

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL MEETING, 10 MARCH, 2022

Present: Councillors P Argyle (Chair), J Cox (Vice Chair), W Agnew, D Aitchison, G Carr, M Ewenson (substitute for Councillor J Latham), A Fakley, J Ingram, A Kloppert (substitute for Councillor G Reid), P Johnston, D Keating, I Mollison, S Smith, and I Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors J Latham and G Reid.

Officers: Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services; Head of Service (Planning & Economy); Head of Service (Roads & Infrastructure); Chief Inspector, Local Area Commander for South Aberdeenshire (Police Scotland); Road Casualty Reduction Strategy Co-ordinator (Environment & Sustainability); Team Manager, Planning Service Manager, Planning & Economy (David MacLennan); Planning Service Manager, Planning & Economy (Mairi Stewart); Planning & Economy (Darren Ross); Service Manager, Environmental Health & Trading Standards; Regeneration & Town Centres Manager (Planning & Economy); Policy Manager (Roads & Infrastructure); Strategy Manager (Environment & Sustainability), Waste Manager (Environment & Sustainability); Principal Officer, Environment & Sustainability (Neil Stewart); Principal Officer, Environment & Sustainability (Marion MacKay); Engagement & Consultation Officer, Customer & Digital Services, Business Partner, Finance (Moir Beverley), Principal Solicitor, Democratic Services (Arlene Gibbs), Principal Committee Services Officer and Senior Committee Officer, (Frances Brown).

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked Members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the following interest was intimated:

Councillor Ewenson declared an interest in Item 13, by virtue of being a representative on a body, which owns premises within the defined area and would have a vote in the ballot. As such, Councillor Ewenson confirmed she would leave the meeting and take no part in that item.

2A. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

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.

2B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

Item No	Paragraph No of Schedule 7A
23	8

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF 20 JANUARY, 2022

The Committee had before it, and **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of Infrastructure Services Committee of 20 January, 2022.

4. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

There was circulated a list of outstanding actions from previous meetings of the Infrastructure Services Committee, which had been deferred to future meetings of the Committee, as of 10 March, 2022.

The Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services introduced the report and provided the Committee with an update on each of the seven outstanding actions and confirmed:

- Items 1, 2, 3 were on the agenda and if agreed could be removed from the list.
- Item 4 – A briefing session had been arranged and undertaken, with key information having been circulated to members. It was reported that that item was now complete and could be removed from the list.
- Item 5 - A letter had been sent to the Cabinet Secretary. It was reported that that item was now complete and could be removed from the list.
- Item 6 – There were no new changes to partnerships planned, however, if there were, it would be reported back to Committee. It was reported that that item was now complete and could be removed from the list.
- Item 7 - Officers were continuing to engage with Crown Estate Scotland to ensure ongoing support for Aberdeenshire Coastal Communities and Economic Sectors. A report would be presented to Committee in October 2022 and that item would remain on the list.

The Committee **agreed** to **note** the current position in respect of actions arising at previous meetings.

5. CURRENT APPROACH TO SPEED ENFORCEMENT - POLICE SCOTLAND

The Chair welcomed Jackie Knight, Chief Inspector and Local Area Commander for South Aberdeenshire, who was in attendance to provide the Committee with an overview of the current approach to the enforcement of speed limits by Police Scotland within Aberdeenshire.

The presentation included the legal basis for speed enforcement; the need to enforce speed limits; who enforces speed limits; how the police undertake speed enforcement; where and when the police enforce speed limits, and responses to community concerns and partnership working.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Chief Inspector for attending the meeting, and for providing an extremely informative presentation.

The Committee **requested** that the powerpoint slides from the presentation should be circulated to the Committee after the meeting.

6. ROAD SAFETY IN NORTH EAST SCOTLAND – POLICE SCOTLAND

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 19 August 2021 (Item 9), where the Committee considered a Member Promoted Issue on speeding on the Fintray Road, Blackburn, there was circulated a report, dated 24 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which advised the Committee of the Strategic approach to road safety and delivery performance across the North East of Scotland, which detailed the collaborative approach taken to reducing the level of road casualties across the network, including the role of speed enforcement as detailed in the presentation by Police Scotland.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to **note** the report, which informed the Committee of road safety delivery and performance across the North East of Scotland;
- (2) to **acknowledge** the role that speed enforcement, as per the presentation by Police Scotland, plays in the reduction of road casualty levels in the North East of Scotland; and
- (3) to **support** the continued collaborative approach taken by Aberdeenshire Council when developing and delivering Strategy and Policy relating to Road Safety.

7. FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ERECTION OF DWELLINGHOUSE AND GARAGE AT SITE ADJACENT TO SCHOOLHOUSE, LONMAY, FRASERBURGH – REFERENCE: APP/2021/1766

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Buchan Area Committee of 1 February 2022, (Item 4a), there had been circulated a report dated 4 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services which sought consideration

of an application for Full Planning Permission for the Erection of a Dwellinghouse and Garage at a Site Adjacent to the Schoolhouse, Lonmay, Fraserburgh – Reference: APP/2021/1766.

The reported explained that the application had been considered by the Buchan Area Committee, who had agreed that the application should be referred to the Infrastructure Services Committee for final determination, with the recommendation that the proposal should be approved, against Officer's recommendations on the grounds that the Buchan Area Committee considered that there was an existing cluster of five properties within the vicinity of the site to which the development could be added, and that it would not impact upon the historic designation of the listed buildings in the surrounding area or designed landscape.

Following discussion, Councillor Ingram seconded by Councillor Fakley moved to endorse the recommendation from the Buchan Area Committee to GRANT the application on the grounds that the Committee felt that there was an existing cluster of five properties (the houses to the left and right of the application site), and the proposal would not impact upon the historic designation of the listed buildings in the surrounding area or designed landscape.

As an amendment, Councillor Argyle, seconded by Councillor Smith moved to support the Officer's recommendation, as contained in Section 6.1 to the report, to REFUSE the application for the following reasons:

01. The proposal is not in accordance with the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017. The proposal involves the development of a Greenfield site that would not be well related to, or contribute to, an existing cluster or group of five or more dwellinghouses within the Rural Housing Market Area. It would not comply with any of the relevant criteria of Policy R2 Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside, meaning that the principle of development for the proposal cannot be established, and it conflicts with the Local Development Plan.
02. The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the setting and character of the Listed Buildings within the surrounding area, due to the erosion of the open character of the landscape, as well as the proliferation of development along the public road towards School House. There are no imperative reasons of overriding public interest that would otherwise offset this impact. The proposal is contrary to Policies HE1 Protecting historic buildings, sites, and monuments and Policy E2 Landscape of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017. The application is also in conflict with Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (2019) and Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting.

Members of the Committee then voted:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----|---|
| for the motion | (7) | Councillors Agnew, Cox, Carr, Ewenson, Fakley, Ingram and Keating. |
| for the amendment | (7) | Councillors Aitchison, Argyle, Johnston, Kloppert, Mollison, Smith, and Taylor. |

There being an equality of votes, the Chair used his casting vote to support the amendment and the Committee **agreed** to **REFUSE** Full Planning Permission as detailed in the amendment.

8. MEMBER PROMOTED ISSUE – MORE TREES IN ABERDEENSHIRE

There was circulated a report, dated 31 January 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services which responded to a Member Promoted Issue (MPI) raised by Councillor Ford, regarding action to support increasing tree cover in Aberdeenshire. The report considered the impact of storm Arwen and further storm events in Aberdeenshire whose impacts were still to be collated and looked at increased incidences of tree disease on the current levels of tree cover, detailing opportunities for increasing tree cover in Aberdeenshire in line with national targets.

Councillor Ford addressed the Committee, and spoke to his Member Promoted Issue, thanking Officers for producing an interesting, well researched and comprehensive report which had considered the issues he had raised. Councillor Ford noted that following the storms he had seen over 100 trees which had come down near to his house and he was pleased to see restocking would eventually result in previous levels being achieved throughout Aberdeenshire.

Councillor Ford commented on the options for increasing tree coverage, as detailed in paragraphs 3.27 to 3.38 of the report. Councillor Ford referred specifically to paragraph 3.36 which had discussed the Council's responsibility in relation to trees on road verges and urban street planting. Councillor Ford sought assurances that future reports being presented to Committee would be explicit in terms of a revised position on urban street trees and tree planting on broad road verges owned by the Council.

During discussion, the Committee welcomed the report and commented:

- (i) Any future reports should look at risk, to include caution when considering tree planting on verges.
- (ii) All mature trees should be managed appropriately.
- (iii) Future tree planting should consider having the right tree, in the right place, and the public should be kept well informed on the progress in reinstating tree coverage throughout Aberdeenshire.
- (iv) Officers should consider options available for council funded grant schemes for community groups if funding could be identified.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) that they had **considered** and **commented** on the Member Promoted Issue as attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to **note** the proposals for restocking and woodland management following recent storm events; the scope of the Greenspace Project and the ongoing initiatives to encourage and support tree planting;

- (3) to **request** that a report should be taken to a future meeting of Infrastructure Services Committee to provide a full update on storm damage and replanting following more recent storm events and progress on other measures identified within this report to increase tree coverage in Aberdeenshire. That report should:
- a. be explicit when considering the Council's position on urban street trees and the attitude to tree planting on broad road verges.
 - b. ensure extra planting would see the right tree, in the right place, with the public being kept well informed.
 - c. ensure all mature trees were managed to identify risk.
 - d. consider options for Council funded grant schemes for Community Groups if funding could be identified.

9. ABERDEENSHIRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME 2022

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 13 May 2021 (Item 7) where the Committee had approved the Development Plan Scheme 2022, there was circulated a report dated 8 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services which addressed the procedural steps required for the approval of the Development Plan Scheme 2022 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report and which commits to actions required to engage on a second Development Plan Scheme later in the year.

The report explained that Aberdeenshire Council are required to prepare and submit to Scottish Ministers at least annually, a Development Plan Scheme. Due to unforeseen delays in the publication of Regulations by Scottish Ministers governing the next generation of the Local Development Plan, that had resulted in uncertainty for the Development Plan Scheme to be delivered in 2022 and Appendix 1 to the report, addressed the procedural steps required for the approval of the Local Development Plan 2022, and committed to actions to engage on a second Development Plan Scheme later in the year. This second Development Plan Scheme would present the timetable and participation statement for the Local Development Plan that the Service anticipate would be adopted in 2027.

It was reported that the draft Development Plan Scheme, had been amended by comments from Area Committees who were generally supportive of the scheme, and that was now presented for consideration and approval by the Infrastructure Services Committee.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to **approve** the draft Development Plan Scheme 2022, which is set out in Appendix 1 to the Report.
- (2) to **note** that all Area Committees were generally supportive of the ADP Scheme.

- (3) to **acknowledge** that the dates contained within Appendix 1 would require further amendment prior to publication.
- (4) to **note** that additional narrative would be put into the Appendix on P.94, to inform the public at what stage the extant plan was at and what was being done for the new plan for 2027. That would be updated again in the Autumn when the ADP would be updated.

10. URBAN GULLS STRATEGY

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 20 January 2022, (Item 5), which presented a review of the work being undertaken by the Council's Protective Services team, in response to community concerns regarding urban gulls, there was circulated a report, dated 4 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which provided an update on the progress of an Aberdeenshire Urban Gulls Strategy in the form of an Action Plan that detailed how the Council would actively respond to community concerns relating to the impact of Urban Gull concentrations in Aberdeenshire communities.

During discussion, the Committee welcomed the report but queried how to discourage people feeding gulls or throwing away scraps of food. The Committee were advised that communication within communities was key based on the four E's (Engage, Explain, Encourage and as a last resort Enforce).

Officers confirmed that Urban Gull complaints should be directed to the Protective Services Team in the first instance and a contact telephone number and email address would be established, followed by Corporate Communications to get that number circulated within communities.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to **approve** the implementation of the Action Plan as presented as Appendix 1 to the Report subject to budget being identified; and
- (2) to **request** that annual updates on progress of the Action Plan be reported to Committee.

11. ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL NESBREC – INCREASE OF EXISTING CHARGES

There was circulated a report, dated 25 January 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which sought agreement on the proposal to increase charges by 10% (including the annual inflationary uplift) for providing biological data to commercial users of the North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC), in accordance with the Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2020-2022 and NESBReC Strategy 2020-2023.

It was reported that NESBReC were looking to increase the income which they currently receive for providing biological data to commercial users who were predominantly in the development industry (environmental consultants). The concessionary nil charge for providing biological data to non-commercial users,

typically for educational, research and general public use as well as providing information to other conservation bodies, was proposed to remain and background information on NESBReC in relation to that matter was presented as Appendix 1 to the report.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed** to the proposal to increase charges by 10% for providing biological data to commercial users of the North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC).

12. ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL RANGER SERVICE – INTRODUCTION OF CHARGES

There was circulated a report, dated 25 January 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which sought agreement on the proposal to introduce charges for the delivery of exclusive activity sessions which the Ranger Service could provide to commercial organisations.

The report explained that the Ranger Service were looking to increase revenue to the Council by collecting income for the delivery of exclusive activity sessions to commercial organisations based on the on-cost hourly rate of a Countryside Ranger, including direct and indirect costs and overheads and background information on that Service was presented as Appendix 1 to the report.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed** to the proposal to introduce charges for the delivery of exclusive activity sessions which the Ranger Service can provide to commercial organisations starting at a rate of £30 per hour in the financial year 2022/23.

13. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDS)

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 12 March 2020 (Item 12) where the Committee agreed to maintain the policy to support Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) for a five-year period, there was circulated a report dated 10 February 2022 by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services which sought agreement of recommendations to allow 'We are Inverurie' and 'Rediscover Peterhead' BIDS to progress to a ballot of businesses and to grant specific Council support in terms of the operation of those BIDs assuming ballot success.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) that they had **considered** the comments and recommendations made by the Buchan and Garioch Area Committees as contained in Appendix 6 to the report;
- (2) to **agree** that Aberdeenshire Council should **support** the continuation of specific BID's in Inverurie, and Peterhead as outlined in the report;

- (3) to **approve** the implementation of both BID proposals subject to a positive ballot outcome in each case;
- (4) to **note** that Aberdeenshire Council has specific duties in terms of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, including the provision of business occupiers, owners and ratings data, the collection of the BID levy, responsibility for the required ballot, the establishment of a ring-fenced BID Revenue Account and the preparation and commitment to deliver an agreed level of baseline services within each BID area approved;
- (5) to **note** that ballot dates had now been proposed by the Boards for both BIDs;
- (6) to **note** that Civica would be contracted by the Council to carry out the ballot process for both Inverurie and Peterhead BIDs, the costs of which would be covered by Economic Development;
- (7) to **delegate** Authority to the Head of Planning and Economy (in consultation with the Head of Property and Facilities Management) to sign off all ballot papers for Council-owned properties that fall within the defined area of each BID;
- (8) to **delegate** Authority to the Head of Finance, to sign off the Baseline Service Agreements and the BID Proposals on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council for each BID;
- (9) to **delegate** authority to the Head of Finance to sign off the respective Operations Agreements after their preparation by Legal and People, subject to a positive ballot outcome in each case;
- (10) to **note** that subject to a positive ballot outcome, the BID levy contributions for Council-owned premises within the defined Inverurie BID area total £6,760.00 per annum, as outlined at Section 3.5 of the report; and that the levy contributions for the Peterhead BID area had still to be determined; and
- (11) to **note** that a report would be submitted to the Business Services Committee, to authorise Officers to collect the levies on behalf of both BID companies.

14. CONSULTATION RESPONSE – PAVEMENT PARKING REGULATIONS

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 1 June 2017 (Item 12), where the Committee agreed a response to the Scottish Government's initial consultation on Improving Parking in Scotland, there was circulated a report, dated 24 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which advised the Committee that the Scottish Government were now consulting on the development of proposed regulations and directions relating to new national prohibitions on pavement parking, and specifically, the type of streets and pavements which would have an exemption from the parking prohibition and the procedures which must be followed to allow for such an exemption.

During discussion, the Committee noted that the closing date for submission was 11 March 2022 and having considered the proposed response as presented as Appendix 1 to the report, considered that it was an excellent response, and they had no further comment to make.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) that they had **considered** and **commented** on the proposed response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Pre-Implementation Directions and Regulations for Local Authorities; and
- (2) to **delegate** authority to the Head of Service (Roads & Infrastructure), following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson, to finalise the Council's consultation response, taking into account comments made by the Committee, and to submit that to the Scottish Government.

15. ROADS POLICY REVIEW UPDATE

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 11 March 2021 (Item 14), there was circulated a report, dated 24 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which presented proposals for four policies (Street Naming and Numbering, Signing of Tourist Facilities and Attractions, Enforcement of Roads and Traffic Authority Powers and Electric Vehicle Charging) which the Committee were asked to consider and approve.

The report also provided updates to the Committee on the outcome from Officer reviews of two existing policies (Road Markings and Variable and Vehicle Activated Signs).

The Chair intimated that a request to speak had been received and the Committee **agreed** to hear from Mr Simon Broadley who wished to challenge some of the assumptions on which the draft EV charging policy had been based.

Mr Broadley then addressed the Committee and highlighted several issues, namely inadequate provision for electric vehicles in driveways; a presumption that Stonehaven had sufficient charging points which would be difficult to know at peak times; the EV charging policy excludes two charging solutions; home charging and issues around lamp posts and why Aberdeenshire Council not applied for the on-street residential charging scheme grant, a government scheme which enabled local authorities to install electric car charges into the on-street environment.

The Chair asked Mr Broadley to confirm that he had received a fair hearing. Mr Broadley confirmed that he had received a fair hearing and thanked Committee for allowing his request to speak.

During discussion, the Committee recognised that the policy would need to adapt for electric vehicle charging points over the next five years, as would the infrastructure to accommodate charging points on streets. Technology was advancing and the Council would have to adapt to the delivery of vehicle charging in the future.

When considering Vehicle Activated Signs, the Committee queried whether the Service could look at community funded and maintained variable, and speed activated signs and ask Officers to report back to Committee on a Code of Operation and a plan for implementation which would have no detrimental impact to operational safety or other Council infrastructure.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:**

- (1) to **approve** the draft Street Naming and Numbering Policy statement appended to the report;
- (2) to **approve** the draft Signing of Tourist Facilities and Attractions Policy statement appended to the report;
- (3) to **approve** the draft Enforcement of Roads and Traffic Authority Powers Policy statement appended to this report;
- (4) to **approve** the draft Electric Vehicle Charging Policy statement appended to the report and to investigate the policy position to allow car owners to charge their car on the roadside if the infrastructure and payment would allow that to happen, accepting that it was a rapidly changing sector;
- (5) to **note** the outcome from the review of the Road Markings Policy and to **reapprove** that existing policy; and
- (6) to **note** the outcome from the review of the Variable and Vehicle-Activated Signs Policy and to **reapprove** that existing policy. The Service would also look at the Addendum to the Policy which would consider community funded and maintained variable and speed activate signs and investigate a Code of Operation, and a plan for implementation and report back to Committee.

16. CONSULTATION RESPONSE – NATIONAL LITTER & FLY TIPPING STRATEGY

There was circulated a report, dated 23 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services which sought approval of a consultation response to the Scottish Government in response to the new national Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy for Scotland as presented as Appendix 2 to the report.

It was reported that consultation responses should be submitted by 31 March 2022 and responses would help to shape and deliver the final strategy which was due to be published in late spring/early summer of 2022.

The strategy set out a vision for a future where Scotland's environment was unblighted by litter and fly-tipping and to achieve that vision, some potential actions have been identified for litter and fly-tipping under the key themes of behaviour change, services and infrastructure, and enforcement. The consultation, which had been drafted in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS), Keep Scotland Beautiful and Scottish Environment Agency (SEPA) was seeking views on the aims,

objectives and actions that would sit under the new National Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy for Scotland.

During discussion, the Committee commented:

- (i) There was a black hole in the legislation in terms of marine litter and something would need to be added to the national strategy to address marine litter on beaches.
- (ii) More needed to be done by way of education on litter from takeaways which can end up in fields and which has an impact on livestock grazing.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:**

- (1) that they had **considered** and **commented** on the content of a draft consultation response attached as Appendix 2; and
- (2) to **delegate** authority to the Head of Environment & Sustainability, following consultation with Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson, to finalise the consultation response, taking into account the comments of the Committee, and to submit that response to the Scottish Government.

17. PASSENGER TRANSPORT REVIEW

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 21 January 2021 (Item 15), where the Committee considered an update report on the work of the Passenger Transport Network Review Member/Officer Working Group (MOWG), there was circulated a report dated 23 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which provided a further update on the subsequent work of the Group and progress on the outcome of the 'Clean Sheet Review' of the passenger transport network, involving the pilot Ready2Go Enhance Digital Demand Response Transport (DDRT) service and possible future governance arrangements to oversee the conclusion of the passenger transport review as outlined in the report.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:**

- (1) to **note** the work undertaken by the Passenger Transport Network Review MOWG, since the last update report to Committee;
- (2) that they had **considered** and **commented** on progress on the pilot Ready2Go Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) service; and
- (3) to **agree** in principle to the role and remit of the Passenger Transport Network Review MOWG, to be extended to oversee the conclusion of the passenger transport network review, with further updated Terms of Reference to be reported to the next meeting of Committee.

18. REVIEW OF ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL'S LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

There was circulated a report, dated 23 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which sought Committee approval to begin the process to develop a new Local Transport Strategy (LTS) during 2022, which would retain the core values of Travel Less, Travel Actively and Travel Effectively, and would reflect changes in policy at national and regional levels. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the approach for delivery, which would include the establishment of a Member/Officer Working Group (MOWG), Area Committee engagement and engagement with as wide a section of Aberdeenshire residents as possible.

The report explained that the development of the LTS would be carried out in three phases with the revised LTS being completed by the summer of 2023.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to **approve** the proposal to develop a revised LTS for Aberdeenshire as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to **agree** in principle to the formation of a short life MOWG, to guide the development of the LTS, with a further report to be submitted to the next Committee meeting setting out the Terms of Reference of the MOWG and seeking nominations for membership.

19. NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATIONS

With reference to the Minute of the Infrastructure Services Committee Meeting of 11 March 2021 (Item 9), where the Committee had previously considered the Phase 1 report on the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2), there was circulated a report dated 23 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which sought consideration and comment on two recently published Transport Scotland policy documents which Transport Scotland were consulting on as part of the STPR2, which sets out priorities for investment in transportation at a national level over the next 20 years as presented in Appendix 5 to the report.

The Committee were also asked to consider the report entitled 'Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer, and greener Scotland - A Route Map to achieve a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030' (thereafter referred to as the Route Map) as presented as Appendix 6 to the report, which had not previously been considered by the Committee. As such, the consultation was being presented, to advise the Committee of the proposals by Transport Scotland and COSLA; and to consider and comment on the proposed consultation response as detailed in Appendix 7 to the report.

During discussion, the Committee commented:

- (i) As part of the Local Transport Strategy, the review should mention “predictability” as part of that strategy. Highlighting lower speeds, safer travel, less stress driving to work and the ability to be able to predict arrival at your destination.
- (ii) While the Committee accepted that there were changes to the way people travel, they expressed disappointment as part of the review, that there was a lack of progress on the A90 corridor due to poor infrastructure.
- (iii) To encourage the public to get away from cars and buses, further investment should be made into railway stations with further investment into stations which were not operational.
- (iv) There was a lack of progress for rail going northwards and rail corridor enhancements and investment were required.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:**

- (1) that they had **considered** and **commented** on the content of a consultation response to Transport Scotland as part of the consultation on STPR2, attached as Appendix 5 to the report;
- (2) that they had **considered** and **commented** on the content of a consultation response to Transport Scotland and COSLA as part of the consultation on the 20% Reduction in Car Km Route Map, attached as Appendix 7 to the report;
- (3) To **delegate** authority to the Head of Environment and Sustainability Service, following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson to finalise the consultation responses, taking into account the comments of the Committee, and submit the finalised responses to Transport Scotland and COSLA, respectively.

20. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AS 31 DECEMBER 2021

There was circulated a report, dated 7 February 2022, by the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which provided the Committee with financial performance information to 31 December 2021 for the Infrastructure Services Committee budget and the expected full year outturn to 31 March 2022 for both Revenue and Capital Expenditure and an update with progress on the achievement of agreed savings.

The report explained that the revised Revenue Budget for 2021/22 for the Infrastructure Services Committee was £60.138 million, with a forecast position to the end of the currently financial year being £0.674 over budget, as detailed in Appendix 1a and 1b to the report with the net position being made up of several factors as detailed in Sections 4.2 – 4.13 to the report. The Committee were asked to note that the recharge of COVID related costs (detailed in Section 4.11) to reserves and the potential use of the Winter Maintenance Fund would bring about a balanced budget position.

The report further explained that the approved revised Capital Budget for 2021/22 in respect of the Infrastructure Services Committee was £90.954 million as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, with the Service anticipating an underspend in the Capital budget £22.266 million with major variances as noted in Section 6.2 to the report.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) that they had **considered** and **discussed** the Revenue forecast over budget position of £673,801;
- (1) to **note** the Director approved budget virements as set out in Appendix 2b to the report;
- (2) to **note** the progress with agreed savings as set out in paragraph 5.2 to the report; and
- (3) that they had **considered** and **discussed** the Capital under budget position of £22,266,000 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

21. POLICY REGISTER ANNUAL REPORTING

There was circulated a report, dated 1 February 2022, by the Director of Business Services, which detailed the current position of 31 policies which were delegated to the Infrastructure Services Committee, and which had been reviewed during 2021 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed**:

- (1) to **acknowledge** the policies delegated to Infrastructure Services Committee that have been reviewed during 2021;
- (2) to **agree** the proposed plans for review for those policies that have expired as well as those that are approaching their review date (as detailed in Appendix 1), to be considered at future committees; and
- (3) that they had **not** identified any gaps or review requirements as part of the agreed annual overview of the Council's Policy Framework, as per section 3.5 of the Policy Development and Review Framework in Part 4B of the Scheme of Governance.

22. CONSULTATION RESPONSE: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT HYDROGEN ACTION PLAN

There was circulated a report, dated January 2022, by the Director of Business Services, which detailed Aberdeenshire Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on their Draft Hydrogen Action Plan as presented in Appendix 1 to the report which had been reviewed by the Chair, Vice Chair, and main Opposition Spokesperson prior to submission on 19 January 2022

The report explained that Scottish Government had published the consultation on 10 November 2021 with a closing date of 19 January 2022 and due to the timelines of Infrastructure Services Committee meetings, the consultation response was reviewed by the Chair, Vice-Chair, and main opposition spokesperson under delegated powers, prior to the final submission.

The draft Hydrogen Action Plan sought to support the Policy Statement and articulate the actions that would be taken over the next five years to support the development of a hydrogen economy and to further efforts for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Scotland's energy system while ensuring a just transition.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed to note** the Aberdeenshire Council response to the consultation on the Scottish Government's Draft Hydrogen Action Plan which was submitted following consultation under delegated powers.

23. PROCUREMENT PLAN 2022-2023 – ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

There was circulated a report, dated 23 February 2022, but the Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services, which presented a Procurement Plan for 2022-2023, which all Directors must report to their respective Committees on an annual basis, in compliance with the Council's Scheme of Governance. The report provided Environment & Infrastructure related procurements with a contract value of £50,000 or more which were planned for 2022-2023 as presented in Appendix 1 to the report and Procurement Approval Forms as presented in Appendix 2 to the report.

During discussion, the Committee acknowledged the complicated situation in the world today, which could have an impact on the approved annual procurement plan, with higher prices, fuel challenges and market conditions. The Director confirmed that those conditions could result in less contracts being awarded than planned and he would bring a paper back to Committee which would identify those challenges, highlight the impact that those challenges would have on the approved procurement plan and include any contracts which the service had chosen not to award, with the priority being given to those contracts which the service were certain they could actually deliver.

Having considered the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:**

- (1) to **approve** the items in the Procurement Plan as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) **not** reserve approval of the Procurement Approval Form for any item on the Procurement Plan where the value of the matter is between £50,000 and £1,000,000;
- (3) to **acknowledge** that the Committee would receive the Procurement Approval Form for approval, for any item on the Procurement Plan which was within the Committee's remit and the value of the matter was over £1,000,000;

- (4) to **approve** the Procurement Approval Forms for the item on the Procurement Plan which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report;
- (5) **not** reserve the award of the final contract for any item over £1,000,000 and acknowledge that the relevant Head of Service would have delegated authority to award the final contracts; and
- (6) to **note** that a report would be presented to the Committee, identifying challenges to the annual procurement plan, and which would highlight any contracts within that procurement plan which the service was certain could no longer be delivered.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

- (A) Minute of the Meeting of the Strategic Development Planning Authority of 17 May 2021. (**Appendix 1**).
- (B) Minute of the Meeting of the North East Scotland, Fisheries Development Partnership of 12 November 2021.
- (C) Minute of the Meeting of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee of 12 November 2021. (**Appendix 2**)
- (D) Minute of the Meeting of the North East Scotland, Agricultural Advisory Group of 24 November 2021.

APPENDIX 1

**ABERDEEN
CITY AND
SHIRE**

*Strategic Development
Planning Authority*

ABERDEEN, 17 May 2021. Minute of Meeting of the STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY.

Present: Councillor Boulton, Vice Chairperson; and Councillors Aitchison, Cooke, Forsyth, Graham, Grant, Johnston, Lonchay, Mair, Mollison (as a substitute for Councillor Latham) and Yuill.

Apologies: Councillors Cox, Bell and Latham.

In Attendance: Rab Dickson, NESTRANS

Officers: **Aberdeen City Council:** Gale Beattie, Chief Officer, Strategic Place Planning; Karen Gatherum, Legal, Governance; Alan Thomson, Team Leader, Governance; Tom Walsh, Senior Planner; and Emma Robertson, Committee Assistant, Governance.

Aberdeenshire Council: Mel Greig, Senior Information and Research Officer; Sheena Lamont Senior Policy Planner; Paul Macari, Head of Planning and Environment; Mairi Stewart, Planning Service Manager.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 11 DECEMBER 2020

2. The Authority had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 11 December 2020, for approval.

The Authority resolved:-
to approve the minute as a correct record.

**ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE RESPONSE TO NATIONAL PLANNING
FRAMEWORK MINIMUM ALL TENURE HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT**

3. The Authority had before it a report advising Members of the consultation, engagement and contents of the submission prepared by the Strategic Development Planning Authority officer team on the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4's Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement. Tom Walsh, Senior Planner spoke to the report.

The report recommended:

that the Strategic Development Planning Authority:

- i) note the contents of the submission on the National Planning Framework 4 Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement; and
- ii) directs the respective Heads of Planning to approve the consultation response to National Planning Framework 4 Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement.

The Group resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4. The Authority noted that its next meeting would be held at Woodhill House or remotely as required, on 1 October 2021 at 2pm.

- **Councillor Marie Boulton, Vice-Chairperson.**

APPENDIX 2

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE

12 NOVEMBER, 2021

Present: Councillors A Kille, J Cox (substitute for Councillor Argyle), and G Petrie (Aberdeenshire Council);

Councillors M Boulton, R Houghton and J Laing (Aberdeen City Council); and

Professor G Boyne, Mrs J Craw and Sir I Wood (ONE).

Apologies: Councillor P Argyle.

Officers: Aberdeenshire Council – Mr A Wood, Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, Mr P Macari, Head of Service, Planning & Environment, Ms M Beattie, Head of Finance, Ms S Rochester, Service Manager, Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor, Ms A McLeod, Committee Officer

Aberdeen City Council – Mr R Sweetnam, Chief Officer, City Growth, Ms J Richards Wood, Programme Manager, Ms A Gray, PMO Support Officer, Ms W Robertson, Digital Lead, Mr A MacKay, Team Leader, Roads Projects.

In attendance: Mr P Finch and Mr R Dickson, NESTRANS; Mr D Briody, Transport Scotland; Mr J Dunshea, Network Rail.

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Apologies were intimated in respect of Councillor Argyle, Aberdeenshire Council.

Sir I Wood, Mrs Craw, Councillor Kille and Professor Boyne, declared an interest in items 5 and 9, specifically in terms of any issues affecting Opportunity North East (ONE) or the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) which may arise in the discussion, by virtue of them being Board Members of ONE. They considered that the nature of their interest did not require them to leave the meeting during consideration of the items.

2. RESOLUTIONS

(A) Public Sector Equality Duty - In making decisions on the following items of business, the Joint 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.

(B) Exempt Information - The Joint Committee **agreed**, in terms of Sections 50A (4) and (5) of The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item 9 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE OF 20 AUGUST, 2021

The Joint Committee had before it and **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Committee of 20 August, 2021.

4. APPOINTMENT OF ONE MEMBERS

Mrs Craw, ONE, advised the Joint Committee Professor George Boyne had been appointed as a substantive member of the Joint Committee, representing ONE, and that he would replace Professor Stephen Logan. In addition, Mr Stanley Morris would take the role of substitute member and a further substitute member would be advised once confirmed. The Chair welcomed Professor Boyne and Mr Morris to the membership.

5. ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE

The Joint Committee had before it and **noted** a report dated 12 November, 2021 by the Programme Manager, which provided information on the progress of the City Region Deal and its constituent workstreams, through the body of the report and Appendix 1 – Project Updates.

In respect of the proposed Transport Links to Aberdeen South Harbour, some concerns were expressed in relation to the timescales for completion, in light of additional Business Case approvals which were required by Scottish Government, and acknowledging that the Transport Links were key requirements for the Aberdeen South Harbour and Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) initiatives. The need to expedite the process and to provide a clear programme, including any areas of potential acceleration and contingency, to ensure the earliest possible completion of the project was noted and acknowledged by officers.

6. DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FULL BUSINESS CASE UPDATE

There had been circulated a report dated 12 November, 2021 by the Head of Service, Planning and Environment, Aberdeenshire Council, providing an update on the timescales for presenting the Digital Infrastructure full business case.

The Joint Committee heard from Mr Macari, Head of Planning & Environment, who advised the Joint Committee that following receipt of the R100 premise level data from Scottish Government, and after analysis of the data, a detailed options appraisal would be undertaken, to allow the business case to be completed, and a further report would be provided in May 2022.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee **agreed** to note that the timescales for the Digital Infrastructure Full Business Case would be May 2022, and information from the Scottish Government on the R100 premise level data as relevant to the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire area, was now available, which would enable the full business case to be completed.

7. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT UPDATE – TRANSPORT PROJECTS

The Joint Committee had before it a report dated 12 November, 2021 by NESTRANS providing an update on the progress of projects being taken forward through the additional Scottish Government investment announced alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal. The report covered progress on the A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement Scheme and the investment in the rail network to improve services between Aberdeen and the Central Belt.

The Joint Committee heard from Transport Scotland Officers of aspects of the projects, which were linked, or complimentary to ongoing work of the City Region Deal, highlighting progress of the projects and timescales for progression. The officers responded to questions from Members around timescales; design issues; the emerging use of hydrogen; opportunities being explored for further development in terms of the decarbonisation agenda, and the potential for further dialogue between Transport Scotland and officers from the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee **noted** the terms of the report.

8. PROPOSED DATES FOR JOINT COMMITTEE FOR 2022/23

The proposed dates for future meetings of the Joint Committee for 2022/23 were submitted and the Joint Committee **agreed** the following dates:

04 February 2022 (previously agreed);
27 May, 2022;
9 September, 2022;
25 November, 2022;
3 February, 2023.

9. BIO HUB

The Joint Committee noted an update by Mrs Craw on ongoing discussions in relation to progress with and funding arrangements for the Bio Hub Aberdeen Project.

Councillor Andy Kille, Chair

DRAFT