



MINUTE

‘B’

Services Committee

Room 16, Islesburgh Community Centre, Lerwick

Thursday 11 March 2010 at 10.00am

Present:

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

Apologies:

A J Cluness
A G L Duncan
W H Manson
R C Nickerson (for lateness)
A S Wishart

In Attendance:

H Sutherland, Executive Director, Education and Social Care
C Ferguson, Head of Community Care
C Medley, Head of Housing
V Simpson, Service Manager – Housing and Property
A Jamieson, Service Manager, Housing Business Support
G Martin, Senior Housing Officer
N Watt, Sport and Leisure Services Manager
A Nicol, Youth Services Manager
R Sinclair, Head of Capital Programmes
J Thomason, Management Accountant
K Simpson, Telecare Project Manager
J Robinson, Service Manager Occupational Therapy
L Adamson, Committee Officer
R Macleod, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Mr L Angus, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

Mr C L Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 “Provision of Temporary Housing – Opportunity Conversion of Acquired Properties”, as the joint-owner of a second home. Mr G Robinson, Mr A J Hughson, Mrs E L Fullerton, Mr L Angus and Ms L F Baisley also declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 as the joint-owner of a second home.

In response to a question, the Committee Officer advised that the level of interest did not relate to the recommendations in the report.

Mrs F B Grains declared an interest in Item 4 “Shetland Museum and Archives Service Plan 2010/11”.

Mr J H Henry declared an interest in Item 4 “Shetland Museum and Archives Service Plan 2010/11”, and Item 8 “Establishing a Housing Strategies Steering Group”.

Mr F A Robertson declared an interest in Item 4 “Shetland Museum and Archives Service Plan 2010/11”.

Dr J G Wills declared an interest, as family members worked within the Education Service and the Social Care Service.

Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 4 February 2010, having been circulated was confirmed.

Members’ Attendance at External Meetings

Mr C L Smith – Reshaping Care for Older People, Edinburgh – 8 February 2010

Mr L Angus – Meeting with the Scottish Housing Minister, Edinburgh – 4 March 2010

After hearing these updates, the Head of Housing advised that, along with the Head of Finance, he had met with the Scottish Housing Ministers’ Civil Servants. The Committee noted that a proposed plan to phase out the Housing Support Grant Scheme is now in place. The Head of Housing advised that this will have a dramatic impact on the Housing Revenue Account with a loss of approximately £1.2m. The Head of Housing will work together with the Head of Finance to present Members with all available options and seek the instruction of the Council. A follow-up meeting with the Scottish Housing Minister, to discuss this issue, has been set for early April.

The Chairperson provided some background information on the payment of Housing Support Grants and agreed that, following work by the Head of Housing and Head of Finance, the Council’s decision will be presented through various committees, ultimately being considered at a future meeting of COSLA Leaders. He added that the Convener has been briefed on the situation and further steps will be taken to progress this after the General Election later in the year.

Dr J W G Wills wished to express his thanks to the Chairperson and Councillor Duncan for taking negotiations with the Scottish Housing Minister forward. He added that the Scottish Housing Minister should be made aware of the unique situation faced by the Council and

suggested that consideration should be given to the debt being written off. The Chairperson echoed his appreciation for the work that Councillor Duncan had undertaken to secure a meeting with the Scottish Housing Minister. The Committee concurred.

20/10 **New Anderson High School Capital Project – Progress Report**

The Committee noted a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 1).

Following an update on the content of the workshop sessions run by Architecture and Design Scotland, which looked at the whole site for the Anderson High School, Mr F A Roberson advised that a similar workshop would be arranged for all Members. Members were informed that although no date had been set for the Members workshop session, Architecture & Design Scotland are very enthusiastic to return to Shetland and it is hoped that this can be progressed soon. Mr F A Robertson moved that the Committee approve the recommendation contained within the report. Mr A T J Cooper seconded.

The Executive Director of Education and Social Care highlighted an error in the wording in paragraph 5.1 of the report and Members noted that it should read "...the site on the hillside might not be the best overall position for the new school..."

In response to a question from a Member, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care informed the Committee that an update on the legal position would be presented at the next meeting.

Dr J W G Wills stated that he was happy to see that the halls of residence had been included in the project. In response to a question from Dr J G Wills, the Chairperson advised that the Anderson High School capital project consultation will dovetail with the consultation on the Blueprint for Education.

In response to a query from Ms L F Baisley, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care confirmed that the use of the existing Anderson High School will be addressed as part of the consultation and this will be done during the early stages of the process.

Mrs C H J Miller questioned whether the inclusion of the halls of residence would have an effect on the capital programme. The Chairperson advised that a finite sum of money had been set aside for the completion of this project and it was Council policy to remain within this amount.

The Chairperson advised that, along with the Vice-Chairperson, he had attended an interesting meeting with the Education Consultant. Discussion had taken place regarding the use of multi-purpose areas and how these can be best utilised. Members were informed that it would be prudent to centre the building design around the curriculum, number of teachers and diversity of subjects.

21/10 **Shetland College/Train Shetland Board of Management – Note of Meeting held on 24 February 2010**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 2).

In response to a query from a Member, Mr A J Hughson confirmed that work on Phase 3 is continuing.

Whalsay Golf Club – Support Grant

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 3).

Mr J G Simpson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report, seconded by Mr R S Henderson.

Mr A T J Cooper commented that organisations who receive similar funding should be made aware that the same level of funding may not be available in years to come.

Dr J W G Wills enquired as to the percentage of running costs which had recently been granted to the Dale Golf Club. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager stated that he could not provide definitive figures but would estimate that the total grant amount was around £42,000. Dr Wills commented that it would be unfair for Whalsay Golf Club to be awarded a lower proportion of their running costs. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager agreed to source the figures during the meeting, if this met with Members approval. Members gave their approval to this suggestion.

(The Sport and Leisure Services Manager left the meeting).

Dr J W G Wills moved an amendment to defer the decision until the percentage figures could be taken into consideration, seconded by Mr G Robinson.

Voting took place by a show of hands, and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Dr J W G Wills)	8
Motion (Mr J G Simpson)	6

In order to progress the agenda, Members advanced to the next item whilst awaiting the figures requested.

When consideration of this item resumed, the Sport and Leisure Services Manager reported that the Dale Golf Club have estimated running costs of £127,700 for their financial year 2009-10 and will receive a grant of £42,000, which covers 33.2% of the total costs. Members noted that the terms of the report proposes to grant 20% of Whalsay Golf Clubs' running costs.

Dr J W G Wills moved that Whalsay Golf Club be granted 33.2% of its running costs. Mr R S Henderson seconded.

Mrs C H J Miller moved an amendment that the Whalsay Golf Club grant remain at the level recommended in the report and that Dale Golf Club only receive 20% of their running costs in the next financial year. Ms L F Baisley seconded.

Following discussion and acknowledging that the Committee was not in a position to make a decision on the budget for the next financial year, Mrs C Miller withdrew her amendment.

Mr J Simpson referred Members to the terms of the report and commented that it would not be in the best interests of the Whalsay Golf Club, to disregard the recommendations.

Mrs E L Fullerton suggested that a policy detailing funding levels for voluntary organisations should be implemented as a large number of these organisations rely on Council funding. In order to progress this, consultation should be entered into with the Shetland Charitable Trust. Mr A Cooper agreed, stating that the policy should be implemented in a timely manner in order to give organisations sufficient time to cope with the reduction in funding which may occur next year.

Dr J Wills amended his motion to support the recommendations contained within the report. This met with the approval of his seconder Mr R S Henderson and the Committee concurred.

23/10

Shetland Museum and Archives Service Plan 2010/11

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Education and Social Care (Appendix 4).

In response to queries from Dr J W G Wills regarding the 1% reduction in funding to the Shetland Museum and Archives, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care advised that this had been possible due to a lower than average increase in the salary budget and a change to opening hours, and that a 25-year Service Level Agreement had been signed with Shetland Amenity Trust and this allows for the negotiation of services and costs. She added that the Head of Finance will present a report at the next meeting of the Council indicating how the target of £460,000 in savings for non essential services within the Education and Social Care Department can be achieved.

(The Sport and Leisure Services Manager attended the meeting).

Following discussion regarding local heritage hubs, Members were informed that the Economic Development Unit have a new scheme in place to provide financial aid to smaller heritage groups and that since the introduction of this scheme there have been no complaints.

Mr A T J Cooper moved the recommendations in the report, seconded by Mrs E L Fullerton.

24/10

Therapy Resource Centre – New Build Project

The Committee considered a report by the Service Manager Occupational Therapy (Appendix 5).

Questioning the timescales for building work to commence, Mr C L Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report, seconded by Mrs E L Fullerton. The Head of Capital Programmes confirmed that design work should be progressed to a stage where a planning application could be submitted by early June.

25/10

Housing Support Worker (HSW) Service

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 6).

Mr C L Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendation contained within the report, seconded by Ms L F Baisley.

In response to a query from Mrs I J Hawkins, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care provided detail on each of the three pilot projects currently underway at Unst, Scalloway and Lerwick, and confirmed that the Single Shared Assessment would be launched in April 2010.

Referring to the pilot project in Unst, Ms L F Baisley commented that the Council should be very proud of the outcome of this project which had been conducted in an imaginative and innovative approach.

26/10

Provision of Temporary Housing – Opportunity Conversion of Acquired Properties

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 7).

In response to a question from Mrs I J Hawkins, the Head of Housing advised that the proposed properties to be brought back into use were mainly located in the Lerwick area but if the opportunity arose to purchase properties outwith Lerwick, where demand has been identified, this would also be considered.

Mr A T J Cooper questioned the possibility that the purchase of existing properties would go against the Council's aim to implement a standard house type, but supported the proposal that most houses would be located in Lerwick, near the support services to meet the needs of some tenants.

Mrs C H J Miller moved the recommendation contained within the report, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins.

Speaking on behalf of Councillor A G L Duncan, Mr C L Smith asked that consideration should be given to converting properties in rural areas.

27/10

Establishing a Housing Strategies Steering Group

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 8).

Mr A T J Cooper moved that the Committee approve recommendations 7.1a) and b)ii in the report. Mrs C H J Miller seconded.

In referring to Appendix A, Mr C L Smith wished to pass on a request from Councillor A Duncan that a representative from the Fire Board be included in the membership of the Group. Members noted that this would be useful should the proposed amendment to Building Regulations, regarding sprinkler systems, come into force.

28/10

Allocation Policy Annual Review

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 9).

Mrs C H J Miller moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report, seconded by Mr C L Smith.

29/10

Homelessness and the 2012 Target

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 10).

In response to a question from a Member, the Service Manager – Housing and Property advised that a “local connection to Shetland” would be established following residency in the Isles for at least six months out of the last twelve months, or three years out of the last five years.

Mrs E L Fullerton questioned the proposed change to paragraph 8 of Appendix 1 and asked if there would be any detrimental effect on looked after children arising from this. The Service Manager – Housing and Property assured Members that all looked after children would still be covered by this policy.

Mr C L Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report, seconded by Mrs E L Fullerton.

In response to a question from Mr A Cooper, the Service Manager – Housing and Property explained that should the proposed amendments be approved, a person 50 years or over would be considered vulnerable, but by 2012 any person found to be homeless would be considered as vulnerable.

30/10

Trips Away! – Policy and Guidelines on Health and Safety of Young People on Off Site Trips and Visits

The Committee considered a report by the Youth Services Manager (Appendix 11).

The Committee acknowledged the exhaustiveness of the document and Dr J W G Wills asked Officers to provide an executive summary for ease of reference. Highlighting paragraph 8.15 on page 33 of the policy document, Dr J Wills commented that the policy was not realistic and in parts over prescriptive.

In response to a query from a Member, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care confirmed that the Council’s Insurance Section had been part of the Working Group membership. Members questioned whether the document had been tested by teachers and staff in the voluntary sector.

Mr J H Henry asked whether the Council has an obligation to consult with parents on the introduction of this document.

Acknowledging the necessity for the introduction of the document, Ms L F Baisley drew Members’ attention to paragraph 7.23 on page 28 and stated that it would be sad to discourage contact with animals.

Drawing on personal experience, Mrs E L Fullerton suggested that an executive summary should be passed to parents. She added that a more robust indexing system should be used so that, in cases of emergency, the appropriate guidance could be found more quickly.

Mrs E L Fullerton moved that the Committee defer decision for one cycle to allow for consultation with teaching staff, Parent Councils and the Learning School. Following further discussion, where Members noted the benefits of visits to Trondra Farm, Mr C L Smith seconded.

Mr G Robinson wished for clarification of the life saving qualifications referred to at paragraph 7.20 on page 27 of the document. He also enquired as to how this would be monitored.

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 the following items of business.

31/10 **Telecare Service Provider Options**

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

Mr C L Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report if consideration could be given to the sharing of costs for 24/7 service provision, seconded by Mrs E L Fullerton.

32/10 **Update on Private Investment Opportunity for Care Services**

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

Following discussion, which included the proposal for a working group to be established to take this forward, Mr C L Smith moved that a decision should be deferred for two cycles to allow for the working group to meet and that a detailed report be presented at a future meeting of Services Committee. Ms L F Baisley seconded.

(Mr R C Nickerson attended the meeting).

Following further discussion, Mrs C H J Miller moved as an amendment that the Committee approve the recommendations as they stand. Dr J W G Wills seconded.

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

Amendment (Mrs C H J Miller)	2
Motion (Mr C L Smith)	14

Members agreed the appointment of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Mr C L Smith and Mr A G L Duncan to the Care Centre Private Investment Member-Officer Working Group. At the request of the Chairperson, the Executive Director of Education and Social Care agreed to appoint Officers accordingly.

33/10 **Funding for Interim Placement Service at Montfield Hospital**

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

The Chairperson provided some background on this matter and following discussion, Mr C L Smith moved that the Committee approve the recommendation contained within the report, seconded by Mrs E L Fullerton.

The meeting concluded at 11.55 a.m.

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L Angus
Chairperson