

## **Services Committee**

**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**

**Thursday 9 October 2008 at 10.00am**

### **Present:**

L Angus	L F Baisley
J Budge	A J Cluness
A T J Cooper	A T Doull
A G L Duncan	B L Fullerton
F B Grains	I J Hawkins
R S Henderson	J H Henry
A J Hughson	W H Manson
C H J Miller	R C Nickerson
G Robinson	J G Simpson
C L Smith	A S Wishart
Dr J W G Wills	

### **Apologies:**

F A Robertson  
J Henry (for lateness)

### **In Attendance:**

H Sutherland, Executive Director – Education and Social Care  
H Budge, Head of Schools  
J Reyner, Quality Improvement Manager  
A Edwards, Quality Improvement Manager  
C Ferguson, Head of Community Care  
S Morgan, Head of Children's Services  
A Williamson, Chief Social Work Officer  
S Crook, Library and Information Services Manager  
C Medley, Head of Capital Programmes and Housing Service  
V Simpson, Service Manager – Housing and Property  
J Thomason, Management Accountant  
R Sinclair, Senior Contract Manager  
A Hamilton, Senior Adviser  
I Tait, Curator, Shetland Museum and Archives  
A Cogle, Service Manager – Administration  
L Adamson, Committee Officer

### **Chairperson**

Mr L Angus, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

### **Circular**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Dr J W G Wills declared an interest in agenda items 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 due to family connections.

## **Minutes**

The minute of the meeting held on 28 August 2008, having been circulated, was confirmed.

## **Members' Attendance at External Meetings**

There was nothing to report.

### **75/08      Allocations Policy Review 2008-09**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Capital Programmes and Housing (Appendix 1).

The Chairperson advised that further detail on Member involvement with housing allocations would be the subject of a future report. In response to a question from Mr A T J Cooper, the Service Manager – Administration reported that an advice note would be drawn up to provide Members with guidance and information on housing allocations, and a seminar would be held in November.

In response to a question from Mrs C H J Miller, the Service Manager – Housing and Properties advised that the Policy on sensitive housing letting issues was included in the Allocations Policy, and would be included in the review.

On the motion of Mr C L Smith, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, the Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

### **76/08      Blueprint for Education in Shetland – Consultation Timetable**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 2).

Mr R C Nickerson referred to Section 4.3, and asked for assurance that the results of the consultation on the presumption against rural school closures would be included in the Blueprint. The Head of Schools advised that this would be included as an additional bullet point.

In response to a further question from Mr Nickerson, the Head of Schools advised that it was difficult to determine the resources associated with the consultation process at this stage, however the full costs of the process would be recorded.

Mrs I J Hawkins referred to the third bullet point on Page 3 of Appendix A, and stated that “centre of excellence” should read “centres of excellence” to include both the NAFC Marine Centre and Shetland College.

In response to a question from Mrs C H J Miller, the Head of Schools advised that Bressay had never previously been classed as a remote island, and therefore the exception to the pupil roll of 20 as a minimum size for delivering the best service delivery would not relate to Bressay school. In response to a further question, the Head of Schools reported that the timeframe as agreed at Committee in August should be met, with a report to Committee in January.

On the motion of Mrs B L Fullerton, seconded by Mr C L Smith, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

### **77/08      Consultation on Shared Management in Yell Schools**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 3).

In response to a question from the Chairperson, the Service Manager – Administration clarified that as the report had originated from Officers there was no contravention of the Council’s Administrative Regulations.

Mr R S Henderson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Ms L F Baisley seconded.

Mr G Robinson moved as an amendment that the status quo should be maintained until such time as the Blueprint for Education was finalised. He explained that otherwise it could be seen that the shared management of Mid Yell Junior High and Cullivoe Primary had been given preferential treatment, and other shared management agreements could come forward with similar proposals. Mr R C Nickerson seconded.

Ms L Baisley said it was important to realise that shared management would work in some schools, however in the case of Yell it had not been successful. The community of Yell had been offered and taken part in a pilot scheme, which they had chosen not to continue, and there was little point in consultation with communities if their wishes were to be totally ignored. Mr W H Manson agreed that the provision of education in Yell should revert to the previous model and the process should not be delayed to await the findings from the Blueprint for Education. Mrs I J Hawkins agreed with the recommendations in the report, and said that Yell had put forward their case and it was important that the situation was rectified.

Mr C L Smith stated that Members should have the confidence to stand by the decision agreed by Committee in June, and to defer a decision on the shared management until the Council had considered the Blueprint for Education. Mr R C Nickerson said that the Committee should not necessarily change their decision because of pressure from one part of the community.

Mrs F B Grains said it could be useful to explore why shared management arrangements work for some schools in Shetland, and not for others.

In response to a request from a Member, the Head of Schools provided Members with the background to the shared management agreement in Yell. She highlighted that during the consultation no concerns had been raised regarding the standard of education, which was a credit to both the schools, and that the children’s education in both schools remain unaffected. She added that as concerns had been raised by one of the schools involved it would be particularly difficult to continue with the current arrangement.

(Mr J H Henry attended the meeting).

After summing up, voting took place by a show of hands and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mr G Robinson)	7
Motion (Mr R S Henderson)	11

78/08

### **Childcare Partnership**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Children’s Services (Appendix 4).

Mr J G Simpson commented that the economic importance of childcare had been discussed at Development Committee where assurance had been given that the local Childcare Strategy would be presented within two meeting cycles. Mr Simpson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr W H Manson seconded.

Mr G Robinson stated that it was important to have Member participation on the local childcare strategy Working Group, and proposed that the Officer Working Group should change to a Member/Officer Working Group, to ensure Member involvement in formulating policy. In response to a suggestion from Mr Robinson as to whether Mr Simpson would include this proposal into his motion, Mr Simpson said that he would adhere to the recommendations in the report.

Mr Robinson moved as an amendment that that there should be Member involvement in the formal process of developing the local childcare strategy. Dr J W G Wills seconded.

After summing up, voting took place by a show of hands and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mr G Robinson)	8
Motion (Mr J G Simpson)	8

The Chairman used his casting vote in favour of the motion, which was declared the finding of the meeting.

79/08      **Provision of Pre-School Education in the Lunnasting Area**  
The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 5), and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mrs F B Grains, seconded by Mrs C H J Miller.

80/08      **Report by HM Inspector of Education: Shetland Islands Council – Action Plan**  
The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 6), and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr G Robinson.

81/08      **Consultation on Secondary Education Qualifications**  
The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 7).

Mr W H Manson commended the effort by Officers and staff in providing the response. He noted that the questionnaire had been very difficult to respond to, and had raised differing views in each of the sectors of education. Mr Manson moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report, with the proviso to submit an additional political statement to highlight that the proposals do not fully cover the educational needs of island groups. Mr R S Henderson seconded.

Members noted that the outcome of this consultation could amend Scottish Government guidelines, and would be taken into account in the Blueprint for Education. The Head of Schools reported that the Scottish Government had advised that a consultation meeting would be held in Shetland which should highlight the issues for the island communities.

82/08      **Prioritisation of Education and Social Care Capital Projects**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 8).

The Chairperson proposed that the Occupational Therapy Resource Centre, currently ranked ninth, should be moved to the top of the new build list as the project had secured 50% NHS funding and the site had been identified.

Mrs B L Fullerton referred to the elderly population projections and noted that the proposed Community Care projects did not include any proposals to extend current care homes or to build new care homes. Mrs Fullerton said that with the requirements for this type of care increasing there was a need to look at future provision.

Mr A S Wishart requested that a report be prepared for the next Council meeting on the present level of reserves and the impact on the current financial crises. Mr A J Cluness clarified that a report was currently being prepared and would be presented to Council in October.

Mrs I J Hawkins noted that the new science block at the Scalloway School had not been included in the Schools Services priority ranking order. The Executive Director explained that the projects which had been included had been considered as live projects, however the science block would be added to the list.

Mr A T J Cooper proposed that community effort should be ranked at the top of the list of priorities and made a plea for Members to set aside the rolling programme for community effort for the lifetime of this Council. He referred to the Sports and Leisure Services remit and moved that Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations and Water Based Facilities are combined into one single rolling programme, and that Park Equipment and Play Areas are combined in a single rolling programme. Regarding Capital Grants to Water Based Facilities, Mr Cooper proposed that the Council could fund one marina each year for the lifetime of this Council. Mr A J Cluness seconded.

Mr A G L Duncan stated that he was totally opposed to Mr Cooper's proposal, and said that the priority areas should be Social Care, Education and Housing. Mr A G L Duncan moved as an amendment that Sports and Leisure services should be abolished completely. However this did not receive a seconder.

During the discussion Dr J W G Wills said that he generally agreed with Mr Cooper's proposals, however he did not regard marinas in Shetland as a priority. Mr R C Nickerson said that he supported Mr Cooper, however he had concerns regarding how new projects would get into the system.

Dr Wills then referred to the proposed ranking of the Schools Services projects, and proposed that the Lerwick Library Refurbishment should be ranked below Lerwick Primary Provision. Mrs C H J Miller seconded.

Mr G Robinson noted that the additional classrooms at Happyhansel Primary School had been ranked sixth in priority, however he explained that there was a pressing need for the additional classrooms to be built.

Mr B L Fullerton referred to Recommendation 10.1 (d) and asked that the further report should include details on the exploration of external funding, and the effect on service delivery on future projects should current facilities not be fit for purpose.

Mr L Angus commented that there were clearly restrictions on the Council's aspirations. Mr Angus moved that with the exception of the Occupational Therapy Resource Centre, the Executive Director take forward the issues raised, and report back to the next meeting. Mr A S Wishart seconded.

83/08

**Home Education Policy**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 9), and approved the recommendation contained therein on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Schools advised that currently 20 children were being education at home in Shetland.

84/08

**New Anderson High School Capital Project Update**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 10).

In introducing the report, the Executive Director advised that the revised brief and accommodation schedule did not yet include all the requirements, however these would be included in a future report. The Senior Contract Manager reported that there were some issues meeting the target size of 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> for the new school which were currently being addressed.

In response to questions from Dr J W G Wills, the Executive Director advised that utilising the Anderson Educational Institute was not part of the initial design being prepared at the moment but that idea could be taken forward. The Executive Director advised that copies of the concept designs were available and would be placed in the Members' room.

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mr J H Henry.

85/08

**Creation of Post of Adult Protection Co-ordinator**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care (Appendix 11).

The Chairperson advised that the Adult Protection Co-ordinator post was a fixed term appointment and would be reviewed after a two year period when the funding allocation from Scottish Government ceases.

On the motion of Mr G Robinson, seconded by Mrs B L Fullerton, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

In response to a question from Mr A T J Cooper, the Head of Community Care said it was difficult to determine whether the main tasks of the post would be complete within the two-year period, however there was an expectation that Scottish Government funding would continue.

86/08

**Shetland's Cultural Strategy: Draft for Consultation**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 12).

The Chairperson commended Mr Nickerson and the other Members who had been involved in progressing the Strategy document.

Mr G Robinson said that he would prefer officers' time to be addressing more challenging issues, and moved that the Committee agree to note the report at this time. However this received no seconder.

During the discussion, it was reported that the production of a Cultural Strategy was a requirement of the Council, and the Draft Cultural Strategy, attached as an Appendix to the report, was a refreshed version of the Cultural Strategy approved by Council in 2004.

Mr A J Cluness stated that heritage and culture were very much part of the regeneration of the islands with many of the projects reaping major economic benefits. Mr Cluness accordingly moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report. Ms L F Baisley seconded.

87/08 **Focused Futures Project**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Capital Programmes and Housing (Appendix 13).

Mr A J Cluness commented that similar initiatives had been extremely helpful and this would be a worthwhile project.

88/08 **Housing Issues from the Community Services Forum**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Capital Programmes and Housing (Appendix 14), and approved the recommendation contained therein on the motion of Mrs B L Fullerton, seconded by Mr C L Smith.

89/08 **Changes to the Inspection Model for Schools**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 15).

90/08 **Attainment in Shetland Schools, 2007 – 08**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Schools (Appendix 16).

The Chairperson congratulated the pupils, and staff in Education and Schools Services for achieving these excellent results.

91/08 **Report by Scottish Library and Information Council: Shetland Library**

The Committee noted a report by the Library and Information Services Manager (Appendix 17).

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairperson commended the Service on the excellent report. The Library and Information Services Manager advised that the results of the report had been favourable considering the space limitations. Members noted that the full report was available on the Council's website and copies had been placed in the Member's room.

92/08 **Service Performance of Funded Organisations for financial year 2007/08**

The Committee noted a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 18).

Members noted that the service performance report did not include SCT supported organisations.

93/08

**Shetland College Board of Management – 24 September 2008**

The Committee noted the minute of the above meeting (Appendix 19).

**42/08 – Train Shetland – Vocational Training**

Dr J W G Wills highlighted the changes in Government funding for modern apprenticeships, and commended Train Shetland's efforts to address this matter and said that Members should support Shetland's bid to source additional funding. Mr A Hughson advised that the Board had agreed that the Director of Shetland College would discuss the issues with the Chairperson of Skills Development Council.

**In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mr L Angus moved, and Mr C L Smith seconded, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of agenda items 20 and 21.**

(Members of the public and the media left the meeting)

(Mr A J Cluness and Dr J W G Wills left the meeting).

94/08

**Museum and Archive Service – Return of Donated Collection of Medals**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care.

Mr J H Henry referred to Recommendation 7.2, and moved that the Committee agree to defer a decision until such time as the group had been set up and the issues fully discussed. Mrs F B Grains seconded.

The Curator of the Shetland Museum and Archives provided further information on the collection of medals, and on the request for the collection to be returned. Members noted that this was the first instance when a request had been received for items to be returned, and that all donated items although considered part of the museum collection was the property of Shetland Islands Council.

Following discussion, Members agreed that legal advice should be sought and a further report would be presented to Committee.

95/08

**Corporate Parenting Monitoring Group**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Children's Services.

In response to a question from the Head of Children's Services as to whether Members were comfortable with the format of the report, some Members commented that the report was very comprehensive and the format was good and easy to follow.

Mrs B L Fullerton referred to the key information outlined in Section 4 of the report and noted that a number of the statements were particularly positive. The Head of Children's Services explained that each Looked After Child has an individual plan to meet their individual needs, and that feedback from the children was considered important to ensure that any problems or issues can be addressed.



During the discussion, Members commended what is done for young people in the Looked After Children system. However it was noted that these children tend to be in the bottom tier of attainments, and also the vulnerable minority of young adults who tend to go off the rails. Members said that the Council should aim to change the situation as regards attainments, and improve the process when children leave the Looked After Children system. The Head of Children's Services said it was hoped that the Focused Futures Project and a review of the youth work service would address some of the issues.

The meeting concluded at 11.40am.

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L Angus  
Chairperson