



**NORTH of SCOTLAND AREA ROADS AUTHORITIES & UTILITIES
COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the
QUARTERLY MEETING**

Date: Wednesday 5th February 2020

**The Learning Centre Meeting Room, The Highland Archive Building, Bught Road
Inverness, IV3 5SS**

Present:

Tommy Deans (NoSRAUC Chair)	T.D.	BEAR Scotland N.E. / N.W.
Kevin Abercrombie	K.A.	Aberdeen City Council
David Armitage	D.J.A.	Aberdeenshire Council
Angus Carmichael	A.C.	Scottish Road Works Commissioner
Norman Carnegy	N.C.	ESPUG
Gerry Cullen	G.C.	Traffic Scotland
Karyn Davidson	K.D.	Vodafone
Irvine Ellis	I.E.	SSEN
Allan Falcon	A.F.	Openreach
Stephen Fisher	S.F.	Century Link (By VC Link)
Jim Forbes	J.F.	CityFibre
Darren Grant	D.G.	SSEN
Mike Gray	M.G.	BEAR Scotland N.W.
David Hearty	D.H.	MBNL / EE
John Johnson	J.J.	Shetland Islands Council
Fiona McInnes	F.McI.	Scottish Water
Donald Macleay	D.A.Macl.	Western Isles Council
Duncan MacLennan	D.MacL.	Openreach
Alison MacLeod	A.MacL.	The Highland Council
Kevin Price	K.P.	The Moray Council
Iain Ross	I.R.	O.S.R.W.C.
Kenny Roy	K.R.	Orkney Islands Council (By VC Link)
Ruth Scott	R.S.	SSE Telecom
Kevin Skinner	K.S.	Scottish Water
Antony Thorpe	A.T.	Balfour Beatty (AWPR O & M)
Mark Wilson	M.W.	GTC

In Attendance:

George Borthwick	G.B.	Secretary
Robert Young	R.Y.	Scottish Government (Digital Scotland)

Apologies:

Hazel Moore	H.M.	BEAR Scotland NE
Derek Smith	D.S.	The Moray Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

Tommy Deans (BEAR Scotland), welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were recorded as above.

2. Minute of the last Meeting held on 11th November 2019

a. Accuracy

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 11th November 2019 in The Beach Ballroom, Beach Promenade, Aberdeen, AB24 5NR were agreed as read.

b. Matters Arising

Matters arising from the previous meeting are recorded on the Action Tracking Summary.

3. Local RAUC Reports

a. Aberdeen City Local RAUC

K.A. reported there had been no issues to remit as they had all been dealt with at the meeting.

There were only 4 representatives at the meeting, so discussion had been limited.

There was a considerable number of works ongoing in Aberdeen and where there were problems which required discussion the relevant S.U.s were called in for a meeting. He commented that the City Fibre scheme was the most extensive project at present and regular meetings were being held and any problems remedied before they became an issue.

The Commissioner suggested that from a fully attended meeting there must be items, which needed to be remitted to get resolution or to pass on for the benefit of others.

b. Aberdeenshire Local RAUC

Aberdeenshire had introduced additional clauses into their Road Construction Consent conditions of agreement. The purpose of the clauses which were similar to those submitted to the last RAUC(S) meeting, was to ensure that as much S.U. plant was accommodated before the final course was laid and the road adopted.

The road would be classified as prospectively adoptable 6 months before the final course was to be laid with a 3-month Notice being registered for the final course being laid. This is intended to allow time for any S.U. to submit Notices to lay plant and complete coordination.

More information on the Construction Consent content is available on line by using a web search on RCC Aberdeenshire.

Other R.As are welcome to use the clauses to develop their own RCC conditions.

All plant provided in the road requires to be adopted for maintenance by a S.U. or have permission under section 109 or the road will not be adopted.

J.F. indicated that a Telecom S.U. would need to poll the residents to see if there would be a market for their service before they would proceed to lay plant. In addition, there was the possibility of existing plant in a development requiring augmentation to accommodate a second phase which received planning consent.

The meeting noted that the developers, Persimmon, had telecom powers.

The purpose of the revision to the RCC was to assist S.U.s to have access to provide their service in a development and to protect R.As from having newly laid surfaces damaged by the laying of plant which should have been laid before road surface completion.

c. Highland Council Local RAUC

There had been some problems with CityFibre but they had been ironed out following discussion.

There had been an improvement in the programme information which was provided for discussion at the meeting.

There were ongoing discussions about the laying of plant across the A9 adjacent to the U.H.I. Transport Scotland were not prepared to allow the plant to be laid by open cut. One alternative which was being considered was to lay it over the Golden Bridge but there was yet no agreed solution.

The problem with plant laid in the verge was raised again. Since it was previously remitted to RAUC(S) there had been no feedback and the problem was ongoing. Plant was still being laid in the verge and there was no specification to work to and the probability was that it would be damaged or cause delays to maintenance, cutting off lets, creating new accesses etc. The R100 Broadband project in the NoSRAUC Area would be very much focused on rural areas. With this in mind it was essential that a form of words was produced to clarify the datum from which the measurement was made to the top of the plant – probably the adjacent road level.

The Committee noted that the SROR working group had not met since the remit was made because it was awaiting the publication of the SROH which may or may not form the basis to a Scottish rewrite of the SROR. When the Group meets it will review the cable in verge requirements.

The Commissioner reported that the rewrite of the SROH was very much top down but the review of the SROR would be a blend of top down and input from the Working Group. The Commissioner asked the Community to send comment and suggestions to him for consideration in the process.

d. Moray Council Local RAUC

There had been no meetings since the last Area Meeting. The next meeting will be held in April.

e. Orkney Islands Local RAUC

The next meeting is in two weeks' time.

f. Shetland Islands Local RAUC

At the previous meeting I.R. and L.H. from the O.S.R.W.C. attended via a phone line. This had proved valuable in that they were able to explain the powers of the S.U.s to lay plant in the road and how the use of Section 109 by S.U.s was not acceptable.

The next meeting is in two weeks' time.

g. Western Islands Council

Western Islands Council and the S.U.s have a concern that hot lay material will not be available generally for reinstatements. The Council had already had to import material from Oban for a resurfacing scheme on Barra.

The committee noted that although the period for making a reinstatement permanent was 6 months the R.A. could extend that period to accommodate problems such as periodic availability of the material. This may help the W.I.C. to deal with the problem by allowing final reinstatements to be carried out in bulk when the quarry was open for the resurfacing programme. D.A.MacL. will provide a report to the next meeting on the ongoing outcome of discussions with the Quarry owner.

Action – D.A.MacL

ViaFix cold lay material is one option which could be an answer to the problem.

The Community Meetings were under consideration by a small Working Group. One suggestion being considered was for some local meetings to amalgamate to reduce the overall number of meetings which the S.U. representatives had to attend. This already happened in TayForth where Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross had joined up.

Where appropriate Staff from the Commissioner's Office could dial into meetings to make a report or deal with a problem. With the progress of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 there was points to be considered.

4. Matters Arising from RAUC(S) Meeting – 4th December 2019

The previously circulated draft Minutes were commented on as follows: -

- The Transport Bill is now The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 having received Royal Assent in November 2019. The sections of the Act will be commenced over the next 2 years.

One of the first sections to be commenced will deal with the Commissioner's financial and legal liabilities.

The Red Book will be made mandatory at an early date however this document has been used widely and is used by the H & S Executive when dealing with any industrial accidents. A.F. indicated that he was on the Group which is reviewing the content of the Red Book. The Group should remember that it is used on sites and should therefore be able to be pragmatic and easy to carry about.

- The Anglia Water / HAUC UK video dealing with safe travel through sites for the disabled amongst other groups called Safe for All is now available online at: - <https://vimeo.com/376841696> and was recommended for training including toolbox talks.

T.D. informed the Committee that he had been invited to take a journey through Broadford in Skye in a wheelchair to experience how difficult it can be. He had found the trip very enlightening and suggested that all staff involved in road design and

roadworks should try the experience as it would not fail to result in better layouts and facilities in the future.

a) RAUC(S) Working Group Recruitment

The schedule is currently up to date with the groups fully staffed.

A new Group had been appointed at RAUC(S) to review Advice Note No. 8 to deal with temporary Traffic Orders etc. The Group and its members will be added to the Recruitment Schedule by the Secretary.

5. National & Local Coring Update

i. National Coring Update

A short verbal update report was given to the meeting as follows: -

- There is work needed to complete the programme which has fallen a little behind the milestones and will not be ready for submission to the March meeting of RAUC(S)
- All core sites and results (pass or fail) need to be recorded on the Register.
- The Appendix A and Appendix B should be prepared and match.
- All Lead R.As and R.As need to be pushing to achieve an early completion with the results agreed and passed to the Co-Chairs for collation and publication. **Action - Urgent**
- The sites used in the programme which had been cored by a S.U. should be recorded on the Appendices and on the Register. The date on the Register is the date the core result was agreed.
- In the NoS Area all cores were completed and agreed.
- The progress has overall been better than last year, but it was disappointing to have missed the March publication.

ii. Local Coring Programmes Update

The Scottish Water internal programme is ongoing.

CityFibre will commence coring in Aberdeen soon.

6. SRWC Report & Performance

a. SRWC Report

The following verbal report was submitted from the Commissioner's office: -

- The Commissioner had issued penalties in January against 3 S.U.s (£6k each) for systematic poor performance over 3 years. They are G.T.C., Fulcrum and Energetics.
- There will be a Seminar at Victoria Quay on 1st April to review the content of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The Seminar is aimed at Senior Managers who will be expected to cascade the information to their Organisation / staff. The number of places available is about 100 which means that they are restricted to 1 per Organisation however Organisations can apply for additional passes, but it will depend on how many applications are received.
- BT / Openreach have arranged a demonstration in Edinburgh of their narrow trenching system in order to get an agreement to use it in the City. The system must be in accordance with the SROR, traffic management and other codes. The view was expressed that Type 1 backfill is not suitable for narrow trenches and the best option

was foamed concrete. This was the proposed technique to be used on the R100 Broadband contract.

A suggestion was made that although the system does not require a trial the Community would benefit from a report to the Area Meetings and an ability to search the Register to check on the performance.

The Secretary was asked to add a remit to the SRWR Steering Group Agenda to discuss the best way to record the process and be able to locate the details of the various sites.

Action - Secretary

- 5 of the Organisations on Improvement Plans from the 2018 Performance Review have been released and it is anticipated that the rest will be cleared by September.

The present indication is that no Organisation will be put on a plan at present.

b). SRWC Indicators and Statistics Reports

The previously circulated Dashboard for Q3 was taken as read and where there were queries, they should be sent to G.M. at the O.S.R.W.C. copied to I.R.

- The Targets for unplanned works have been eased which has resulted in fewer Organisations being in the red performance band.
- All were reminded that they must comment back to the O.S.R.W.C. where their performance on any of the Reports was in the red band to indicate mitigating circumstances and or their plans to improve.

b. Improvement Notices – Action Tracking

It was noted that no Improvement Notices had been issued in the NoSRAUC Area in the last Quarter.

7. Safety

a. Safety Concerns/Issues

Comments on safety were recorded as follows: -

- Another batch of Safety Bulletins had been circulated electronically. These Bulletins are being issued for circulation to relevant staff and operatives to help with education.
- T.D reported an incident where a vehicle cut through the lane cones into the road works lane and undertook another vehicle. If the vehicle had not returned to the running lane when it did it would have run into the works operatives. Details had been passed to the police but insufficient information on the offending vehicle could be retrieved.
- Aberdeen City had a problem with a site where the batteries on the temporary traffic signals failed. The T.M. contractor was not immediately available which resulted in traffic problems. The view was that standby crews had to be available in the north / north east to cover such problems.
- The TAG Working Group had completed the preparation of the question bank for the accreditation testing. The bank will be introduced in March. In groups taking the test the questions should all be different for each candidate.
- Openreach had problems with a site where a TTRO was turned down because it affected a polling station. The Committee noted that several R.As were listing the sites on the Register with embargoes to avoid such problems with the resulting delays to works.

- Scottish Water will be using more shoring in excavations for safety. The depths which they are using for the requirement for shoring are different to those specified in the SROR.
- Vodafone had introduced quarterly meetings with their Contractors to discuss safety problems which had occurred in the previous period.
- Centurylink receive Railway Safety briefings and they will arrange for them to be circulated to RAUC(S) members. **Action – Stephen Fisher**
- There had been an incident where a trailer detached from the vehicle towing it. When investigated it was found the bolts holding a bracket had come loose but due to a build-up of material it was not visible to the operative carrying out a daily inspection. This is being rectified.

b. Traffic Management Issues

Covered in Item No. 7a Above.

Edinburgh City are meeting with TM Contractors to discuss their work on Edinburgh sites and S.U. sites to get an improved standard. The problems often related to the omission of basic requirements.

R.Y. informed the meeting that in relation to the R100 Contract he is writing a paper on TTROs which he intends to issue for consultation. He will circulate to SCOTS and to RAUC(S). The R100 project will affect more rural areas where the roads are often single track where a closure can cause long diversions. The Contracts for the South and Central areas of Scotland have been issued to BT / Openreach and the contract for the North Area will be awarded in due course.

8. Information on Strategic Programmes of Works

a. Roads Authorities

R.A. Works were reported to the meeting as follows: -

BEAR Scotland

North East

1. A96 – Various signing upgrades
2. A96 – Bishopton Underpass Tyrebagger – 10th Feb – 2 weeks on lane closure for parapet works
3. A96 – Carden Oyne Fork – Parapet and Scour Works ongoing – proposed end date 06/03/2020
4. A96 Tyrebagger / Blackburn / Clinterty – Gap closures and signage Installation – Commencing May 2020 (TBC)
5. A96 – Elgin – Near Tesco - Pedestrian traffic signal-controlled crossing upgrades. Works to commence before end of March.

North West

1. A9 – Site investigation works at various locations continue between Inverness and Perth.

2. A9 – Berriedale Braes Resurfacing complete.
3. A830 – Banavie Bridge - Works completed following night time closure ahead of schedule.
4. A82 – Transformer Movements taking place between Invergordon and Fort Augustus Sub Station commencing 2 x Sundays March / April.
5. A82 – West Link, Inverness – Overnight closure Mon 10/02/2020 to Tues 11/02/2020. Diversion for next 6 weeks for LGV's above 7.5T. Usual diversionary route via General Booth Road.

Aberdeenshire

The details of the 2020/21 programme has not been approved by the Council but as soon as it is the detailed schemes will be recorded on the Register.

Aberdeen City

The Union Terrace Gardens project has started and there are restrictions on traffic in Union Terrace.

The Haudagain Junction improvement is ongoing. One-way traffic is due to be introduced which will lead to increased traffic problems.

Highland

The Western Link Road round Inverness is continuing.

Although not a NoSRAUC problem the Committee noted that the COP 26 Climate Change Conference would be held from 9th to 20th November in Glasgow. There would be extensive embargoes on the network (A9 / A90) extending quite far north to accommodate delegate traffic.

b. Statutory Undertakers

CityFibre programme in Aberdeen is ongoing with problems being discussed and dealt with at regular joint meetings. The programmes in the Highland Council Area was ongoing and they will be the subject of regular liaison meetings.

di. Superfast Broadband – Aberdeen City / Shire Programme Update

DSBB Programme is still on planned Programme Targets and is due for completion at the end of year 2019/20.

Deployment is now almost exclusively Fibre to the Premise (FTTP), with around 80 installations remaining.

There is a further deployment planned, termed Reaching for 100% (R100), to address the remaining premises that will be without access to Superfast Broadband. There will be three Contracts – North, Central and South. Councils in the North of Scotland are within the North Contract Area. Aberdeen City Centre is excluded as not eligible for State Aid Funding.

BT/Openreach have been awarded the Central and South Contracts. The preferred bidder for the North Contract has still to be announced.

Contract Award is expected sometime later this year, with mobilisation to follow. The R100 Programme team intend to meet with all Roads Authorities in Scotland to discuss the deployment of the works.

dii. Superfast Broadband - H.I.E. Programme Update

Programme Overview – Highlands and Islands

As there was no representative present at the meeting there was no update on the programme.

9. Proposed Changes to Road Designations

In Aberdeenshire the roads which become Prospectively Adoptable under the revised road construction consent clauses will be recorded on the Register. Coordination between S.U.s and Developers will be via the R.A.

10. Management and Operation of the SRWR

A verbal report on the Operation of the SRWR was presented as follows: -

- The draft Fees and Amounts matrix had been circulated to assist Organisations with budgeting. The payment period would start on 1st April and last for 60 days. Emails will be sent to each Organisations early in March with the draft Fee to allow them to prepare early payment.
- Register Transition Training – The training sessions will be available on line from 10th February to 6th June. The training is free online, and all operators must pass the required modules before they will be granted access to the new Register from the 6th April. The time taken to complete the modules as estimated to be between 4 and 6 hours and can be completed in blocks to accommodate time management.

The Courses are: -

Register Overview
Co-ordination – Standard
Co-ordination – Advanced
Works Promoter – Standard
Works Co-ordinator – Advanced
Permissions and Consents
Inspector

The Training is free with the cost being met from the Fees and Amounts. There will be a saving to Organisations with no travel to training, time away from the Office and no subsistence.

The standard training will be available online from 6th June with modules tailored to the requirements of the User including new Operators. There will be no charge for the training of new operators.

There will be no classroom training available.

There are no forums planned but this can be reviewed in due course.

- The Commissioner commented that the Register is the Scottish Road Works Register not Aurora or Symology which are the trade names.
- The Register will be unavailable on 4th and 5th April to accommodate the transition to the new Version. The new Register will be open on 6th April for normal operation. Late Noticing and FPNs will not be affective over these dates. Extra support will be available on the 6th April.
- The existing access to the Apps closes and requires to be reset for the new Register by contacting the Support Desk. A warning will be issued via the App that the upgrade is needed and warning that all Notices / Inspections must be synchronized before the outage commences.
- Once upgraded the Register will be accessed via: -
https://register.srwr.scot
- All Organisations should be aware that some additional web addresses (URLs will need to be white listed by their IT Departments. I.R. sent out instructions for testing the connection and that should be done, and a reply sent to I.R. by 10th February.
- Energetics has now changed its name on the Register to Last Mile Electricity Ltd and Last Mile Gas Ltd.
- A new Undertaker called Axione has been added to the Register.

Action – All

Post Meeting Comment - the implementation of the new version of the SRWR has now been put back as a result of the Covid 19 lockdown.

a. Gazetteer Report

Gazetteer via Improvement Service - The last submission on 27th November was made via Improvement Service was satisfactory. Highland Council did have some problems. If there are any problems, they should be passed to I.R.

The Gazetteer is sent to Improvement Service then the Validation Form is sent to Symology who take the validated Gazetteers from Improvement Service.

All must submit a gazetteer for the next upload as Symology will not migrate the version from the existing Register to the new Register. Any Organisation with a problem doing so must contact Improvement Service and I.R.

Action - All

All should note that there can be different Logs between submissions, and a record which is approved in one log may not be in the next.

The new SDTF 4.0 specification is due to be introduced. The new Conventions were produced, consulted on and approved by RAUC(S) Community not the Commissioner.

b. Systems Assurance Team

The SAT carried out the third phase of Aurora Acceptance Testing on 3rd February. The testing noted several errors, but these should be dealt with before the 6th April and should not prevent the sign off.

c. Community Apparatus VAULT

B.T. / Openreach have been developing a system to submit their plant data through Vault to answer a PIR. Their data will not be stored on VAULT. Symology have been involved in the development and have indicated that the response time for answering a request should be within

the tolerance required. The information provided via this method should be completely up to date. Other S.U.s have indicated an interest in providing their data using the same process.

11. AOCB

a. List of Plant Protection Systems

The list would be circulated to each meeting and all were asked to check the data and advise the Secretary of any additional information or changes so that it could be kept up to date on the Web.

b. Emergency Contact Details

The list would be circulated to each meeting and all were asked to check the data and advise the Secretary of any additional information or changes so that it could be kept up to date on the Web.

c. The NOSRAUC Meeting Chair

A revised Chair Rota has been prepared and it will be circulated to the Members for comment. It was based on the previous rota with any larger S.U.s added in.

Comment was made that the Island Councils may wish to take a turn as Chair either as a single Authority or as a group taking turns as the Chair. They were asked to comment on this suggestion.

Action – D.A.MacL. / K.R. / N.R.

The next Chair will be Darren Grant from SSEN. He will take over the Chair after the August meeting. The accommodation will be booked in advance following discussion between D.G. and T.D.

Action – T.D. / D.G.

12. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The Next Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 6th May 2020 (10.30 for 11.00)**

VENUE - The Beach Ballroom, Beach Promenade, Aberdeen, AB24 5NR

Future Meetings: -

August Meeting** Wednesday 5th August 2020

November Meeting*** Wednesday 4th November 2020

The Venues are arranged for 10.30am with the meeting starting at 11.00am

Meeting Venues to be confirmed: -

** The Learning Centre Meeting Room, The Highland Archive Building, Bught Road
Inverness, IV3 5SS

*** The Beach Ballroom, Beach Promenade, Aberdeen, AB24 5NR

The Meeting Closed at 13.05