the progress towards the joint solution for residual waste treatment, working in partnership with the Moray and Aberdeen City Councils. The report reminded members that the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012 required a challenging

reduction in the types and volume of waste that could be landfilled. The Council was required to find a different way of dealing with residual waste and to implement this by December 2020 at the latest. The report further explained that the Joint Member Waste Working Group, comprising representatives from all three authorities, including councillors from Aberdeenshire, met in June 2015 and were provided with an update on progress and the efforts were now focused on the development of an Inter Authority Agreement.

The Committee **agreed** to note the detail outlined within the report and the proposed process and timescale for the adoption of the Inter Authority Agreement in respect of the Joint Solution for Residual Waste Treatment.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

- (a) Draft Minute of the North East of Scotland Agricultural Advisory Group (NESAAG) meeting of 3 June, 2015 (Appendix A).
- (b) Draft Minute of Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) meeting of 25 June, 2015 (Appendix B).

APPENDIX A**NORTH EAST SCOTLAND AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY GROUP****COMMITTEE ROOM 5, WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN****WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE, 2015**

- Present:** **Aberdeenshire Council** – Councillors C Buchan, A Norrie, L Pirie and D Stewart
Aberdeen City Council – Councillor J Corall
Angus Council – Councillors L Devine and B Myles
Brodies for Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce – Mr C Phillips
Forestry Commission Scotland – Mr J Nott
James Hutton Institute / University of Aberdeen – Dr L-A Sutherland
Press and Journal – Gemma Mackenzie
RPID – Ms J Kinnaird
RSPB – Mr H Maggs
SAC Consulting - Mr A Laing
Scottish Enterprise – Ms G Ford
Two Mennie Cooks – Mr P Cook (NESAAG Vice Chair)
- Attending:** Mr Roderic Bruce, Quality Pork Ltd; Ms Chantal Fenton, Angus Council; and Ms Elspeth Macdonald, Food Standards Scotland.
- Apologies:** Councillor W Howatson, NESAAG Chair; Councillors A Duncan and K Farquhar, Aberdeenshire Council; Councillor G Alexander, Moray Council; Kyrsten Black, SRUC; Jim Dewar, Forestry Commission; Brian Pack, OBE; Kevin Patrick, LANTRA; David Smart, RICS Representative; Strutt and Parker; and Philip Smith, Visit Scotland.
- Officers:** Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime); James Davidson, Project Officer - Land Use Strategy Pilot; and Victoria McCaskill, Committee Officer.

CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Howatson, the Vice Chair, Peter Cook, chaired the meeting.

1. NOTE OF MEETING OF 28 JANUARY 2015

The Note of Meeting of 28 January, 2015, was circulated and **approved** as a correct record.

2. PRESENTATION - THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCOTTISH QUALITY PORK LTD

The Chair welcomed Roderic Bruce, Chairman of Quality Pork Ltd, to the meeting. Mr Bruce gave a presentation to the Group on the development of Scottish Quality Pork Ltd. The presentation covered:

- background information on the Scottish pig industry;
- the reasons behind the concentration of the Scottish pig industry in North East Scotland;
- how manure and slurry was being used;
- the options available in light of the Broxburn closure;
- background information of the Board, funding and operations at Quality Pork Ltd;
- details of who was responsible for slaughter, cutting and packing;
- an update on construction work at the Brechin abattoir site;

- the schedule for the work running up to the plant becoming fully operational; and
- plans for the future.

During discussion, members asked questions on the working relationship with Tulip; information provision for local residents in Brechin; and where butchering would take place.

Thereafter, the Group **agreed**:-

- (1) to note the information provided in the presentation, and
- (2) to request that a presentation, to provide further information on developments at the Brechin site, be facilitated for the local community in Brechin.

The Chair thanked Mr Bruce for his informative presentation.

3. PRESENTATION - FOOD STANDARDS SCOTLAND: TRANSITION TO THE FUTURE

The Chair welcomed Elspeth Macdonald, Deputy Chief Executive of Food Standards Scotland, to the meeting. Ms Macdonald gave a presentation to the Group on Food Standards Scotland's transition to the future. The presentation covered:

- background information on the Food Standards Agency and, now, Food Standards Scotland;
- details on the new organisation, including information on the Chair, the Board; and the structure of the organisation;
- the broad objectives for Foods Standards Scotland;
- the values and way for working for Foods Standards Scotland;
- the vision, strategy and future focus for the organisation;
- opportunities going forward;
- contributing to the Scottish Government's priorities;
- working together to deliver better outcomes for consumers and businesses; and
- next steps and priorities for the organisation.

During discussion, members asked questions on the future for genetically modified food; how the organisation can work to promote healthy eating; and enforcement powers.

Thereafter, the Group **agreed** to note the information provided within the presentation.

The Chair thanked Ms Macdonald for her interesting presentation.

4. UPDATE ON COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Jenni Kinnaird, Principal Agricultural Officer for RPID at Thainstone provided the Group with a brief oral update on the processing of payments under Pillars one and two of the Common Agricultural Policy. A new IT system had been launched for rural payments and services. Everyone who had previously been registered was required to register again. The process was almost complete but there had been a number of issues with the system which required ongoing improvements. It was advised that some Pillar two schemes were not available for online applications.

After consideration, the Group **agreed** to note the information provided in the update.

5. BULLETIN REPORT – LAND-BASED STUDY FOR NORTH EAST SCOTLAND

There was circulated a bulletin report dated 25 May 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which advised that the contract for the new study of the land-based sector in North East Scotland had been awarded. The new study was to cover Aberdeenshire, Moray and

Angus. A key part of the study would be to assess the implications of subsidy change and to examine how the sector could become more efficient, market-orientated and embrace change.

Following an Invitation to Quote through the Public Contracts Scotland system, two bids were received. The bid led by Two Mennie Cooks Ltd was accepted. Outputs from the study will include a detailed current assessment of the wider land-based industry; the medium term future (five years); the longer term future; and a list of recommendations for industry, support agencies and local authorities.

It was advised that a meeting would be scheduled for September to present interim findings and that all members of the Group would be welcome to attend.

After consideration, the Group **agreed** to note the information provided within the report.

6. BULLETIN REPORT – PROGRESS UPDATE ON RURAL INTERNSHIP PROJECT

There was circulated a bulletin report dated 25 May 2015, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which provided information on the background to the Rural Internship Project. It was advised that twelve internship places were available in 2015. The programme was due to start on 8 June and ten candidates had been offered places at the time of writing the report. A small number of candidates were scheduled to be interviewed to fill the remaining places.

Aberdeenshire Council funding was limited to 'pump priming' in years one and two of the project. However, following the success of the programme in 2013 and 2014, Ringlink had succeeded in generating sufficient financial support from a number of sources to enable the project to proceed in 2015.

After consideration, the Group **agreed** to note the information provided within the report.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Derek McDonald noted that Bruce Mackie had spoken at the last meeting of the Group on the subject of the dairy sector. Specific questions had been raised about the Council's procurement of dairy products. Mr McDonald advised that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils' joint procurement service had a proven track record in sourcing local produce for local schools and care homes and operated the Positive Procurement Programme to encourage and support local companies interested in becoming public sector suppliers and help them through the procurement process.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Group was due to take place on Wednesday 18 November, 2015, at 10:00am. However, concerns were raised that this date would clash with an AgriScot meeting. The Group **agreed** that officers would investigate this clash of dates and look at the possibility of rescheduling the next meeting of the Group if required.

APPENDIX B**STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY****WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN****THURSDAY 25 JUNE, 2015**

Present:- Councillors P J Argyle, Chairperson, R Milne, Vice-Chairperson, D R Aitchison, J B Cox, R Grant, S W Pratt (Substituting for Cllr B A Topping), E A Robertson (Substituting for Cllr P W Bellarby) and N J Smith.

Apologies: Councillors P W Bellarby, J Corall, A Finlayson, R Thomson, B A Topping and I Yuill.

Officers:- **Strategic Development Planning Authority:** Strategic Development Plan Manager
Aberdeen City Council: Planning and Environment Policy Manager
Aberdeenshire Council: Head of Planning and Building Standards, Senior Sustainability, Information and Research Officers (M Greig and S Shaw), Accountant (R Taylor) and Committee Officer (F Brown).

OPENING COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR

- (1) The Chair welcomed Councillor D R Aitchison to his first meeting of the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) following recent changes to Aberdeenshire Council's administration. Councillor Aitchison would replace Councillor Merson as a substantive member to the Authority. The Chair reported that Councillor Merson had been a founding member of the SDPA and the Chair on behalf of the Authority extended his gratitude to Councillor Merson for his long term commitment and contribution to the work of the SDPA.
- (2) The Chair welcomed Ruth Taylor, Accountant to her first meeting of the SDPA following the recent secondment of Tom Buchan as Facilities Manager within Aberdeenshire Council.

DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

Councillor P J Argyle, R Grant and R Milne declared an interest in Agenda Item 2 by virtue of their membership of the North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (Nestrans) however, as their interests were non pecuniary they intimated that they would take part in the discussion when that item was being considered.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING 24 APRIL, 2015

1. The Authority had before them the minute of the previous meeting of 24 April, 2015.
 - (i) With reference to Item 6(a) the Strategic Development Plan Manager advised the Authority that the application for planning permission in principle for residential development at Auchattie, Banchory had been presented to Aberdeenshire Council at their meeting of 18 June, 2015 and the Council had agreed to refuse the application.
 - (ii) With reference to Item 6(b) the Strategic Development Plan Manager advised the Authority that the application for Full Planning Permission for the Construction and Operation of a Carbon Capture, Compression and Conditioning Plant at Peterhead

Power Station (a National Development) had been presented to Aberdeenshire Council at their meeting of 18 June, 2015 and the Council had agreed to grant the application.

The Authority resolved:

- (i) To approve the minute as a correct record; and
- (ii) To note the verbal update for Item 6(a) and 6(b) of the minute.

ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE – STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FUND

2. With reference to the Minute of the Meeting of the Strategic Development Planning Authority meeting of 24 April, 2015 (Item 7) there had been submitted a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which provided the authority with an update on the review of the Supplementary Planning Guidance following the approval of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and which requested consideration by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) to adopt the statutory Supplementary Guidance on a Strategic Transport Fund as presented in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager introduced the report and advised the Authority that the SDPA at their last meeting had agreed to make amendments to the guidance in light of consultation responses and the guidance had then been submitted to Scottish Ministers for the statutory 28 day consultation period for them to decide whether to issue a Direction regarding the adoption of the guidance.

It was reported that the Scottish Government had responded to the Strategic Development Plan Manager on 2 June, 2015 as presented as Appendix 1 to the report and that response had indicated that Scottish Ministers had given notice that the Strategic Transport Fund Supplementary Guidance may not be adopted until the following modification was made:-

6.1 A planning obligation or other legal agreement will normally be used to secure contributions, although in appropriate cases up-front contributions will also be acceptable. In such cases, the receipt will set out the circumstances under which it will be used. ***The use of any planning obligation shall follow the guidance in Circular 3/2012: Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements.*** These will be paid into a dedicated strategic transport fund.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager advised the Authority that the additional sentence would not present an obstacle to adoption and that sentence had been incorporated within the text of the supplementary guidance as presented in Appendix 2 to the report.

The next stage would be to present the proposed supplementary guidance for ratification by Aberdeenshire Council on 20 August, 2015 and Aberdeen City on 27 August, 2015 with a view to the supplementary guidance then coming into force on 28 August, 2015.

The report recommended that the Authority:-

- (a) Adopt the Supplementary Guidance: Strategic Transport Fund as statutory supplementary guidance to the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2014;

- (b) Refer the report to the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee of Aberdeen City Council and the Infrastructure Services Committee of Aberdeenshire Council for ratification;
- (c) Agree that, subject to ratification by both councils, the statutory guidance would come into effect on 28 August 2015; and
- (d) Agree that the current non-statutory supplementary planning guidance would cease to be used with effect from 28 August, 2015.

The Authority resolved:

To agree the recommendations as set out in the report and to thank the Strategic Development Plan Manager and his team for the innovative policy.

HOUSING LAND AUDIT 2015

- 3. The Authority had before them a report which reported the results of the 2015 Housing Land Audit as presented in Appendix 1 to the report and the implications for the housing land supply position.

The report advised that the supply in each of the housing market areas was above the 5 year housing requirement of the Strategic Development Plan and as such no action was required beyond the continued implementation of the Strategic Development Plan and the two Local Development Plans. The 5 Year Effective Housing Land Supply identified in the 2015 audit is 12,091 units in the AHMA and 3,686 units in the RHMA. That equates to a housing land supply of 7.7 years and 5.5 years respectively when measured against the Strategic Development Plan requirement.

The report recommended that the Authority:-

Note the contents of the 2015 Housing Land Audit.

The Authority resolved:-

To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

TAYPLAN PROPOSED STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4. The Authority had before them a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which sought consideration of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) to agree a response to the TAYplan Proposed Strategic Development Plan which covered Dundee, Angus, Perth, Kinross and North Fife.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager introduced the report and advised the Authority that the consultation period for the proposed plan would end on 3 July, 2015 and there were five issues which were worthy of addressing as the response from the SDPA which would build on their previous response to the Main Issues report which was submitted in June, 2014, namely:-

- Increased Housing Flexibility;
- New Stations;
- Road and Rail Improvements;
- Carbon Capture and Storage; and
- Laurencekirk

The report recommended that the Authority:-

Agree the report as the Authority's response to the TAYplan Proposed Strategic Development Plan.

The Authority resolved:-

To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15

5. The Authority had before them a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which sought consideration by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority (SDPA) to agree the Planning Performance Report for 2014/15 and its publication on the SDPA website and onward submissions to the Scottish Government by the submission deadline of 31 July, 2015.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager introduced the report and advised the Authority that the Planning Performance Report for 2014/15 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report followed the same format as the previous year which was largely prescribed by Head of Planning Scotland and the Scottish Government to ensure consistency.

It was reported that the National Headline Indicators which were relevant to the SDPA were presented on Page 12/13 of the report and all targets were being met.

The report recommended that the Authority:-

Approve the Planning Performance Framework 2014/15 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report as well as its publication and submission to the Scottish Government.

The Authority resolved:-

To agree the recommendation as set out in the report.

SDPA BUDGET MONITORING POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH, 2015

6. The Authority had before them a report by the Treasurer to the SDPA which provided the Authority with the budget monitoring position for 2014/15 as at 31 March, 2015 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report.

The report informed the Authority that the costs of the Authority were broadly in line with the budget but with a detailed underspend being attributed to staff costs following the unsuccessful recruitment for the post of Senior Planner which it was reported had been vacant for the whole financial year. The report advised that as at 31 March, 2014 Aberdeen City Council had contributed £69,000 and Aberdeenshire Council had contributed £52,000 and the resulting surplus of net expenditure was £21,000 which would be split with £19,000 being returned to Aberdeen City and £2,000 to Aberdeenshire Council so that both Authorities will have paid an equal amount.

The report recommended that the Authority:-

- (i) Note the budget monitoring position as at 31 March, 2015; and
- (ii) Approve the return of surplus income at year end to Aberdeen City Council of £19,000 and to Aberdeenshire Council of £2,000.

The Authority resolved:-

To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2014/15

7. The Authority had before them a report by the Treasurer which sought consideration by the Authority of the Unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Accountant introduced the report and drew the Authority's attention to the Movement in Reserves Statement which showed there had been no movement in the reserves of £104,000; the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Balance Sheet which detailed the SDPA unaudited financial position as at 31 March, 2015.

It was report that there would be a change to the report and the Appendix before final submission to the external auditor to reflect recent staff changes within Aberdeenshire Council. Alex Stephen was Head of Finance and as such was now Treasurer to the SDPA following a recent appointment of Alan Wood to the post of Director of Business Services.

The report recommended that the Authority:-

- (i) note the Unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 and approve their issue to the Authority's external auditor and the Controller of Audit; and
- (ii) agree the return of £19,000 to Aberdeen City Council and £2,000 to Aberdeenshire Council, to redistribute the net underspend of £21,000.

The Authority resolved:-

To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

SDPA BULLETIN – JUNE 2015

8. The Authority had before them an information bulletin prepared by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which informed members on key issues relating to the work of the Authority where no decisions were currently required and verbal updates on each item were provided since publication where required

Details contained within the bulletin included:-

- (1) Planning Reform announced by the Cabinet Secretary

It was reported that there were no further details of the process or remit of the review for Planning Reform which would focus on development planning and housing delivery, however, a report would be presented to a future SDPA meeting when there was more clarity on national discussions to ensure the authority was actively engaged in that process.

During discussion the Authority requested that a letter should be drafted and sent to the Cabinet Secretary which would highlight that the SDPA as well as both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were already focusing on development planning and housing delivery and doing it very well.

(2) Local Development Plans Update

It was reported that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were both working towards the submission of their Local Development Plans for examination later on in the year.

During discussion the Authority welcomed the progress made by each Council in the preparation for their replacement plans and it was acknowledged that this was a huge testament to the ongoing work of all of the officers involved.

(3) SDPA Membership (Aberdeenshire Council)

It was reported that Aberdeenshire Council had agreed to change their nominations to the SDPA following a change of administration on 8 June, 2015. While it was reported that there was no change, Aberdeenshire Council had resolved to change the membership at their meeting of 18 June, 2015, namely:-

Substantive Members

Councillor D R Aitchison
Councillor P J Argyle
Councillor P W Bellarby
Councillor J B Cox
Councillor N Smith
Councillor B A Topping

Substitute Members

Councillor J N Gifford
Councillor I W Gray
Councillor G Owen
Councillor S W Pratt
Councillor E A Robertson
Councillor S W Smith

(4) Planning Applications of Strategic Importance

It was reported that the SDPA consultation response on the planning proposal by NorthConnect for onshore works associated with an electricity interconnector to Norway was presented as Appendix 1 to the Bulletin report and the application would be determined by Aberdeenshire Council in August, 2015.

The Authority resolved:

- (i) To note the content of the bulletin;
- (ii) To write to the Cabinet Secretary to highlight the excellent work being done already within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for development planning and housing delivery; and
- (iii) To note the changes to the SDPA membership.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9. The Authority noted that the next formal meeting of the SDPA would be held on Wednesday 23 September, 2015 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town House, Broad Street, Aberdeen.