

## **THE MORAY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN**

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor J Russell (Chairman), G Coull, S Cree, J Divers, G Leadbitter, G McDonald, G McIntyre, I Ogilvie, P Paul, R Shepherd and A Wright.

#### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors L Bell & J Hamilton.

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

The Corporate Director (Environmental Services), the Head of Direct Services, the Head of Development Services, the Transportation Manager, the Consultancy Manager, the Estates Manager, R Gerring, Senior Engineer, F Knight, Senior Engineer (Design), L Paisey, Principal Accountant, R Milburn, Principal Officer (Economic Development), M MacLeod, Design Manager, S Williamson, Waste Management Officer, A McEachan, Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing), P Harty, Planning Officer (Planning & Development) and the Senior Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the Meeting.

#### **1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS**

Councillor Leadbitter declared an interest item 4 & 5 "Elgin Traffic Management : Western Distributor Road Report 1" & "Elgin Traffic Management : Western Distributor Road Report 2"

There were no other declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda.

#### **2. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

In terms of Standing Order 28, the meeting agreed to vary the order of business set down on the Agenda and take the confidential items of business, items 4, 19, 20, 21 & 22, at the commencement of the meeting and resume in public session at 11.00 am.

### 3. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The meeting resolved that, in terms of Section 50A(4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items of business appearing at the relevant paragraph of this minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

<u>Para No of Minute</u>	<u>Para No of Schedule 7A</u>
4	6, 8 & 9
5	1,8 & 9
6	8 & 9
7	9
8	8 & 9

#### 4. ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT : WESTERN DISTRIBUTOR ROAD: REPORT 1 (Paras 6, 8 & 9)

Prior to considering this item Councillor Leadbitter left the meeting taking no part in the discussion or decision.

Under reference to Paragraph 4 of the Minute of this Committee dated 28 June 2011 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) advising the Committee of the implications of the acceptable junction options for joining Wittet Drive to the A96 trunk road as part of the Elgin Traffic Management : Western Distributor Road project, details of which were set out in Section 5 of the report.

A McEachan, Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing) advised the meeting that whilst it would have been preferable to have dealt with the route evaluation issues in public, some of the information Members required to be aware of prior to the selection of the preferred junction option relates to details of properties affected by the various options which is considered confidential in terms of Paragraphs 6, 8 & 9 of part 1 of schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The Head of Direct Services gave a PowerPoint presentation on the technical details of the three A96 junction options relating to traffic lights at the existing A96/, Wittet Drive junction, a roundabout at the same junction and a roundabout at the A96/Sheriffmill road roundabout which included details of the individual properties which would be affected by each of the three options. Thereafter the Head of Direct Services responded to Members questions during which it was noted that were the Sheriffmill roundabout option to be approved as the preferred option any decision on the details of traffic flow and traffic calming at the existing junction of Wittet Drive and the A96 trunk road would take place following consultation with the community. It was also noted that due to the complexity of the presentation it was not possible to reproduce the various option site plans in paper form prior to the meeting. It was noted however that in future when such a complex issue is to be discussed consideration be given to either giving a presentation to members prior to the

meeting or producing a short DVD of the presentation so that Members are aware of all the facts prior to determining the matter at the meeting. The meeting also noted that subsequent to a decision being taken on the preferred junction option the Council will be engaging with the Community, affected residents and the Elgin Designing Better Streets Action Group on the proposals and that appropriate site plans of the agreed route plan will be made available to the community and affected residents as soon as practicable.

Following consideration the Committee: -

- (i) noted the economic development and planning issues and associated risks;
- (ii) noted the detailed appraisal work undertaken since the decision of the Committee on 28 June 2011;
- (iii) noted the three options including land survey work carried out by Council's consultants and Council staff on the junction options for the distributor road to the A96 West Road;
- (iv) noted the property acquisition implications of each of the three options for the Wittet Drive/West Road junction; and
- (v) agreed to consider these implications as part of the option evaluation required by Elgin Traffic Management – Western Distributor Road: Report 2, item 5 on in the Agenda.

At the conclusion of this item Councillor Leadbitter rejoined the meeting.

## **5. REPLACEMENT DREDGER (PARAS 1, 8 &9)**

Under reference to Paragraph 23 of the Minute of this Committee dated 8 March 2011 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) inviting the Committee to consider future dredger operations including a replacement of the Council's dredger, the "Shearwater". There was appended to the report as Appendix A a copy of the Dredger Replacement Business case and it was noted that financial details of the business case had been made available on the Members' Portal.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the report considering future dredger operations and authorised Officers to prepare a plan for part-time working of the Shearwater from 2013 onwards; and
- (ii) that an update report on the situation to include the possibility of partnership working be submitted to this Committee in 6 months.

## **6. WATER BOTTLING FACILITY AT BRAES OF GLENLIVET (PARAS 8 & 9)**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) inviting the Committee to consider recommending to the Policy & Resources Committee the proposed sale of the water bottling facility at Braes of Glenlivet to Highland Spring Limited.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to recommend to the Policy & Resources Committee that it agrees to:

- (i) the sale of the water bottling facility at Braes of Glenlivet to Highland Spring Limited on the main terms as detailed in para 4.7 of the report; and
- (ii) remit the Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing ) to conclude the transaction.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REVENUE BUDGET: QUARTER 1 MONITORING REPORT FOR TRADING ACCOUNTS (PARA 9)**

There was submitted and noted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) informing the Committee of the progress of Trading Accounts against revenue budgetary targets for the financial year 2011/12 during the period 1 April 2011 to 30 June 2011.

## **8. FORRES (BURN OF MOSSET) FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME: SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR GROUNDWATER MODELLING IN PREPARATION FOR THE LANDS TRIBUNAL FOR SCOTLAND (PARAS 8 & 9)**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) seeking homologation of action taken by the Consultancy Manager, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee and the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee to appointment British Geological Survey (BGS) as specialist consultant in preparation evidence to the Lands Tribunal for Scotland.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to homologate the action taken by the Consultancy Manager, in consultation with the Chairs of the Economic Development & Infrastructure Services and Policy & Resources Committees, to appoint BGS as:

- (i) consultant to carry out and report on groundwater modelling, prepare evidence for the Lands Tribunal for Scotland; and
- (ii) an expert witness for the Tribunal proceedings.

## **9. ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT : WESTERN DISTRIBUTOR ROAD: REPORT 2**

Prior to consideration of this item Councillor Leadbitter left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or decision.

Under reference to Paragraph 4 of the Minute of this Committee dated 28 June 2011 and Paragraph 4 of this Minute there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) advising the Committee of the findings of the technical appraisal of each of the three acceptable junction options for joining Wittet Drive to the A96 trunk road and inviting the Committee to consider a preferred option taking into account the implications for residents affected by the various options, as intimated in the earlier confidential report to Committee (para 4 of this Minute refers).

Prior to considering the report the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) addressed the meeting on the economic and planning background to the project emphasising the economic aspirations and importance of the project and that the delivery of the Western Distributor Road is crucial to the continued development of Elgin and will require a significant investment over a number of years. Thereafter the Head of Direct Services addressed the meeting on the technical details of the three A96 junction options relating to traffic lights at the existing A96/Wittet Drive junction, a roundabout at the same junction and a roundabout at the A96/Sheriffmill Road roundabout none of which can be constructed without some property being acquired in terms of associated property and adjoining land. A summary of the options and estimated costs were set out in Section 4.20 of the report.

Thereafter members expressed their views and officers responded to questions during which it was noted that Scottish Government ministers have repeatedly made it clear that potential improvements to the A96, which is crucial to the future economic development of Moray, will not be progressed until Moray Council has delivered a distributor road and that should the Sheriffmill roundabout option to be approved as the preferred option any decision on the details of traffic flow and traffic calming at the existing junction of Wittet Drive and the A96 trunk road would take place following consultation with the community. The Chairman also acknowledged the arguments put forward by the Elgin Designing Better Streets Action Group that effectiveness is not just about traffic speed and hoped that officers of the Council will take into consideration the Group's ideas in progressing to the detailed planning process.

Following consideration the Committee:

- (a) noted the economic development and planning issues and associated risks;
- (b) noted the detailed appraisal work undertaken since the decision of the Committee in June 2011;
- (c) considered the three options including land survey work carried out by Council's consultants and Council staff on the junction options for the distributor road to the A96 West Road;
- (d) approved option 'C' as the preferred option and instructed officers to proceed with the Stage 3 assessment, detailed design, planning application and property negotiations of the entire route; and
- (e) noted the draft strategy for delivery of the Western Distributor Road.

On the determination of this item Councillor Leadbitter rejoined the meeting.

## **10. WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

There were no written questions.

## **11. LOSSIEMOUTH BREAKWATER**

Under reference to paragraph 14 of the Minute of this Committee dated 8 December 2009 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) advising the Committee on the present condition of the breakwater at the east side of the River Lossie's estuary and proposals for its future maintenance.

During discussion it was suggested that, given the possibility of adverse weather conditions over the winter months, consideration be given to the carry forward balance of £210,000 remaining available until 31 March 2012.

Following consideration the Committee approved regular monitoring of Lossiemouth Breakwater with future minor repairs to be carried out under a separate future revenue allocation and that for the remainder of this financial year the carry forward capital balance of £210,000 remain available for any works required as a result of adverse weather over the winter months.

At the conclusion of this item Councillor McIntyre left the meeting.

## **12. 'THE MORAY ECONOMIC STRATEGY' AND 'ELGIN-CITY FOR THE FUTURE' FINAL DRAFT REPORTS**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) inviting the Committee to consider funding the entire costs of 'The Moray Economic Strategy' and 'Elgin-City for the Future' community engagement/consultation events, media campaign and publication of both the Draft Final and Final reports from the 2011/12 Economic Development budget

Following discussion Councillor Leadbitter, seconded by Councillor Paul, moved that given this is a community planning engagement/consultation exercise the request for funding be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration to be met from Council reserves as opposed to the Economic Development budget.

As an amendment Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor Wright, moved that the Committee:-

- (i) agree that the sum of up to £18,000 be allocated from the 2011/2012 Economic Development budget, to resource the agreed 'Moray Economic Strategy' and 'Elgin- City for the Future' public engagement/consultation events and publication of the Final Reports; and
- (iii) note that in accordance with the agreement of the Special Meeting of the Community Planning Board on the 30 June 2011, the responses from this community engagement/consultation will be the subject of a further report to a

special meeting of the Community Planning Board with a copy to this Committee for information.

On a division there voted:-

For the Motion (6)                      Councillors Coull, Divers, Leadbitter, G McDonald, Ogilvie & Paul

For the Amendment (4)              Councillors Cree, Russell, Shepherd & Wright.

Abstentions (0)

Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and it was agreed that given this is a community planning engagement/consultation exercise the request for funding be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration to be met from Council reserves as opposed to the Economic Development budget.

On the conclusion of this item Councillor Shepherd left the meeting.

**13. 'THE MORAY ECONOMIC STRATEGY' AND 'ELGIN-CITY FOR THE FUTURE' PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION EVENTS**

There was submitted a report by the Acting Chief Executive informing the Committee on the proposed arrangements for the community engagement/consultation events and media campaign around 'The Moray Economic Strategy' and 'Elgin-City for the Future' to be held during September 2011, details of which were set out in Section 4 of the report and the Appendix appended to the report.

Following consideration the Committee noted the arrangements for the community engagement/consultation events and media campaign around 'The Moray Economic Strategy' and 'Elgin-City for the Future' and that a copy of the report to be submitted to a special meeting of the Community Planning Board on the responses to the community engagement/consultation exercise will be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

**14. PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER : BOROUGHBRIIGGS ROAD AND COOPER PARK, ELGIN**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) seeking Committee approval of the promotion of a Road Traffic Regulation Order to introduce additional and revised waiting restrictions within the Cooper Park and Boroughbriggs Road, Elgin as detailed in Appendices 1 & 2 to the report.

During discussion it was noted that, in regard to the proposed introduction of temporary bollards restricting access to the park from North College Street between 7.30 am and 10.00am Monday to Friday, the roads around the Cooper Park, whilst under the management and maintenance of the Council, are private roads and therefore the Council as managers can regulate the traffic within the Park which best

fits the public space within the Park without the need to go through a statutory process. The meeting also noted that the purpose of using temporary bollards in the short term to prevent vehicular access to the park before 10am each day was to curtail all-day parking and these should be installed subject to consultation with the Elgin North & South Forums & Elgin Community Council.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- (i) to approve the proposed Road Traffic Regulation Orders to introduce additional and revised waiting restrictions at the following:
  - (a) Cooper Park between Lossie Wynd and the Library;
  - (b) Cooper Park, elsewhere including Grant Lodge; and
  - (c) Boroughbriggs Road
 and instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to proceed with the statutory process;
- (ii) to instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to make and implement the Order if, following the consultation period, there are no outstanding objections; and
- (iii) that the Head of Direct Services be delegated authority to introduce temporary bollards restricting access to the park from North College Street between 7.30am – 10am Monday – Friday for a trial period following the satisfactory outcome of officer consultations with Elgin North & South Forums & Elgin Community Council.

#### **15. PROPOSED ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER : AMENDMENT TO DISABLED PARKING WITHIN ELGIN TOWN CENTRE**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) seeking homologation of the decision taken by the Senior Traffic Engineer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee and the Elected Members for Elgin City North and South, with the exception of Councillor Shand who was unavailable, to proceed with the physical works involved in widening the footway and relocating the disabled parking in North Street, Elgin. The report also sought approval of the promotion of a Road Traffic Regulation Order to revise disabled parking within parts of Elgin Town Centre as detailed in Appendix 1 and shown in the plans appended to the report as Appendix 2.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) homologate the decision taken by the Senior Traffic Engineer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee and the Elected Members for Elgin City North and South with the exception of Councillor Shand who was unavailable, to proceed with the physical works involved in widening the footway and relocating the disabled parking in North Street, Elgin;



- (ii) approve the proposed Road Traffic Regulation Order to alter disabled parking within parts of Elgin Town Centre, and instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to proceed with the statutory process; and
- (iii) instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to make and implement the Order if, following the consultation period, there are no outstanding objections.

**16. PROPOSED ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER : DUFF AVENUE  
(CUL-DE-SAC), ELGIN : WAITING RESTRICTIONS**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) seeking Committee approval of the promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order which will amend the existing parking restrictions on the Duff Avenue cul-de-sac that forms the only access to Elgin Tennis Club as detailed in Appendix 1 and shown in plan Appendix 2, to the report.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (a) approve the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a revision to the existing waiting restrictions on the Duff Avenue cul-de-sac that provides the only access to Elgin Tennis Club and instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to proceed with the statutory process; and
- (b) instruct the Head of Direct Services and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to make and implement the Order if, following the consultation period, there are no outstanding objections.

**17. REVIEW OF PARKING STANDARDS**

Under reference to Paragraph 14 of the Minute of this Committee dated 8 March 2011 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) on the outcome of a recent public consultation and seeking approval for the revised parking standards. There were appended to the report as Appendix A details of the comments received and officers' recommendations together with a copy of the revised Parking Standards.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the consultation responses received and recommendations set out in Appendix A;
- (ii) approve the revised Parking Standards for use in consideration of development proposals in Moray; and
- (iii) note that the approved Parking Standards will be reported to the next meeting of the Planning & Regulatory Services Committee.

## **18. PROPOSED DIVERSION OF RIGHT OF WAY AT KIRKTON, CABRACH**

Under reference to Paragraph 12 of the Minute of this Committee dated 3 May 2011 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) seeking confirmation of the diversion of the registered Right of Way (catalogue number GM87) from Powneed to Kirkton as shown on the plan appended to the report.

During consideration concern was expressed that it was understood that gates on the proposed diversion route were often locked and it was noted that should the Committee confirm the diversion order the concerns will be taken into account in the preparation of the Order so as to ensure public right of way.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to instruct the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) and the Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing) to finalise the appropriate Diversion Order.

## **19. TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCING (ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) outlining to the Committee the opportunity provided by Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) as a tool for the Council to provide infrastructure investment for development and thereby assist the local economy and seeking homologation of the action taken by the Planning and Economic Development Manager, in consultation with the Acting Chief Executive, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, the Convener of the Council and the Council Group Leaders to engage consultants to prepare and submit TIF Pilot Scheme Projects (TPSP) for Moray.

The meeting noted that The Scottish Government and the Scottish Futures Trust ("SFT") have together developed an innovative approach to delivering economic growth, by enabling Local Authorities to fund public infrastructure that will unlock regeneration and growth which might otherwise be unaffordable to a Local Authority or undeliverable through the private sector. This model is referred to as Tax Incremental Financing ("TIF").

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) homologate the action of the Planning and Economic Development Manager taken in consultation with the Acting Chief Executive, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, the Convener of the Council and the Council Group Leaders to engage consultants to prepare and submit for the Council TIF Pilot Scheme Projects (TPSP) for Moray. The cost of services to prepare the TPSP was £21,825 and is to be paid from the funds available in the Economic Development Budget; and

- (ii) seek funding approval from the Policy and Resources Committee to develop a full business case for the TPSP (by the end of the financial year) if the submission is successful.

## **20. WASTE MANAGEMENT : IMPACT OF BUDGET REDUCTION**

Under reference to Paragraph 17 of the Minute of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee dated 7 June 2011 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) advising the Committee of the cost of vandalism and the cleaning of public toilets. In addition to providing the information on public toilets, this report provided additional information on the implications of the budget reductions in both public toilet provision and street sweeping.

During discussion concern was expressed in regard to the level of street cleaning in rural areas and it was suggested that consideration be given during the setting of the 2012/13 budget to the provision of an appropriate allowance for keyholder responsibility. In regard to street cleaning the meeting noted that the effects of service reductions are being monitored and indicate that there has been little change in the cleanliness of streets albeit the removal of village officers has had an impact on the overall service provided to villages which previously had an officer, whereby the work which was done outwith their remit is no longer done. It was also noted that further monitoring of cleanliness and public complaints will provide a clearer picture of potential problems and this will be reported back to Committee with recommendations.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the impact which the budget reduction has had on the street sweeping and public toilet service provision;
- (ii) to note that further monitoring is undertaken on these services and reported back at a later date; and
- (iii) that consideration of provision of an appropriate budget in 2012/13 for keyholder responsibility is referred to the appropriate Committee in due course.

## **21. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS : QUARTER 1: 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2011**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) outlining to the Committee the performance of the service for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2011.

Following consideration the Committee to note the:

- (i) performance outlined in this report; and
- (ii) actions being taken to seek improvements and revise targets where required

## **22. PERFORMANCE REPORT : QUARTER 1 APRIL TO JUNE 2011**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) outlining to the Committee the performance of the service for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2011.

Following consideration the Committee:

- (i) scrutinised the performance outlined in this report; and
- (ii) noted the actions being taken to seek improvements where required.

## **23. INDUSTRIAL PORTFOLIO ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) inviting the Committee to consider the terms of the 2010/11 Annual Report on the Council's Industrial Portfolio, a copy of which was appended to the report as Appendix 1.

During discussion the meeting noted that the possibility of promoting a Flood Alleviation Scheme for the Isla Bank Mills industrial estate in Keith for inclusion in the minor flood alleviation scheme projects within the Capital Plan will be considered during the forthcoming review of the Capital Plan.

Following consideration the Committee considered the terms of the 2010/11 Annual Report on the Council's Industrial Portfolio.

## **24. EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND, AXIS 4**

Under reference to Paragraph of the Minute of this Committee dated 28 June 2011 and Paragraph of the Minute of the Policy & Resources Committee dated 16 August 2011 there was submitted a report by the Head of Development Services informing the Committee of the recommendations and approval by the Policy & Resources Committee on 16 August 2011 in relation to the development of a Moray Local Fishing Development Strategy and Business Plan and the requirement of financial support as outlined in Section 3 and 4 of the report.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the recommendations and approval by the Policy & Resources Committee;
- (ii) to approve the draft Moray Local Fishing Development Strategy and Business Plan for submission to the Government – Marine Scotland by 9 September 2011; and

- (iii) that the Committee's appreciation of the work on the development of the strategy and business plan be conveyed to all concerned.

## 25. WELCOME TO RICHARD HARTLAND

The meeting welcomed Mr Richard Hartland to his first meeting of the Committee following his appointment to the post of Corporate Director (Environmental Services).

## 26. QUESTION TIME

Prior to commencement of Question Time Councillor Paul left the meeting.

**Councillor Divers** referred to the provision of School Crossing Patrollers and enquired as to what plans were in place for cover in the event of a school crossing patroller being unavailable on the day given that he understood that head teachers were being contacted on the day and advised that a school crossing patroller would be unavailable. This, in his opinion, placed teachers in a dangerous position, particularly in regard to the busy A941, in having to go out and fulfil the task of the school crossing patroller and gave them little time to advise parents.

The Transportation Manager advised the meeting that the notification from the Council's Transportation Unit to head teachers is provided as soon as the Unit is aware that a school crossing patroller is unavailable. He also explained that the telephone message is not to ask the head teacher to provide an alternative to the school crossing patroller but merely to advise that there is not a school crossing patroller available.

As a supplementary question Councillor Divers referred to budget process when it was suggested that teachers undertake the role of school crossing patrollers or ask parents to undertake the function and sought clarification in regard to this proposal given that he understood there was a problem in recruiting school crossing patrollers.

The Head of Direct Services advised the meeting that subsequent to the budget process it was agreed, following consultations with the then Chief Financial Officer (now Corporate Director (Corporate Services)) that the indicative savings were not achievable. He also advised that there were a number of school crossing sites across Moray with a greater number of school crossing patrollers with some in reserve. However there are occasions, due to absenteeism when there is not enough to cover all the crossings. What was proposed during the budget process was that there could be better support from others within the school environment to meet the need when it arose. However following further discussions with education colleagues it was ascertained that teachers have other duties to perform at the time school crossing services are required and would not therefore be available to deputise as school crossing patrollers. In light of this the Department continues to seek to increase the number of school crossing patrollers on the establishment for the gaps when others are not available, however it has proven very difficult to attract relief patrollers despite a continual effort to recruit.

The Head of Direct Services also advised the meeting that this was a road safety matter and responsibility lay with parents to take their children to school and that school crossing patrollers are there to provide a safer environment for children to cross the road.

**Councillor Leadbitter** sought an assurance that school crossing patroller cover, particularly emergency cover, be looked at by the Council's Central Management Team (CMT), with a view to obtaining a corporate solution.

The Chairman suggested that in the first instance the Head of Direct Services circulate to all members of the Committee a copy of his response to Councillor Divers and on receipt should any Member still require clarification or wish further action(s) to be considered they should submit an appropriate written question to the appropriate Service Committee of the Council.