

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Economic Development & Infrastructure Services Committee

Tuesday, 05 November 2019

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

### **PRESENT**

Councillor George Alexander, Councillor David Bremner, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor John Cowe, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Claire Feaver, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Sonya Warren

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Walter Wilson

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Transportation Manager, Environmental Protection Manager, Consultancy Manager, Mr Burnish, Senior Engineer (Flood Risk Management) and Mrs L Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor A McLean

#### **1 Chair**

Councillor Leadbitter, being chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee, chaired the meeting.

#### **2 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests**

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Members interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

#### **3 Minute of Meeting dated 10 September 2019**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the Meeting of this Committee dated 10 September 2019, the Chair stated that, following the meeting, it had been brought to his attention that there was no requirement for the Road Asset Safety Inspection Policy to be ratified at the Policy and Resources Committee as, in accordance with the Scheme of Administration, the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee has delegated authority to approve policies of this nature. In

order to avoid a report being prepared for the Policy and Resources Committee unnecessarily, the Chair asked that the Committee agree to note that this report would not be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee as it is not required. This was unanimously agreed.

Thereafter, the minute of the meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee dated 10 September 2019 was submitted and approved.

#### **4 Written Questions**

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

#### **5 Free After 3 Parking**

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of the Meeting of this Committee dated 8 March 2016, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the opportunity to provide a Free After 3 parking promotion covering December 2019.

During discussion, Councillor Divers stated that the provision of Free After 3 parking had been welcomed in the past with some shops having to employ extra staff after 3:00 pm due to the extra footfall. He highlighted the switch on of the Christmas lights in Elgin due to take place on Saturday 23 November 2019 and moved that the Committee agree to start the Free After 3 parking from Saturday 23 November 2019 until Saturday 4 January 2020 in coincide with the switch on of the Christmas lights. This was unanimously agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to the provision of 'Free After 3' parking in the St Giles Centre Multi Storey Car Park from Saturday 23 November 2019 to Saturday 4 January 2020 (inclusive).

#### **6 Environmental and Commercial Services – Service Plan 2019-2022 including Service Improvements**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asked the Committee to consider the Environmental and Commercial Services Service Plan - Actions for Improvement for 2019-2022.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to approve the Environmental and Commercial Services Service Plan – Actions for Improvement 2019/21 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

#### **7 Bus Services**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the current position of the Green Bus Fund and North Sea Interreg G-Patra scheme funded electric bus service linking Aberlour and Forres and sought approval to expand the service range and timetable.

During discussion surrounding the Aberlour to Forres route, it was queried whether

use of this route could be monitored so that, should it not be fully utilised, the service in and around Forres could be developed further.

In response, the Transportation Manager explained that the funding for the electric bus had been received from HiTrans as part of a scheme to use low carbon vehicles in rural areas and see how they fared in rural conditions, specifically Speyside. The Transportation Manager further explained that the peak time Aberlour to Forres route had been chosen as it fit the criteria however consideration could be given to changing the route providing any alternative provision still met the funding criteria.

During further discussion surrounding the proposed additional journeys between Forbeshill, Forres Medical Centre and Forres Town Centre, it was queried whether the service could be extended to include the new housing development at the top of Forres.

In response, the Transportation Manager explained that there was no funding to develop this route further at present however advised that, on completion of the development, the Council will receive developer obligations to further develop bus services in that area.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to approve:

- i. the proposal to increase the number of journeys linking Aberlour and Forres as set out in Section 4 of the report; and
- ii. a number of additional journeys between Forbeshill, Forres Medical Centre and Forres Town Centre as set out in Section 5 of the report.

## **8 School Streets**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) provided details of the recent School Streets one day road closure at New Elgin Primary School and asked that the Committee give consideration to a possible way forward for further trials to inform a policy decision on whether the introduction of School Streets road closures in Moray should be pursued and how they should be implemented.

During consideration of this item, the Committee noted the positive response received from the school, parents and residents following the recent one day School Street closure at New Elgin however recognised that other schools with significant safety issues could not take advantage of the funding as they do not fit the criteria required and queried whether consideration could be given to road safety across all schools.

In response, the Transportation Manager advised that, to determine whether the School Streets project is suitable for Moray a thorough trial has to take place and the 2 proposed trial sites which meet the specified criteria will help to inform a Council policy. She further advised that the benefits of implementing road safety methods on road infrastructure around every school in Moray would require to be balanced against relevant statistics in terms of perceived road safety risk at each school.

The Head of Environmental and Commercial Services further advised that it is intended to bring a report to a future meeting of this Committee highlighting the findings of the trial and offered to include the implications of implementing road

safety surveys on road infrastructure around all schools in Moray within this report. This was noted.

Councillor Warren acknowledged that the School Street project would not suit every school in Moray however welcomed the trial and moved that the Committee agree the recommendations as printed within the report. This was seconded by Councillor Divers.

There being no-one otherwise minded, the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the outcomes of the one day School Streets event at New Elgin Primary School as set out in Section 5 of the report;
- ii. approve a trial of School Streets at two locations in Moray funded from Cycling Walking & Safer Streets Grant Funding as detailed in Section 6 of the report;
- iii. delegate authority to the Head of Environmental & Commercial Services to select the sites – based on the criteria in para 6.6 of the report; and
- iv. note that the findings of the trial and a recommended policy position will be brought to a future meeting of this Committee including the implications of implementing road safety surveys on road infrastructure around all schools in Moray.

## **9 Port Marine Safety Code - Quarterly Report**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the Meeting of this Committee dated 20 March 2018, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee with regard to matters of Marine Safety and compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) for the second quarter of 2019/20.

During discussion, concern was raised that Elected Members who are members of the Harbour Advisory Committee (HAC) may not be members of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services (EDIS) Committee being the Harbour Board which may lead to a disconnection between both bodies in terms of reporting any concerns and it was queried whether a further meeting could be arranged where members of the HAC could meet with Council Officers to discuss any concerns prior to meetings of the EDIS Committee.

In response, the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services confirmed that the EDIS Committee is the Harbour Board and has decision making powers whereas the HAC does not. He further confirmed that he had recently arranged meetings with Elected Members who have harbours within their wards so that any issues can be highlighted prior to meetings of the HAC. He acknowledged that members of the HAC may not be members of the EDIS Committee and agreed to liaise with the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance to explore possible solutions to this.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the:

- i. safety performance, fulfilling their function as Duty Holder under the Port Marine Safety Code;
- ii. findings of the Port Marine Safety Code health check which was voluntarily

undertaken on 18 July 2019 as set out in Section 12 of the report; and

- iii. that the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services would liaise with the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance to explore possible solutions to consistency between membership of the Harbour Advisory Committee and the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee.

## **10 Prioritisation of Proposed Works for the 2021 Flood Risk Management Strategies**

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of this Committee dated 3 May 2016, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the Flood Risk Management actions being put forward for prioritisation in the 2021 Flood Risk Management Strategies.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. the list of proposed works put forward to SEPA for prioritisation in the Flood Risk Management Strategies; and
- ii. to note that the prioritisation will determine if and when Government Grant Funding will be made available and that it may not be within the 2022 to 2028 Flood Risk Management cycle for works.

## **11 Environmental and Commercial Services/Economic Growth and Development Budget Monitoring to 31 August 2019**

Under reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of Moray Council dated 27 February 2019, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the current position regarding Environmental and Commercial Services/Economic Growth and Development Budgets.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the budget monitoring report for the period to 31 August 2019.

## **12 Elgin Transport Strategy**

Under reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of Moray Council dated 9 August 2017, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of revised outputs from Elgin Traffic Modelling and their potential impact on Elgin Transport Strategy.

During discussion, Councillor Divers raised concern at the continued congestions within Elgin and expressed his frustration at the various proposals that had been discussed by the Council such as an Elgin bypass and bridge over the railway which had never come to fruition and stated that he was not in favour of the proposal to extend the backstop date of the Elgin Transport Strategy to 2035. He therefore moved that the Committee make no changes to the original Elgin Transport Strategy. This was seconded by Councillor Cowe.

Councillor Macrae acknowledged the extensive traffic modelling that had been undertaken by Officers which indicates that the predicted level of traffic from future growth has reduced in the medium term, deferring the need for an additional north-south road crossing of the railway in Elgin until 2035 and moved, as an amendment, that the Committee approve extending the backstop date of Elgin Transport Strategy to 2035 as per the recommendations within the report. This was seconded by Councillor Feaver.

On a division there voted:

For the Motion (4): Councillors Divers, Cowe, Alexander and Cowie

For the Amendment (8): Councillors Macrae, Feaver, Bremner, Coull, Leadbitter, M McLean, Morrison and Warren

Abstentions (0): Nil

Accordingly, the Amendment became the finding of the Committee and it was agreed to approve extending the backstop date of Elgin Transport Strategy to 2035 in light of the revised outputs from Elgin Traffic Modelling.

### **13 Question Time**

Councillor Feaver queried when the bus service would come into place for Forbeshill and the Aberlour-Forres route.

In response, the Transportation Manager advised that the new service would be introduced early in the new year and that the Committee would be notified of the exact date nearer the time.

In relation to the requirement of speed signage in Upper Rafford, Councillor Macrae queried whether Officers had had the opportunity to review the speed survey results.

In response, the Transportation Manager advised that the first installation of speed signage would take place this week in Forres.

Councillor Alexander raised concern that the reduction in the Museums Service budget was being regarded as an issue for Forres rather than a Moray wide issue as the Falconer Museum is located in Forres. He further advised that he had been approached by The Friends of Falconer Museum to speak on the Council's behalf at a recent meeting however, in an effort to demonstrate that this is a Moray-wide issue, he had declined the invitation and suggested that the Council Leader be approached. As the Council Leader was unavailable, Cllr A McLean had agreed to speak however, being a Forres Member, this defeated the purpose of highlighting that the reduction in the Museums Service is Moray-wide. Councillor Alexander further stated that, at the meeting, he had noted that the Convener of the Council was present however did not identify herself as such and he was of the view that this depicted poor leadership.

In response, Councillor Morrison advised that she was on annual leave when the invitation to the meeting was issued therefore was not in a position to talk at the meeting however she did attend and was happy to take questions however none were addressed to herself.

The Chair confirmed that the reduction in the Museums Service was Moray-wide and not just related to the Falconer Museum in Forres and confirmed that continued efforts were being made to re-open the service as quickly as possible.

Councillor Warren noted that the Council had been unsuccessful in securing Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) funding for the ice plant and chill facility at Buckie Harbour and queried whether any appeal had been made or other funding avenues pursued.

In response, the Transportation Manager advised that there was no appeals process for FLAG funding and that alternative funding sources were being pursued for the ice plant and chill facility at Buckie Harbour.