



Council

**Shetland
Islands**

MINUTE

‘B’

Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Thursday 26 January 2006 at 10.30am

Present:

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| F B Grains | L Angus |
| B J Cheyne | C B Eunson |
| R G Feather | B P Gregson |
| L G Groat | I J Hawkins |
| J H Henry | J A Inkster |
| J C Irvine | E J Knight |
| W H Manson | J P Nicolson |
| F A Robertson | J G Simpson |
| W N Stove | W Tait |

Apologies:

A J Cluness Capt G G Mitchell
T W Stove

In Attendance:

L Bisset, Capital Projects Manager
H Budge, Quality Improvement Manager
B Doughty, Interim Head of Social Work
N Galbraith, Interim Head of Education
C Medley, Head of Housing
J Reyner, Acting Quality Improvement Manager
G Smith, Head of Community Development
L Adamson, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Mrs F B Grains, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 1 December 2005, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Members' Attendance at External Meetings

Mr E J Knight reported that he had recently attended the London Boat Show for the launch of the Round Britain and Ireland Race. The Shetland Stand had maintained a significant amount of interest throughout the event. Mr Knight suggested that for future years, it would be worthwhile to combine a Shetland and Orkney stand, as yachts visiting Shetland could also be visiting Orkney. The Committee agreed that this was a very worthwhile exercise and Shetland should continue to be represented at the event.

Fuel Poverty Strategy

The Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Service and the Energy Manager – Infrastructure Services (Appendix 1).

The Head of Housing summarised the main terms of the report and advised that although the Fuel Poverty Strategy had been graded highly by the Scottish Executive, no money has been directly provided to implement the strategy.

Mr J P Nicolson referred to the Executive Summary where it was reported, “The Scottish House Condition Survey estimates that around 25% of households in Shetland are fuel poor” and enquired whether there was any indication of the overall cost for tackling fuel poverty in Shetland. The Head of Housing advised that the estimated cost is £31.1m, with the majority of need being in the private housing sector, rather than in social housing.

Some discussion took place regarding which sectors of the community would be most at risk of fuel poverty, and although it was decided that older people and pensioners would be those mainly at risk, people living in older houses, families with young children and those living in rural areas would also be included. The Head of Housing advised that grants were available through the SIC’s Environmental Health service to assist with installation of insulation and central heating. However, financial assistance to improve homes may not eradicate the problems.

Mrs I J Hawkins said that as the Fuel Poverty Strategy had been forced on Local Authorities, she suggested that the SIC’s representative at the CoSLA meetings should be making representation on this issue and fighting that funding be provided for Shetland.

Mr B P Gregson suggested that as the Government has not had to use the money it allocates for the cold weather scheme, when the temperature falls below a certain level, that money could be used to fund some of the Fuel Poverty Strategy. Mr J A Inkster said that as the fuel strategy is a government priority, it is imperative that the funding comes from central government. Pressure must be kept on the Scottish Executive to achieve as much funding as possible.

Mr L Angus suggested that the Council write to the Department for Work and Pensions outlining the points made and to suggest that when they carry out their review they include the wind chill factor as a base scheme. The Head of Housing advised that he would speak to the Scottish Executive regarding lobbying for funding, as Shetland cannot implement the Strategy without funding.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Housing advised that Hjaltnland Housing Association had set up a “One-Stop-Shop” to provide advice on the grants available to householders.

Mr W H Manson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report and to incorporate the earlier suggestion by Mr L Angus to write to the Department for Work and Pensions. Mr L Angus seconded.

02/06 **Education Service – Service Improvement Plan**

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

The Quality Improvement Manager summarised the main terms of the report. She explained that the objectives have to be set annually in December, to allow schools to consider what to take forward in their plans for implementation in August.

Mr L Angus moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr W H Manson seconded.

Mr L Angus commented that he would like to see some assurance that budget preparation and monitoring would be included. The Quality Improvement Manager advised that the devolved school management scheme was currently being reviewed and during 2005, additional work had been undertaken to ensure that budgets were more closely monitored. The Quality Improvement Manager said it was envisaged that the Education service's budgets would be on target this year.

Referring to the Service Review for Community Services held earlier this week, Mr J P Nicolson said that resource management for the Education service had been well covered and there was evidence that progress was being made in terms of achievement.

A Member commented that there was no reference to alcohol in the Service Improvement Plan. The Quality Improvement Manager advised that health promotion in schools ensures there is a programme for health and social education and alcohol misuse forms part of that area. A Member stated that alcohol misuse is a reflection on the community of Scotland and Shetland, rather than on the Education service. The Interim Head of Education said people should be educated about the dangers of alcohol misuse, although alteration of behaviour was often very difficult. He added that the Education service would be continuing to make a drive to educate on alcohol misuse, in collaboration with other services.

The Interim Head of Education said that the Service Improvement Plan should allow schools to match exactly with inspection requirements, therefore the process should never be a surprise to the schools involved, the Education service or to Members. He reported that there had not been a poor inspection report on a Shetland school in the past two years. The Interim Head of Education added that with the updated Service Improvement Plan all future inspection results for Shetland schools should be good, very good or excellent.

In response to a query from a Member, the Interim Head of Education advised that the former Quarff school building would be implemented as an additional support base later this year.

03/06

Shared Management Guidelines for Shetland's Schools

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

The Quality Improvement Manager summarised the main terms of the report. She advised that the guidelines would allow the Education Service to consult widely with the communities involved, gather all the information and either recommend approval or refusal of shared management. However the final decision on shared management of the schools would be made at Services Committee and SIC.

Mr B P Gregson referred to the shared management guidelines and the reference to the involvement of school boards. Mr Gregson advised that he was aware that there were uncertainties relating to the future of school boards in their existing format. Mr Gregson said that as school boards had played an important role in the future of schools, he asked for some assurance that there would continue to be a large involvement from the local community in the shared management process. The Interim Head of Education gave his absolute assurance that school boards would not discontinue if the school so chose. The intention is to include a wider community group, including teachers, parents with children at school, and members of the community whose children no longer attend that particular school.

Mr B P Gregson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mrs I J Hawkins seconded.

(Mr J C Irvine attended the meeting).

It was reported that the shared management pilot for three schools in the Westside had been a success. The Head Teacher was effectively the manager, with responsibility for the management aspects of the schools and policy development for learning and teaching. In the absence of the Head Teacher at a particular school, the Principal Teacher would take responsibility for the school. This arrangement allows teaching staff to concentrate on teaching the pupils and this benefits the children in the schools.

04/06

Distribution of Additional Funding for Class Contact Reduction, Class Size Reduction and Additional Teachers

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Head of Education (Appendix 4)

The Quality Improvement Manager advised that the funding allocation is over a two-year period. The first year funding is to achieve further class-contact reduction time. She referred Members to paragraph 10 in Appendix A, to the other areas of teaching that have to be taken into consideration by 2007. The second year funding is to ensure that

Primary 1 and Secondary 1 and 2 are at the required levels and ensure that a certain level of art and support teachers are employed.

In response to a query from a Member, the Interim Head of Education advised that it was difficult to establish the current number of teaching staff in Shetland covered by the circular since it included a range of support staff. However he assured Members that the target of 430 teaching staff would be met by 2007.

On the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

05/06 **Shetland Museums Service – Collection Management Policy 2005-2008**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development (Appendix 5).

The Head of Community Development advised that Shetland Amenity Trust manage the Shetland museum on a day to day basis, however the collection remains in the ownership of the Council.

Mr L G Groat moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr L Angus seconded.

06/06 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Delting Boating Club Marina Users Association**

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

The Head of Community Development advised that this was the first application for funding for a marina project, following the report to Committee in September on “Additional Resources for Water Based Facilities”.

Mrs B J Cheyne advised that Busta Voe, where the proposed marina would be located, was where all the Island Games sailing events had been held. She advised that the voe had been designated for recreational purposes. Mrs Cheyne said that this was a big project that residents of Brae and neighbouring villages would use and would also encourage yachts to visit Shetland. Mr E J Knight said that the provision of visitor berths in any marina development was crucial. It was suggested, to encourage visiting yachts, facilities such as piped water and electricity should be provided on the pontoons.

Mrs B J Cheyne moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr E J Knight seconded.

07/06 **Support for Tall Ships’ Race 2006**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Community Development (Appendix 7).

The Head of Community Development advised that he had been in discussion with C.O.P.E. Ltd to get them involved in the selection process, with the possibility of an individual with a disability taking part in the 2006 event.

08/06 **Cinema and Music Venue – An Update**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Community Development (Appendix 8).

Mr J P Nicolson said that the feasibility study indicated that the project would be very vulnerable should audience participation figures fall below the suggested benchmark. There were also many questions still to be answered. The Head of Community Development said that nobody would want the project to proceed should there be continual financial problems. He advised that experts have been commissioned to look at the Business Plan for the Cinema and Music Venue project and their findings will be presented in a report to Services Committee on 16 March.

Mr W Tait reported that a cinema and music venue had recently opened in the Western Isles. He suggested that the Western Isles be asked to provide some statistics on the facility. A Member suggested that the Orkney Cinema also be approached to provide statistics, to gauge comparisons.

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mrs F B Grains moved, and Mr W N Stove seconded, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of agenda item 9.

(Representatives of the media left the meeting)

09/06 **Childcare Services Provided by Firth and Mossbank Enterprise (FAME)**

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Head of Social Work.

(Mr L Angus declared a non-pecuniary interest and left the meeting).

The Interim Head of Social Work advised that this was very much a holding report to allow more work to continue with the new Board of Directors appointed to FAME. To date the new Board have met all the funding conditions to allow the provision of childcare in the area to continue until the end of this financial year. A further report on the proposals for childcare provision in Firth and Mossbank and for childcare services throughout Shetland will be presented to the Services Committee in March.

Mr W H Manson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr L G Groat seconded.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006
Agenda Item No. (c) - Public Report

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F B Grains
Chairperson



REPORT

To: **Employees JCC**
Services Committee

13 March
16 March

From: **Interim Head of Social Work**
Shetland Childcare Partnership

Future of Shetland Childcare
Report No. SW-04-06-F

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to seek Council's agreement to provide a variety of creative solutions to the childcare requirements of differing localities that would fit with the overall objective of a better integrated service for children and families.
- 1.2 Childcare services including pre-school education are established in most areas of Shetland. These include authority nursery classes, commissioned pre-school groups, private nurseries, registered childminders, community nurseries and out of school care.
(Appendix A)
- 1.3 Many of the services referred to 1.2 are managed by voluntary committees. In the past two years, two Out of School Care providers in the voluntary sector have closed due to pressure on voluntary management committees and lack of financial security. Details of the pressures on these committees are set out in full in **Appendix B**.
- 1.4 Of the remaining 4 voluntary out of school care providers, all are still facing the same pressures and depend heavily on financial assistance from the Shetland Childcare Partnership and Shetland Islands Council Community Development Department.
- 1.5 Shetland Childcare Partnership (SCP) along with associated agencies was asked to review childcare and address the following:
 - A more sustainable model for out of school care
 - The future of Islesburgh One Stop Childcare
 - The provision of childcare in Firth and Mossbank

A consultation process has been carried out and the views of parents and interested parties have been considered.

- 1.6 No local authority in Scotland has managed to resolve the issue of sustainability of out of school care. There will always be a need for SCP to fund voluntary organisations. In addition, as stated above the pressures now placed on voluntary organisations makes central management by a larger organisation a necessity.
- 1.7 It is estimated that around 380 parents are enabled to work either full or part-time and that there are around 150 employed in the childcare sector. This could mean around 266 FTE jobs resulting in a total income of £4.8 million per annum to the Shetland economy.
- 1.8 Given the shortage of labour and low unemployment in Shetland the provision of childcare to release more people into the labour force should be seen as a vital component of the economic strategy for Shetland.

2. Links to Council Priorities

- 2.1 The main aim of the Shetland Local Economic Forum Economic Development Strategy "Shetland 2012" is:

"To maintain and enhance prosperity in Shetland by enabling businesses, communities and individuals to attain their full economic potential".

Shetland Childcare Partnership firmly believes that without the commitment and financial support of the Council sustainable and affordable childcare cannot be achieved.

Shetland Childcare Partnership firmly believes that without sustainable and affordable childcare full economic potential for Shetland cannot be achieved.

3. Locality Based Childcare

Childcare provision and availability varies from area to area. This report sets out details of services available using the 7 localities proposed by Community Planning (**Appendix C**) and recommends changes where necessary.

The areas to be discussed are:

- North Isles
- North Mainland
- West Mainland, Foula and Papa Stour
- Central
- Lerwick and Bressay
- South Mainland and Fair Isle
- Whalsay and Skerries

3.1 North Isles

- 3.1.1 Last year Shalder House was established in Baltasound, Unst. Shalder House provided daycare to children between the ages of 0 –3 years three days per week. RAF Saxavord, Shetland Childcare Partnership and the local community supported this venture. Now with the withdrawal of the Royal Air Force from Unst a solution has to be found to retain this service.
- 3.1.2 Recent discussions have led to the setting up of North Isles Childcare, a registered company with charitable status limited by guarantee. This group will manage the day to day running of the service, based at Shalder House. This initiative has the support of the local community including the Head Teachers of both schools.
- 3.1.4 The service will not only provide employment within the childcare sector but will enable parents to seek employment or training; both of which are crucial to the long term future of Unst.
- 3.1.5 Shetland Childcare Partnership has agreed to commit £5,000 to support this project during financial year 2006/07.

3.2 North Mainland

- 3.2.1 Parents residing in North Roe and Ollaberry are receiving computer training through Shetland College. For some parents there is a barrier due to lack of childcare. With no registered childminder in the area a creative solution has to be found.
- 3.2.2 Shetland Childcare Partnership, Initiative at the Edge and Community Development will work with the Care Commission to identify the most effective solution. One option proposed is to recruit a childminder and register premises (in addition to the childminder's own home) sourced by Initiative at the Edge and have a secondary registration at the childminder's home.
- 3.2.3 Shetland Childcare Partnership will advertise for prospective childminders and provide training and a small grant to those interested. A business development grant would be available from Shetland Enterprise.
- 3.2.4 The recent financial difficulties faced by Firth and Mossbank Enterprise (FAME) have highlighted the need to review childcare in this area (Min Ref Oct 6805/ Jan 0906). The following services are provided at 21-23 Leaside under the management of FAME:
- Breakfast Club
 - Community Daycare Facility (Bright Sparks)
 - Out of School Care (KidZone)

Parents residing in the Firth and Mossbank area have no alternative but to travel out with the community to seek employment therefore there is a need for a daycare facility for pre-school and primary school age children. This

area is also the nearest Shetland has to a deprived area with a high turnover of population and a high proportion of vulnerable families.

3.2.4.1 Breakfast Club

Low attendance and high running costs of the breakfast club has led the Shetland Childcare Partnership to recommend that this service be closed. In addition SCP considers that all breakfast clubs should, where at all possible, be based in schools.

3.2.4.2 Community Daycare Facility (Bright Sparks)

There is already a nursery class operating within Mossbank Primary School, providing pre-school education through a morning and afternoon session. Bright Sparks delivers a daycare facility 5 days a week, 50 weeks per year. Both the nursery class and Bright Sparks cater for 3 – 5 year olds. Bright Sparks can accommodate 2 year olds. The present service does not demonstrate the best use of staff and funding. Two ways of service provision have been considered:-.

- 1) To extend the provision offered by the nursery class to full day care and close Bright Sparks. This would make a saving in terms of the venue and create one centre for childcare and pre-school education, by removing duplication of staffing and resources.
- 2) To maintain the nursery class provision, close Bright Sparks and seek Registered Childminders to provide daycare.

After due consideration, SCP is recommending that the Council approve the first option as recruiting and retaining childminders could take a considerable period of time during which parents would be left with only the 2.5 hour nursery session. Following the last round of advertising only two individuals from Brae expressed an interest in becoming childminders and none from Firth and Mossbank area.

Secondly the nursery class is to undergo considerable refurbishment that would increase the available space and create an ideal opportunity to provide wrap around care (extended provision beyond the two and half hour pre-school education session) at one location. **(See Appendix E3)**

The first option will have implications for staff in both Bright Sparks and Mossbank Nursery, and will require further consultation within the context of Transfer of Undertakings regulations (TUPE). Preliminary consultation has taken place with appropriate trade unions. Further consultation will be required with all interested parties.

3.2.4.3 Out of School Care (KidZone)

KidZone is an out of school club based at 21 – 23 Leaside. It caters for children between the ages of 5 – 14 years and provides childcare after school and during school holidays and closure days. A maximum of 12 children can attend at any given time. Since June 2005, FAME has relied on Shetland Childcare Partnership and Council to meet staffing costs.

SCP is recommending that KidZone is managed from Lerwick by Shetland Childcare Partnership. This demonstrates more cost effective use of staff. Only childcare staff directly delivering the service will be transferred to Shetland Islands Council Social Work. A decision on the location of KidZone will follow discussion with the local community but in the interim should remain at 21 –23 Leaside.

Since June 2005, Shetland Childcare Partnership and Council have met the cost of staffing. In total FAME has received the following funding towards childcare.

| SOURCE | FUNDING |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | £27,930 |
| Quality of Life | £20,000 |
| Sure Start | £20,000 |
| Social Work (Nov – Jan) | £31,785.65 |
| Social Work (Feb – March) | £21,000 (has been set aside) |
| TOTAL | £120,715.65 |

- 3.2.5 The cost of providing additional staff to support full daycare at Mossbank Primary School will be approximately £39,000. Funding for this to come from Sure Start (£20,000), Changing Children's Services Fund (£12,000) and Shetland Childcare Partnership (£7,000).

The cost of delivering the service by KidZone, through Shetland Childcare Partnership, will be £34,805. Funding for this will be met as part of the overall funding for the new structure of Shetland Childcare Partnership.

3.3 West Mainland, Foula and Papa Stour

- 3.3.1 Shetland Childcare Partnership has received a few enquiries as to childcare available in the West Mainland. In the document Shetland Childcare 2012 the west of Shetland was identified as a gap area.
- 3.3.2 Discussions with parents have led to a proposal to recruit more registered childminders with a view to them establishing a co-operative based at the Germatwatt Centre or possibly Skeld Nursery. Skeld Nursery Class operates in the afternoons leaving the nursery space vacant in the mornings. Any use of either location will require further consultation with all interested parties.

- 3.3.3 Shetland Childcare Partnership will advertise for prospective childminders and provide training and a small grant to those interested. Shetland Childcare Partnership will give a grant of £200 to anyone registering as a childminder. A project grant of up to £2,000 will be made available through SCP. A business development grant would be available from Shetland Enterprise for anyone interested in becoming a registered childminder.

3.4 **Central Mainland**

- 3.4.1 The biggest demand in this area is for childcare for children between the ages of 0 – 1 years.

A new project called Hame Fae Hame will be located in the Hjaltland Housing Association development on Main Street, Scalloway. The preferred option for operating this provision is as a workers co-operative allowing any registered childminder in the area to opt in. It is currently planned to offer childcare for 1 – 5 year olds. In light of demand Hame Fae Hame and Care Commission will discuss the implications of extending the care to 0 – 5 year olds. It is hoped to have this service available in January 2007. In the Central Mainland, a project grant of up to £2,000 will be made available through SCP to Hame Fae Hame. Shetland Enterprise will support this business venture.

- 3.4.2 The Scalloway Playgroup provides commissioned places for 3 year olds but also offers places for 2 year olds and an extended session, which is available to children from 2 – 5 years old. Pre-school children attending the nursery class can join the playgroup following the end of their session at nursery thus enabling parents to be able to work a full morning.

3.5 **South Mainland and Fair Isle**

There is no significant lack of childcare to meet demand in this locality. Central Private Nursery and Out of School Club provide pre-school care and out of school care. However, Ness Out of School Club has been operating from Boddam Public Hall. This has not been the most convenient location, which is reflected in the small number of children attending.

- 3.5.1 In order to provide more appropriate facilities and hopefully enable the club to move towards sustainability, agreement has been reached in using the art room within Dunrossness Primary School.
- 3.5.2 A voluntary committee runs the club but it is recommended that Shetland Childcare Partnership should provide management of this service given the pressures on voluntary committees set out in Appendix B. The staff employed by the voluntary committee to be transferred to Shetland Islands Council Social Work. The cost of delivering Ness Out of School Club through Shetland Childcare Partnership will be £31,088.76. The increase in cost reflects possible changes within the role of staff involved in this provision and the need to further develop the service. Funding for this will

be met as part of the overall funding for the new structure of Shetland Childcare Partnership.

3.6 Whalsay and Skerries

3.6.1 There would appear to be sufficient provision. Pre-school education is provided by Shetland Islands Council Education Service, within the local Primary School, subject to need.

3.6.2 There is no proposed change to current provision and no financial implications.

3.7 Lerwick and Bressay

3.7.1 At present there would appear to be sufficient childcare to meet demand on Bressay. However should this change in the future then Shetland Childcare Partnership will look at ways of consulting parents on this issue.

3.7.2 Although in Lerwick there is considerable choice in childcare there still remains a shortage of registered childminders. Employment opportunities in Lerwick lead to a considerable uptake in places across most providers.

3.7.3 In response to parental demand Shetland Islands Council Education Service is operating an extended session in one nursery class at Bell's Brae Primary School. Lerwick Pre-School Group, Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Pre-School Group) also offer extended sessions thus enabling parents to work a full morning. Blydehaven and ABACUS Nurseries provide full daycare.

3.7.4 There are a number of Registered childminders in Lerwick most of whom are full and have a waiting list.

3.7.5 For primary and early secondary age children there are two out of school clubs and an activity club in Lerwick. None of these clubs are operating to their full potential and have received substantial funding from Shetland Childcare Partnership. A total of £26,711.50 has been paid during this financial year. Sound Out of School Club is managed by a voluntary committee, which has come under increasing pressure as set out in **Appendix B**.

Consultation has taken place with representatives of Islesburgh Trust, and with staff, committees and parents from both Sound and Islesburgh Clubs. Consultation with children is currently taking place.

3.7.6 It is recommended that Sound Out of School Club and Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Out of School Club) amalgamate and are managed by Shetland Childcare Partnership. This demonstrates more cost effective use of staff and resources. Based on project costs, savings will be achieved. **(See Appendix E2)** Agreement has been reached with Islesburgh Trust, Sound Out of School Club Committee and staff to enable Sound Out of School Club staff to transfer to the employment of the Trust before 31 March 2006.

3.7.7 Islesburgh One Stop Childcare is part of the services offered by Islesburgh Trust. During the recent review of the Trust it was decided that SCP should be tasked with identifying more affordable management models to take on the role of managing the current range of services delivered through Islesburgh Trust. In April 2006 Islesburgh Trust's Services will be transferred to Shetland Islands council and the new Arts Development Agency with the exception of childcare. It is therefore crucial that a decision is taken as to the future of the One Stop Childcare.

The current range of childcare services provided through the One Stop Childcare are;

- Breakfast Club
- Activity Club (10–14 year olds)
- Out of School Club (5– 10 year olds)
- Pre-School Group

3.7.7.1 **Breakfast Club**

Low attendance and high running costs of the breakfast club has led the Shetland Childcare Partnership to recommend that this service be closed. In addition SCP considers that all breakfast clubs should, where at all possible, be based in schools.

3.7.7.2 **Activity Club and Out of School Club**

It is not necessary to have 2 clubs located in the same premises nor is it cost effective, it is therefore recommended that the activity club be absorbed into the out of school club resulting in greater flexibility in the use of staff and resources.

3.7.7.3 **Pre-School Group**

The status quo is not an option given the current position of Islesburgh Trust and reverting back to a voluntary management committee would also be unworkable given the issues around voluntary management committees as set out in **Appendix B**, therefore the SCP has considered the following:-

Option 1

Islesburgh Pre-School Group retains commissioned group status and becomes part of the services available through the Bruce Family Centre. The Family Centre offers support to vulnerable families. A pre-school group managed by the Family Centre would facilitate a more integrated package in line with specific needs. This service would be available to other agencies that work with children and families. The pre-school group would still offer commissioned places and access to the extended session for those who wish it. **(See Appendix D2)**

Option 2

At Bell's Brae Primary School there are 2 nursery classes. One class provides 2 sessions per day – a morning session and an afternoon session. The other class offers the normal two and a half

hours in the morning plus an extra one and quarter hours. Parents can choose to pay for this extended session. The extended session continues to operate as a pilot.

Bells Brae Nursery classes are able to offer 60 places, under this provision. If it were necessary to find extra places in Lerwick, this could only be done by closing the extended session and offering a second afternoon session for a further 20 places. An extra afternoon session at Bells Brae would also incur additional costs to Education Service.

Should Islesburgh Playgroup close; there would be an overall reduction of Pre-school places in Lerwick.

It is recommended that the Council approve option one as this will enhance Bruce Family Centre Services, offer a more integrated service under a sustainable management structure and retain sufficient pre-school places in Lerwick plus the extended session. It will be necessary to transfer the existing Islesburgh Pre-School Group staff (2 P/T Senior Supervisors, 3 P/T Supervisors and 1 relief staff) to Shetland Islands Council Social Work.

3.8 Staffing Implications

A total of 17 staff will be consulted, within the context of Transfer of Undertakings Regulations (TUPE). Preliminary consultation has taken place with appropriate trade union.

4. Revised Management Structure for Shetland Childcare Sector

- 4.1 As stated previously, no local authority in Scotland has managed to resolve the issue of sustainability of out of school care. In Shetland there are five Out of School Care Clubs (Ness, Islesburgh, Sound, KidZone and Central Private). Having considered many options the only alternative is for Shetland Childcare Partnership to manage all out of school care clubs excluding the private providers (Central Private Nursery and Out of School Care, Sandwick). All Shetland Childcare Partnership staff (those whose posts are funded through Childcare Strategy money) are Shetland Islands Council Social Work employees. Out of School Club staff will also become Shetland Islands Council Social Work employees.
- 4.2 For the past 15 months the Out of School Clubs have benefited from the support of a Temporary Out of School Care Development Worker. This worker was employed on a consultancy basis and the post was jointly financed initially through Highland and Islands Enterprise and Shetland Childcare Partnership.
- 4.3 The consultant has:
 - Provided direct support through regular visits
 - Participated in meetings with staff, parents and outside agencies

- Helped a Voluntary Management Committee work through the closure of a club
 - Established policies and procedures
 - Ensured staff attend training
- 4.4 This has taken the pressure off Shetland Childcare Partnership, which has not had the personnel to enable it to provide this level of service.
- 4.5 The revised structure within Shetland Childcare Partnership (**Appendices F1 and F2**) includes a Temporary Part-time Out of School Care Development Worker. This post (£24,185 pro rata) will be funded by Shetland Childcare Partnership. The postholder will be a Shetland Islands Council Social Work employee.
- 4.6 As a result of centralised management it is recommended that Council agree the revised structure within Shetland Childcare Partnership as set out in (**Appendix F2**).
- 4.7 The revised structure will mean that a total of 12 out of school care staff be transferred to Shetland Islands Council Social Work via TUPE, with effect from 1 July 2006.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Childcare in different areas has been funded from the Childcare Strategy budget to varying degrees. It has become apparent that the current model of services and subsequent funding is unsustainable.
- 5.2 The cost during this financial year has been £257,843.15. The proposed changes will result in £196,027 being required. This is allocated as follows:

Funding for Services contained in this Report 2005/06

| Organisation | Current Funding £ | Proposed Funding £ |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| CURRENT STRUCTURE | | |
| ISLESBURGH ONE STOP CHILDCARE | | |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | 11,191.00 | |
| Shetland Charitable Trust | 78,000.00 | |
| NESS OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB | | |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | 3,956.00 | |
| Community Development (pending not yet paid) | | |
| SOUND OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB | | |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | 15,520.50 | |
| Community Development | 20,000.00 | |
| FAME | 129,175.65 | |
| PROPOSED STRUCTURE | | |
| NEW STRUCTURE FOR OUT OF SCHOOL CARE | | |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | | 45,000.00 |
| Changing Children's Services Fund | | 18,000.00 |
| Shetland Charitable Trust | | 60,000.00 |
| DAYCARE FACILITY AT MOSSBANK PS | | |
| Sure Start | | 20,000 |
| Changing Children's Services Fund | | 12,000 |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | | 7,000 |
| ISLESBURGH PRE-SCHOOL GROUP | | |
| Sure Start | | 20,000 |
| TEMP. OUT OF SCHOOL CARE DEV. WORKER | | |
| Shetland Childcare Partnership | | 14,027 |
| TOTAL | 257,843.15 | 196,027.00 |

5.3 There is a further issue over the level of fees, which are currently charged for childcare. This is a potential source of revenue, which will be reviewed. There is a need to ensure that an appropriate charge is made for the service being provided. This could further reduce the overall cost.

5.4 With the establishment of Parent Groups there will be the possibility of accessing external funding which again could reduce the need for Childcare Strategy funding or enhance the service being provided.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The only change to the childcare services in the North Isles is setting up of North Isles Childcare, which will manage the day to day running of the service. A grant of £5,000 will be made by the SCP to fund this.

6.2 In the North Mainland area plans are under way to advertise for a registered childminder. A project grant of up to £2,000 will be made available through SCP.

6.3 In respect of Firth and Mossback, the 3 services currently being provided by FAME, it is recommended that the Breakfast Club close due to insufficient demand and high cost. It is recommended full day care be provided in the

Agenda Item No. 01 - Public Report

Mossbank Primary School and Bright Sparks should cease. It is recommended KidZone becomes a satellite provision from Lerwick, managed by Shetland Childcare Partnership. This demonstrates more cost effective use of staff, would make a saving in terms of the venue and create one centre for childcare and pre-school education. The cost of providing additional staff to support full daycare at Mossbank Primary School will be approximately £39,000. Funding for this to come from Sure Start (£20,000), Changing Children's Services Fund (£12,000) and Shetland Childcare Partnership (£7,000).

6.4 In the Central Mainland, a project grant of up to £2,000 will be made available through SCP to the Hame Fae Hame project

6.5 Whalsay and Skerries there is no change to the current provision.

6.6 In the South Mainland and Fair Isle the only change is the location of Ness Out of School Club to the Dunrossness Primary School at a cost of £31,088.76.

6.7 There is no change to the service provision in Bressay but in Lerwick there are a number of changes. Firstly it is recommended that Sound Out of School Club amalgamate with Islesburgh Out of School Club. Of the services provided by Islesburgh One Stop Childcare, the Breakfast Club is recommended to close due to low demand and high costs, the Activity Club is amalgamated with the Out of School Club and the Pre-School Group is to become part of the Bruce Family Centre. This will result in a more cohesive service, resulting in more efficient use of staff and resources.

6.8 No local authority in Scotland has managed to resolve the issue of sustainability. In Shetland there are five Out of School Care Clubs (Ness, Islesburgh, Sound, KidZone and Central Private). Having considered many options the only alternative is for Shetland Childcare Partnership to manage all out of school care clubs excluding the private provider (Central Private Nursery and Out of School Care, Sandwick). A revised structure of management of Out of School Care, under Shetland Childcare Partnership, is set out in Appendix F2. The change to the management structure will cost approximately £123,026.12. Appendix E2. This is to be funded from SCP (£45,000) and Changing Children's Services Fund (£18,000) and Shetland Charitable Trust (£60,000). There will be the additional cost of employing a Temporary Out of School Care Development Worker. Shetland Childcare Partnership has agreed to fund this post from Childcare Strategy budget at a cost of approximately £14,027.

7 Policy & Delegated Authority

7.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to the Services Committee. The Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. Ref. SIC70/03).

- 7.2 The recommendations in this report include the creation of a post and the transfer of staff to the Council therefore, a decision of the Council is required.

8. Recommendations

I recommend that Services Committee recommend that Council:

- 8.1 Approves the revised structure within Shetland Childcare Partnership **(Appendix F2)**.
- 8.2 Approves the creation of the post of Temporary Out of School Care Development Worker, until March 2008. This post will be evaluated through the Council's Interim Job Evaluation process.
- 8.3 Approves that Ness Out of School Club be managed by Shetland Childcare Partnership and operates in the Dunrossness Primary School premises.
- 8.4 Approves that the amalgamated Sound Out of School Club and Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Out of School Club) is managed by Shetland Childcare Partnership.
- 8.5 Approves that the Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Activity Club) be absorbed into the Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Out of School Club).
- 8.6 Approves that KidZone becomes a satellite provision from Lerwick and is managed by Shetland Childcare Partnership.
- 8.7 Approves that the breakfast clubs operated by Islesburgh One Stop Childcare and FAME should cease due to low attendance and high running costs.
- 8.8 Approves that Islesburgh One Stop Childcare (Pre-School Group) becomes part of Bruce Family Centre Services.
- 8.9 Approves the transfer of 17 operational staff from Islesburgh Pre- School Group, the amalgamated Out of School Club (Sound and Islesburgh), Ness Out of School Club and KidZone to the Council.
- 8.10 Approves that daycare for 2 – 5year old children in the Firth and Mossbank area be provided within Mossbank Primary School.

Report no: SW04-06-F

APPENDIX F1

CURRENT STRUCTURE



The above staff are all Social Work employees

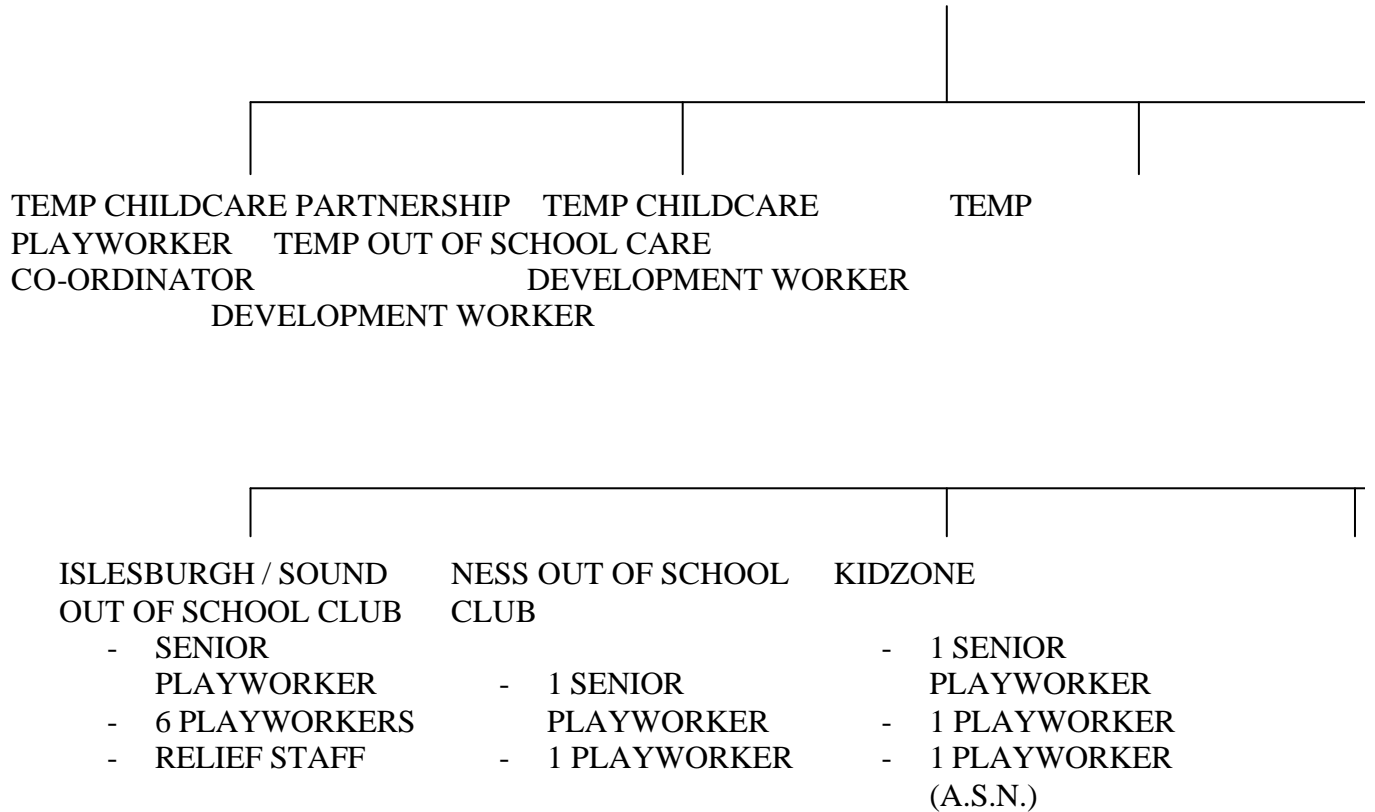
The temporary Childcare Development Worker post is funded through the Workforce Development money. The other two posts are funded through Childcare Strategy. All are line managed by the Family Centre Services Co-ordinator.

APPENDIX F2

PROPOSED

STRUCTURE

SHETLAND CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP





REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Interim Head of Social Work

Audit of Child Protection in Shetland

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report informs Services Committee on the outcomes of an Independent Audit of Child Protection in Shetland, commissioned by the Shetland Child Protection Committee.

2. Links to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 Ensuring Social Justice by protecting the most vulnerable in society from harm.
- 2.2 Working with statutory and voluntary partners to ensure that everyone has the right to feel safe in their community.

3. Background

- 3.1 The audit was commissioned in order to assess the quality of child protection work and processes in Shetland and to identify areas for quality improvement.
- 3.2 The auditors were requested to consider and report on how far the requirements of the Framework for Standards in Child Protection were being met.
- 3.3 The audit was undertaken by Joan Elliott and Pauline Hoggan both experienced child protection practitioners and consultants.
- 3.4 The audit was carried out during the week beginning 26 September 2005. The auditors reviewed practice from the reading of files from social work, education, police, health and the Reporter's administration.

3.5 As well as reading files from all agencies, the auditors interviewed a number of individual staff from the range of services, including the voluntary sector, as well as holding multidisciplinary group sessions with both practitioners and managers.

4. Audit findings

4.1 A copy of the auditors report is attached as Appendix A containing the following conclusions.

4.2 Overall, the auditors were confident that services were working well and together to ensure that children were protected, but there were instances of information not being interrogated thoroughly enough or, following intervention, having clarity of the desired outcomes. On the whole there had been an improvement in the level of information sharing, but this requires continuous monitoring and encouragement. While parts of the system work well, there needs to be more of a whole system approach to the assessment of risk, pulling together all the information and making the links between the pattern of past information and the current situation e.g. information about a child related offender and their relationship with other children. To avoid falling into the trap of taking at face value what parents are saying, there needs to be much more critical analysis of the information and using this to inform good assessment of what is actually happening with children.

4.3 Children and young people need to be listened to deeply and more conscious effort given to explore what they are saying and why, placing this within a developmental context.

- **Key Strengths:**

4.3.1 Good interagency working/relationships developed through good joint training opportunities.

4.3.2 Procedures followed and standard of activity high.

4.3.3 There is regular contact with registered families and core groups are held regularly.

4.3.4 Reports are provided by key agencies even when they are unable to attend meetings or conferences.

4.3.5 Immediate response to child protection referrals evident.

- *These strengths should continue to be built upon and not taken for granted but there is a need to take action in some areas of work.*

- **Areas for improvement:**

- 4.4.1 Reconsider the roles and responsibilities of professionals making recommendations on decisions at case conferences.
- 4.4.2 Minutes should include the desired outcomes and objectives of intervention, including reasons for referral [or not] to the Reporter.
- 4.4.3 Build in checks and balances/ safeguards to ensure that there is a degree of objectivity to alleviate the dynamic of 'the rule of optimism' from being the prominent driver. Professional supervision is key here.
- 4.4.4 To further engage criminal justice social work services as an integral part of the child protection system.

- **Next steps**

- 4.5.1 The report and findings are to be widely disseminated to improve knowledge and practice.
- 4.5.2 The social work service has already taken action in relation to the decision making process at Case Conferences.
- 4.5.3 The Shetland Child Protection Committee will amend it's action plan to take account of the findings of the report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 6.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to the Services Committee. The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. Ref. SIC 70/03).

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Child Protection services will be subject to Inspection in the near future and this report is to be welcomed as a benchmark for this. The report shows there is much good work being done to properly safeguard children but we must always strive for continuous improvement in this most difficult area of work.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 I recommend that Services Committee notes this report and continues to support the work of the Shetland Child Protection Committee.

Report Number SW05-06-F

APPENDIX 1

SHETLAND CPC AUDIT: SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

Background

The audit was carried out on behalf of the Shetland Child Protection Committee (CPC). The auditors were Joan Elliott and Pauline Hoggan and they reported to the CPC Standing Committee on Quality Assurance.

The audit was commissioned in order to assess the quality of child protection work and processes in Shetland, with the intention that it should identify areas for quality improvement. The auditors were asked to consider and report on how far the requirements of the Framework for Standards in Child Protection were being met.

The audit

The audit was carried out during the week beginning 26th September 2005. The auditors reviewed practice from the reading of files from social work, education, police, health, and the Reporter's administration. As well as reading files from all agencies, the auditors interviewed a number of individual staff from the range of services, including the voluntary sector, as well as holding multidisciplinary group sessions with both practitioners and managers from all of the above mentioned. The audit team did not meet or interview parents or children, nor did they meet with elected members or chief officials of the local authority or other agencies. The audit report is not able therefore to comment on directly surveyed views of parents, children, chief officers or elected members. A full list of activities and persons involved is included in Appendix 1. The CPC may wish to consider doing a survey of users and elected members at some future stage as this will form part of an inspection by the Scottish Executive.

The audit team were impressed by the openness of agencies and were at all times assisted by staff and managers to access information needed.

The area audited

The area audited covered the geographic area of the Shetland Isles Council. It covered the range of services, and professionals working in the area who had some role in protecting children. This included the services provided by health, the police, the local authority and the Children's Hearing System, as well as services provided by the voluntary sector. Professionals who provided services primarily for adults but who were likely to come into contact with vulnerable children were also included, e.g. criminal justice staff. The auditors were also able to access reports from services out with this area, but used by families living in Shetland Isles, including the accident and emergency and other health and police facilities in Aberdeen and Inverness.

The second smallest local authority in Scotland in terms of population, Shetland is an island community made up of one main island and over 100 smaller ones. Shetland Isles covers an area of 1,442 square miles. It has a lengthy coastline and, apart from two main centres, its population is scattered throughout small communities. People of working age account for 62% of the total population which is the same as the national average. It has an estimated population of 22,740, 21.2 % of whom are aged 15 years and under.

Spending for every person on social work in 2001-2002 was £437, far in excess of the figure of £267 for Scotland as whole.

The number of children referred for child protection inquiries in 2004 was 50. Referrals are at a rate of 10.8 per 1,000 population, slightly higher than the Scottish average of 8.9. The rate of case conferences per 1,000 population was 6.5, considerably higher than the national average of 3.6. Rates of registration were higher at 4.6 compared to national average of 2.6, and the rate on the register per 1,000 was again higher with Shetland having 3.2 compared to 2.4 as an average in Scotland. However these figures would need further analysis to understand the differences. There were no cases looked at which we felt were inappropriately classed as child protection, if anything some of the cases we looked at may have benefited from more formal measures being pursued.

A sample for the audit was taken randomly from all the children referred for child protection inquiries between 1st September 2004 and 31st August 2005. The sample included cases that were conferenced but not registered, registered cases and cases deregistered between 1st September 2004 and 31st August 2005. The ages of the children involved ranged from birth to 16 years of age. There were no cases where there had been no further action at the point of referral.

Section 1

How effective is the help children and young people get when they need it?

The auditors were confident that overall there was an immediate response to child protection concerns. In the main, staff appeared to have a good understanding of the child protection procedures and where a referral should be directed when a concern arises. There were some examples where this had not been the case and had resulted in there being a delay. In one instance a judgement had been made about when it was most appropriate to refer, but it was later judged, by social work on receipt of the referral, that it should have been referred sooner. In another example, the professional making the referral did not know how to make contact out of hours and waited till the next day. (It should be stressed there was not an immediate need for action).

There was good evidence of agencies working together and sharing appropriate information. While most services on the Islands are accessible for children and families, there are some specialist services that require them to go to mainland Scotland, primarily Aberdeen or Inverness but occasionally Glasgow. This can be distressing and difficult but something about which all professionals are aware and try to minimise the distress for the family concerned.

There was evidence that on occasion the 'rule of optimism' was present in that undue weight is given to the parents' perspective and at times this is not in keeping with the best interest of the child. This is particularly important given the recent SWIA report 'An inspection into the care and protection of children in Eilean Siar', where this point is stressed very strongly (paragraphs 19, 118).

Approaches to preventing abuse

There appeared to be a good awareness of how to recognise and respond when children and young people needed help. There had been extensive three day inter agency training that everyone described as being most helpful. It was thought that more basic training should be given to a wider range of staff to build on what was already established, particularly around identification and where to go. More joint training would improve the understanding of shared responsibilities, as there were some examples of one service,

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 02 - Public Appendix

primarily working with the adult, not always recognising the child protection element of the work without being prompted.

Intervention at times appeared to be focused on monitoring rather than working to a desired outcome. There was some evidence of providing parenting support, however the work done in relation to prevention or early intervention was variable.

Training for managers would be of benefit particularly around handling challenging decisions.

Raising concerns with social work and police

There was overall evidence of a high standard of immediate sharing of information and public sector response to child protection concerns being expressed or emerging, from whatever source. In all the social work children and families and police files looked at, there was almost immediate discussion of the matter. This usually included discussion by telephone or face to face, e.g. between an education professional and a social worker. The quality of these initial activities appeared good, and appropriate information was seen to be shared among professionals from different agencies.

Staff from other sections or agencies linked their increasing confidence in raising concerns with social work and police to the profile and impact of the three day inter agency training now being delivered several times a year, and jointly funded through the CPC by the local authority, NHS and Police. Contributors commented on the value of both the content of the course and the opportunity to build trusting working relationships.

Voluntary sector staff reflected that lines of communication had improved; this was perceived to be due to mutual efforts in the last year by the head of social care and experienced voluntary sector managers to build relationships and knowledge. It was also linked to voluntary sector representation on the CPC and the activities of the representative in keeping peers informed about developments. However, it was noted that in individual situations, a differential response could be experienced depending on which member of social work staff was reached for initial discussion.

There was some evidence of the referral process being an intimidating experience, particularly if a referral needed to be made out of hours. Despite the referral process information being generally available, the systems within some offices needed to be revisited to ensure that the information on how and who to make a referral to is clear for anyone, particularly those with direct involvement with children and families.

Police/social work interviews

Where the concern was considered so significant as to need it, there was very quick joint follow up by police and social work staff i.e. joint interviews being planned and taking place often by the next day after the referral was received or the concern expressed. One police officer expressed professional pride in the commitment of the services to achieving this, even when both are under pressures such as receiving a number of referrals on one day.

The recording of police and social work joint interviews clearly reflected an informed approach rooted in the 'stepwise' method of evidential interviewing of children. There were consistent references in the records which demonstrated sensitivity to distress of children and willingness to respond to this.

Social workers and police officers linked their increasing confidence in carrying out this stage to participation in the two week Joint Interviewing course based in Inverness, commissioned by the Northern Constabulary and the four local authority areas covered by

the force. Positive feedback on this was about the course content and also the opportunity it provides to build up solid local working partnerships.

The police files contained a clear review record, from which it was easy to discern what had happened, why, who was involved and what the immediate outcome and decisions were.

A problem raised by police and social workers was that of the scarcity of suitable venues for interviews. At present, the family home is sometimes used, which can often be inappropriate. There are plans to set up child friendly rooms in a community facility.

Health assessments

While there was much expertise and commitment from health professionals evident in files and records of multi agency discussions, including consideration of the need for forensic medical examinations, the provision of relevant health assessment was a topic of concern and problem solving discussion for many of the health and other staff contributing to this audit.

The area has had no success in recruiting a locally based paediatrician. Specialist examinations e.g. where there is suspicion of penetrative sexual abuse, need to take place in Inverness or Aberdeen, with the consequent travel and unfamiliarity increasing the stress on children and parents. There was some excellent work by police officers in supporting families by accompanying them. Indeed, social work and police staff reflected that they had been aware of the difference this had made to a family, in comparison with others who had travelled on their own for this kind of examination.

Some concerns were expressed that more autonomous health professionals, such as some GPs, could vary in individual depth of knowledge in, for example, assessing the relevance of physical symptoms or marks, to possible abuse. Police officers commented that while they work with some very knowledgeable and accessible GPs with whom they can usually have immediate consultations, because of the level of demand, it would be most helpful to have one or two more in the area who took a particular interest in child abuse.

There was dissatisfaction by some health professionals about the medical form that is required for admission or suspected abuse, as it states the form requires to be filled in its entirety but this includes examination of the genital area. While accepting this would not be filled in by the GP, they would prefer that the form states this. There was also some dissatisfaction voiced that such medicals are expected to take place in surgery time. It was suggested that, given the length of time the medical can take, it would be best done out with surgery hours. This seems to be a problem that could easily be overcome by negotiation and would be dependent on the urgency of the medical to take place.

Developing initial strategy discussions

Although basic information was usually shared and decisions made by social work and police officers about whether to act, there was discussion about developing the use of Multi Agency Initial Strategy Meetings, involving health and other key professionals, like Criminal Justice workers, as well as police and children and families social workers. This could improve the quality of consideration given to cases where there are 'cumulative concerns' i.e. where there were a number of expressions of concern which had not in themselves merited formal CP enquiries or had not resulted in registration but continued, or where there were 'situational' concerns such as the possible link of a family to a Schedule 1 offender.

Schedule 1 offenders/ Domestic Violence patterns

From the file information, we had some concerns that the dangers to children and young people from Schedule 1 offenders or from a pattern of domestic violence incidents were not always absorbed with sufficient significance by the social work service, including criminal justice and children and families workers. There was more than one situation in which the

presence or friendship of an offender with a family with young people under 16 did not appear to have been given formal consideration. This appeared to be linked to assumptions about the circumstances in which offences had been committed, or even an offender's own presentation of these. The Eilean Siar report (paragraph 116) highlights the importance of a full risk assessment in such cases.

Feedback to referrers

It was acknowledged in the group discussions and interviews that this could be inconsistent. The CPC asked us to look at whether written feedback was always provided. This was not so, but in the interviews and group discussions, health, education and voluntary sector participants commented that they felt the priority was to have brief 'need to know' level feedback, not necessarily written or detailed. One reason given was the benefit of learning from experience or being reassured that they had raised appropriate concerns. However, overall, written feedback was considered desirable as it could then be placed in the child's file, whereas a phone call may not always get recorded.

Where there was a joint interview, there is a mechanism in the debriefing format used by social work and police to decide who will give feedback to those who need it. This could also be adapted, particularly within the social work service, to check and record on this task when there has been a decision to take a matter no further or when it has been satisfactorily resolved without formal action.

Section 2

How actively are children and young people and their families involved in decision making?

As noted in the introduction, it was beyond the scope of this audit to interview or survey the views of children and parents directly. From file information and aspects of discussions with professionals, there are some points we would note.

There was much evidence of parental consultation and involvement in enquiries, conferences and intervention. While this in the main provided positive evidence of beneficial transparency and partnership working, there were instances where the focus seemed to be on adults at the expense of placing the child's perspective or developmental needs at the centre. Some professionals commented on this tendency. We have discussed aspects of this in more detail in other sections.

There was often a very positive sense of various professionals in the community knowing and caring about individual children, e.g. pupil support teachers, social work assistants, youth workers. However, there were some examples of young people being recorded as expressing a view or wish, directly or otherwise, which were not then considered fully. For example, one young person, from a chronically troubled family, asked a social work assistant, with whom ...[the young person – gender deleted] appeared to have regular contact and good engagement, about receiving respite care in the children's home. This was responded to with an immediate no, on the basis that there was extended family that would provide respite if this was needed. Although the interaction was clearly recorded, it did not appear from the file to have been picked up by a supervisor and explored any further either in terms of the literal request or what lay behind it. In another case, a vulnerable young person ...[age deleted] who was at odds with their parent and about whom there was community concern, was seen to be considered only for the possible resource of a tenancy, rather than other more homely accommodation under, for example, Section 25 and other parts of the Children[Scot.] Act. which apply to young people up to the age of 18. The Eilean Siar report stresses the importance of listening to children (paragraph 18).

Section 3

How effectively do agencies and professionals work together to share information, assess and manage needs and plan effectively for children and young people?

Information sharing

As discussed in Section 1, there was evidence overall of a good standard of information sharing among professionals and a real sense of an improving situation, linked to the activities of the CPC. We found the IA procedures clear and coherent and this view was reflected consistently by professionals in a range of roles who used them, either as detailed practice guidance, or from time to time as a consultative guide.

Files

Almost all the social work children and families files which had had an initial case conference in the last year or so contained not only a detailed social worker's report for the conference but also a risk assessment report using local guidelines. Administrative arrangements for inviting relevant people to conferences, seeking amendments of minutes and distributing them, were of a generally high standard.

However, there were examples where some not insignificant errors in recording had been made. e.g. there were one or two instances in the files when letters may not have been double proof read by the admin worker and the Chair, where a wrong name was used [of a child], or because an email containing information about different families was copied for the file this meant it contained information on children from a completely different family. One file had the father classed as stepfather in the front information sheet but it was clear from reading the file that he was the child's natural father. One Reporter's file had letters going out referring to a date of a previous Hearing which was wrong.

All of this just adds up to the need to ensure that information is accurate and should be checked if it is being sent out to other people including the parents or child. The basic information should be up to date and accurate and no information pertaining to other unconnected people should be in the file.

Social work children and families files contained much relevant information. There are however, problems with the arrangement of the material, and we felt it would often be difficult for a professional unfamiliar with the case to discern quickly the context or important facts. The few files which had a chronology and/or a file contents page benefited greatly from the presence of these formats. Although there was often reference within the case notes to consultations with managers, there was no systematic method apparent of recording supervision discussions or signing of case notes by the manager as evidence of having read them. The latter two points are highlighted in the Eilean Siar inspection (paragraphs 153 and 242).

Conferences and follow through

Attendance at Initial Conferences was high, and key professionals who were unable to attend usually provided relevant written reports. As is common throughout the UK, it was most difficult to obtain the actual attendance of a GP but there were often helpful reports from them. Timescales were adhered to. Parents were often present. The provision for having 'restricted time' was used sparingly but appropriately.

There was evidence in individual files of a range of therapeutic and practical support services being offered and arranged, e.g. emotional support, education on safe sex, recovery from sexual abuse, respite, home support, additional educational resources, youth work. These were made available in response to need whether or not a child became registered or a case conference was held.

Although interviewees and the group discussions reflected on some lack of resources, in many cases where a conference or other assessment identified a welfare, health, or educational need, we saw this being addressed flexibly and to effect. For example, although the area might have only one full time staff post to meet a specific need for service, if this were filled, then the service user/patient received a service without necessarily much delay [compared to other areas]. This could be seen in some medical and therapeutic follow-ups. The converse is that if a post is unfilled, the service suffers substantially, as was the case in not at present having a paediatrician available locally. It was recognised that with only one professional in a given field of expertise it could be problematic if there were differences of opinion between professionals as there was little scope for a second opinion.

Risk assessment, planning and decision making

The relationship of ongoing risk to the kind of decisions made was our main area of concern in the audit. We felt that there could be a tendency in assessments and decision making towards the 'rule of optimism' and that some children in the sample may have been more effectively protected by registration, and/or compulsory measures of care, including, in a very few situations, accommodation away from their parent[s]. (In 1983, Dingwall, Eekelaar and Murray carried out research into professional decision making in an English child protection system. They coined the term 'rule of optimism' to describe how health and social workers were often applying overly positive interpretations to the cases they were assessing.)

There were some cases where children were not registered at conferences, but then re-referred, sometimes several times, due to unchanging patterns of behaviour by the adults in their lives, e.g. alcohol use triggering unsafe supervision of children or violent incidents. Where there were clear reasons for serious ongoing concern, children were sometimes not registered because the parents said they would cooperate with safe care objectives and accept professionals' services. Although substantial practical and therapeutic supports were then often provided by the agencies, sometimes for years, some of the files showed that parents' behaviour or attitudes, which had led to concern in the first place, remained unchanged, resulting in consequent ongoing safety hazards for the child, or significant indicators of hindrance to their development. The Eilean Siar inspection points out most strongly that 'parental co-operation alone does not reduce the risk to children' (paragraph 118)

The evidence for these situations could be seen in individual cases, for example, through series of police notifications to the social work service [OP48 forms]; ... [deletion of one specific example that might be identifiable] ongoing information from schools of continuing poor school attendance and emotional disturbance; reports to GPs of series of minor injuries or 'non thriving' symptoms.

In more than one case, local police and mainland agencies presented, verbally and in writing, explicit information and analysis of high risk to social work staff and/or case conferences where the formal decisions then made appeared to us to be insufficient to address that risk. In one Criminal Justice file, there was a detailed case note of crucial information recorded by a duty worker, which appeared to have been passed on appropriately by them, but not then regarded with sufficient urgency.

A contributory factor in case conference meetings may be that the dynamics of initial and review conferences are affected by the model being deployed, which places responsibility on the conference as a whole to make the decision on whether a child is registered or not and uses terminology associated with voting[13.9.1 of the IA procedures]. This model has the attraction of being seen to value the agencies'/ individual professional's assessments equally, but arguably it has drawbacks in enabling the professional group to come to sound decisions.

One is that the weight of influence depends on who is present on the day. Some professionals out with social work, health and the police also told us that while they were very committed to contributing honestly to the assessment and discussion, they felt overwhelmed with the responsibility of perceiving that they actually have a vote, especially if their role was a fairly narrowly defined one. We felt this was borne out by the minutes of some conferences where the decision made did not seem to flow logically from the transparency of information discussed. It is possible that the voting/consensus model can lead to a tendency to focus on registration being perceived as stigmatic to parents and not sufficiently keep sight of the paramountcy of the child's safety.

Another feature of the registration process was the way in which it is recorded and therefore perceived. On almost all instances children were registered as being 'at risk' of whatever category had been decided. The procedures do not use the term 'at risk' in relation to categories of registration. Therefore the category of registration should be recorded under what that is deemed to be and should not have the words 'at risk' in front of it. [Section 4.2, IA procedures]. There was a sense that by using 'at risk' it somehow diminished the seriousness and would be more acceptable to the parent. It would be worthwhile for the CPC to consider the reasons for registration and the risk of significant (future) harm and the familial/carer responsibility for that harm. The procedures are not as clear on this point as they could be.

Another aspect which would benefit from review is the formulation of protection plans which emanate from 'what needs to change' objectives of desired outcomes of registration and other intervention. Although the Initial Case Conference minute always concludes with an Action Plan, this is often a list of tasks to be undertaken by professionals following straight on from the record of decisions. It is a challenge to consider the objectives and detail of the plan fully at the end of an emotional and often lengthy discussion, and it would perhaps be more effective, to achieve at the meeting itself, objectives to form the basis of the parents' and Core Group's work agenda and an outline plan. This process is clearly articulated in the IA procedures, Section 13.11.

When children were registered, core groups and case conference reviews happened regularly and were fully recorded, and as noted above, supportive resources were often made available to families. However it was rare for there to be full attendance of agencies at the core group. This may be for a number of reasons, perhaps because they feel on the periphery of the main work or they are a singleton worker and could not be available to attend all meetings. This carried over to attendance at review case conferences and links with the decision making issue and equal responsibility, in that this needs to be continuing if it is to have any meaning.

The Eilean Siar inspection highlights that the gathering of large amounts of information is not in itself an assessment (paragraph 20) and that there should be clarity about the basis of the interagency plan (paragraph 132).

Professional competence and confidence

Almost all professionals with whom we had contact spoke positively of concrete improvements in training provision and a resulting increase in their confidence when they became involved in the child protection process. Managers and senior staff were aware of the role and activities of the CPC and felt that as a forum it was having an impact locally. Reference was made by all sectors to initial in house awareness briefings of half or one day sessions, and to the three day inter agency course. As a result of the systematic approach to these, comment was made that it was beginning to stand out if any individuals or sectors were avoiding participation. Social workers were beginning to be referred to the accredited CP certificate courses. Police and social workers were participating in the two week Joint Interviewing course.

Minute takers had recently been provided with specialist training which was effective. Managers from the range of services identified training for them on handling particularly challenging situations as being a next stage for the CPC development agenda. Some recent commissioned training on chairing was not experienced as particularly helpful.

The police service has recently put in place a dedicated full time CP liaison post. Officers reported that senior officers were very approachable for discussion of issues, and they also felt able to discuss differing views with colleagues in social work.

Social work staff were very aware of the difficulties for the service in having had their senior management post unfilled for so long, and reflected that this has lowered the political profile of vulnerable children, as well as pressuring front line managers. There was also the challenge of chronic understaffing. The children and families senior social workers have substantial caseloads as well as supervision responsibilities. Seniors and workers spoken to commented on making every effort to maintain regular supervision, especially for less experienced staff, but that this meant other important practice methods, particularly file scrutiny, were not routine.

Nevertheless there was evidence of planned improvements having taken place, such as a comprehensive induction programme being provided for a recently appointed social worker.

Staff from the voluntary sector perceived that they were more engaged with the CP process now. They suggested developing further related joint training on wider topics which affect vulnerability, e.g. the impact of drug or alcohol using lifestyles and attitudes to these issues.

Health and education professionals also spoke highly of the interagency training and the continuing benefits of having been on this.

Within schools the senior management team have all done this training and the teaching staff and other frontline staff usually get one day's training. Everyone on the staff got a copy of the Children's Charter and at the start of every school year, child protection is on the agenda for the in-service day. One head teacher spoke of basic training that is provided four times a year on a Saturday at the Bruce Centre but was not sure who ran this or who it was aimed for. There was an awareness that issues could be raised with the Head of Service and a copy of any referrals to social work were copied to the Head of Service. The Quality Improvement Officer also had a role in relation to child protection. There are

systems within the school to keep track of children and the Phoenix electronic system for managing absence can give detailed information including children who are late. This allows any concerning pattern to be highlighted.

Education staff feel that relationships with social work are good and that there is open communication. However it would be considered helpful if there was more time given to the reading of reports at the start of an initial case conference. There can often be numerous pages of reports to be read and often there is not enough time given to digesting this for those that do not know the family well.

Within health, while the training was seen to have been worthwhile, it was noted that there was no specific training on the procedures. Therefore if someone had newly come to the area they may not know their way around the procedures as well as they need to.

The health service is a much more disparate organisation with a range of professionals spread out in a variety of different settings. Understanding and knowledge was variable even to knowing who within health was the lead officer for child protection.

There did not always appear to be good management systems for disseminating information so that everyone who needed to be was kept informed e.g. in one health clinic because there had been no practice manager for a considerable time there had been no practice meetings. This meant that there was no way of discussing and ensuring that everyone had appropriate information but reliance on email or hard copy doing the job. It would be worthwhile for the health service to look at the recommendations of the Eilean Siar report, particularly paragraphs 248 and 249, which recommend that primary care teams should agree when a family with child protection concerns registers with the practice how they will strategically manage the health care of the family and how they will communicate effectively about this on an intra-agency and inter-agency basis, and that every NHS Board should make sure that all children with complex needs have a health professional who takes an overview and provides coordination of their health care needs.

One part of the service that we felt could be strengthened is that of the Criminal Justice social work service's role as a more robust and accountable partner in the child protection process, for example in providing informed analysis of risk of harm from adults to children. Practice and knowledge levels seemed inconsistent in the cases sampled. There was also some evidence of the significance of some information or patterns of adult behaviour not always being grasped.

Section 4

How effectively do agencies and the community work together to keep children and young people safe from harm?

Detailed examination of this topic was beyond the scope of our remit, but some themes emerged from discussion with professionals which may be useful for developmental consideration by the CPC.

A number of professionals commented on the impact of heavy alcohol use on the safety and development of children in the area. One aspect was that of heavy drinking by adults triggering violent incidents and fights both outside and inside the home. There was also concern at a culture of acceptance by the community and some professionals about drinking by young adolescents [i.e. 12-14], often in public places or regularly in their homes, with consequences for health, engagement in education, sexual exploitation, and involvement in anti social behaviour. Police officers observed that children could be

returned home drunk in the middle of the night, with no response of concern from parents, there appearing to be a view that 'we did it ourselves at that age'. Some professionals also commented that they were aware of community pressure on themselves as parents to let their children be involved with peers in this culture.

The second theme was that of a perceived contrast of most local parents being non violent and generous to their children, but not necessarily careful enough about who was supervising them/who they were with. For example, there were some disclosures of sexual assaults from children who had been spending time in households of school friends where there were also young adults present. It was felt that this was perhaps linked to an overall expectation that the area, the people and households in it are safe.

The perception of both these themes was supported by the sampled file information. In some families where there was a constellation of concerns over years, a pattern of heavy drinking and early sexual activity was not treated as significant, even though it seemed inextricably linked to the issues which were regarded as worrying, such as chronic patchy school attendance, symptoms of ill health, and, indeed, expressions of unhappiness by young people about their living situation. Some children in such long term situations were not referred for compulsory measures of care, although there were a number of grounds and some did seem to be caught in negative inter-generational cycles. The CPC, and particularly the Reporter and Social Work Service, might consider further the framework for assessment of 'vulnerability' and 'significant harm', and the thresholds within this, under the terms of all the conditions identified in Section 52 of the Children[Scotland]Act 1995, which may be useful in addressing those situations which do not seem to be an exact fit for 'child abuse' measures. The quality of contributions to child protection assessments we saw from other agencies –police, health and education- would indicate that there would be a high level of input on the specific potential harm to young people from lack of parental supervision and risky behaviours.

Section 5

How effective is individual and collective leadership?

While we did not elicit views from chief officers or elected members, there was a clear indication that the representatives on the CPC took their role seriously and were working hard to follow an action plan that identified and addressed the needs of this demanding area of work. However as has been mentioned before, social work had been without a lead officer for children and families for a considerable time and even now this has only been filled on a temporary basis. Comment has been made by many of the difference it makes having someone who is leading on this area of work with other chief officers and elected members. The profile and significance given to the child care agenda changes enormously. This said, it is clear that all agencies are giving child protection work the highest priority and are working continuously to improve and learn when mistakes have been made.

There was no sense at any stage of complacency and only occasionally a view that it was someone else's responsibility.

The CPC has promoted good interagency training that has clearly made an impact both in terms of its content but also of the improvement in working relationships, trust and confidence in one another.

Vision, Values and Aims

The Child Protection Committee has joint inter agency guidelines, which state their values and aims in Section 2, headed 'Policy'. It may be that this should be headed up to clearly state that it is a collective value and policy base on which the service is to be conducted.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 02 - Public Appendix

The voluntary sector does feel a part of the child protection system and aware of their responsibility within it. There is a network for getting information out even to the small groups operating throughout the islands.

Individual agency leadership and management

Within each of the agencies there were differing levels of seniority for leading on this agenda.

The management within social work has gone through considerable change and this has impacted on the leadership role within social work. The impact has been seen in relation to the need for better joint working between different parts of the service as well as within the council as a whole.

Within the police force the lead is at Inspector level and there have been several developments to progress the agenda including the full time appointment of a CP officer. There appeared to be clear lines of accountability with officers knowing exactly who is leading the agenda for the police.

Health has a lead in the Director of Public Health. There is considerable improvement on the sharing of information with other professional staff and greater participation of a wider representation in joint training, which was impacting positively. However it was not evident that everyone within health knew who the lead was. It was not clear whether there was a forum within health that looked at how the various arms of the service worked together to the common aims as laid down by the committee.

Within education, the same could be said, that there is a strong emphasis on the child protection agenda but there could be more clarity about the leadership role within the organisation.

It is accepted that a small representation was interviewed, and they may not be representative of the whole, but at the same time the 'whole system' is overall relatively small and communication should be able to filter all the way through the organisation.

Collective leadership and management

The CPC was demonstrating leadership in taking forward their action plan and by looking at ways to inform themselves of the areas of weakness and need for continuous improvement. They have developed extremely well received interagency training that was demonstrating an impact. The CPC has organised itself by the setting up of sub groups including a Quality Assurance sub group. The audit team did not look at the work of the committee or how satisfactorily the work of the action plan was progressing so we are not able to comment on this. However in discussion with members of the committee the impression was that it was working well, met regularly and had a working agenda with an air of openness and frankness. What is not clear is how well this fits with the overall planning for children's services. From discussions with staff, the relationship between the committee and the Children's Service's Planning group was unclear. The CPC annual report is part of the children's service's plan. However it is important for child protection to be seen as part of a continuum of child care services and the role of the universal services in both early intervention and prevention are vital in protecting children from harm.

Leading change and improvement

This audit is one example of taking forward an agenda that is about examining practice and looking to continuously improve. However it will be important to build on this and look at effective ways of building in ongoing monitoring of the service, to ensure that what the committee believes to be happening on the ground is actually happening.

While there is an encouragement to involve young people and their families in their own

decision making and planning, there was no obvious involvement of them in the general planning of services.

CONCLUSION

How well are children and young people protected and their needs met?

Overall, the auditors were confident that services were working well and together to ensure that children were protected, but as has been covered there were instances of information not being interrogated thoroughly enough or, following intervention, having clarity of the desired outcomes. On the whole there had been an improvement in the level of information sharing, but this requires continuous monitoring and encouragement. While parts of the system work well, there needs to be more of a whole system approach to the assessment of risk, pulling together all the information and making the links between the pattern of past information and the current situation e.g. information about a child related offender and their relationship with other children. To avoid falling into the trap of taking at face value what parents are saying, there needs to be much more critical analysis of the information and using this to inform good assessment of what is actually happening with children.

Children and young people need to be listened to deeply and more conscious effort given to explore what they are saying and why, placing this within a developmental context. There needs to be clarity around the case conference process and the reasons for a child being registered or deregistered.

Key Strengths:

Good interagency working/relationships developed through good joint training opportunities.

Procedures followed and standard of activity high

There is regular contact with registered families and core groups are held regularly

Reports are provided by key agencies even when they are unable to attend meetings or conferences

Immediate response to child protection referrals evident

These strengths should continue to be built upon and not taken for granted but there is a need to take action in some areas of work.

Areas for improvement:

Reconsider the roles and responsibilities of professionals making recommendations on decisions at case conferences

Minutes should include the desired outcomes and objectives of intervention, including reasons for referral [or not] to the Reporter

Build in checks and balances/ safeguards to ensure that there is a degree of objectivity to alleviate the dynamic of 'the rule of optimism' from being the prominent driver

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 02 - Public Appendix

To further engage criminal justice social work services as an integral part of the child protection system

Joan Elliott

Pauline Hoggan

October 2005

APPENDIX 1

Activities undertaken by the auditors

1. File reading of individual children's files covering work carried out in the last year.
These files were;

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 02 - Public Appendix

Social work children and family files of

- ...[deletion in the interests of anonymity] currently registered cases, i.e. six children
- Three cases deregistered in the last year
- Nine cases where there was a referral and no further formal CP action following enquiries [this represented about a third of referrals]
- Three cases where there had been a Case Conference, and no registration

Health professionals' files for all but one of the above

Police service files for all of the above

Criminal Justice social work files related to five of the cases [all concerning adults linked to the children]

One related Housing file

Five related Authority Reporter's files

Four related Education service files

Anonymised information from the files was recorded by the auditors using the format in Appendix 2: Audit Tool

2. Questionnaires; two questionnaires were completed by social work services administrative staff who undertake minuting of case conferences.[Format in Appendix 3]

3. Semi structured interviews were carried out with the following professionals using the outline in Appendix 4.

- Two frontline social workers
- Three social work managers
- One G.P.
- One head teacher
- One voluntary sector manager
- Two police officers

4. Group discussions

There was one semi structured group discussion with nine frontline multi agency professionals and one with eight multi agency managers.

[The topics discussed were based on the 'general' section of Appendix 3, 'Semi structured interviews']

5. Document reading

These included

Shetland Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures [November 2004]

CPC Annual reports

Statistics and attendance records of Inter Agency training events

Local authority policies and procedures, e.g. on recruitment.

Notes

1. All key public agencies and the voluntary sector were represented at the group discussions and in individual interviews. Some of the interviewees were involved in specific cases being sampled, and all were also asked about general matters.

2. Due to the time available for fieldwork, and the 'first stage' intention of the audit, it was agreed that no direct consultation would take place on this occasion with children or family members, or observation of work such as case conferences.
3. Clear and explicit ground rules were worked out in advance between the CPC Coordinator, managers of the agencies who made files and staff available, and the auditors. This included a specific undertaking by the auditors not to remove or record any identifiable information. Local authority files were delivered to a dedicated room within Council premises used by the auditors, where files were locked overnight in a cabinet within a locked building. Police and the Reporter's files were seen in their offices, where security was overseen by a responsible member of staff. Health files, which came from a number of locations and sections [e.g. A and E, GP Practices], were delivered to a central health service location on a set date, and returned by a member of health service staff allocated this task, by an agreed time.



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Service Manager Children and Families Services

Additional Resources for Youth Justice 2005-2006

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Services Committee to allocate funding offered from the Scottish Executive to Social Work to meet specific demands around Youth Justice.

2. Links to Corporate Plan

- 2.1 *Social Justice, Active Citizenship, Community Safety and Achieving Potential*

Youth Justice Services are a key element in service provision for some of the most vulnerable children in our community. These services give individuals the opportunity to address behaviours that place themselves and the wider community at risk. In addressing this behaviour the young people gain confidence and move towards achieving their full potential.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Executive has allocated £4.3 million across Scotland to help local authorities to develop, where appropriate, Fast Track Children's Hearings.
- 3.2 The Scottish Executive has acknowledged that not all local authorities can develop Fast Track Children's Hearings and have allocated the funding to assist in the area of youth justice.
- 3.3 In consultation with the Authority Reporter, it has been decided that an attempt to deliver Fast Track Children's Hearings in Shetland would not be the best use of this funding. Our numbers are small enough to

manage timely intervention and we compare favourably with other local authorities in dealing with young offenders.

- 3.4 Shetland Islands Council's allocation is £18000. This is unhypothecated funding and therefore requires a report to Services to seek approval to spend the fund on youth justice.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is proposed that this funding is used to fund specialist training for assessing and developing risk management programmes for child sex abusers. This is an area of work that has increased in Shetland over the last two years and appropriate multi-agency intervention is required in order to stop cycles of behaviour. It is proposed that this training is delivered by G-Map which is an agency that specialises in working with child sex abusers.
- 4.2 It is proposed that this funding is used to fund innovative assessment programmes and risk management plans for young offenders, particularly persistent young offenders. In Shetland we have limited "specialist" resources and have to use innovative approaches. Staff from Social Work, Education, Community Development and the Voluntary Sector work well together to deliver such packages. This funding can assist in further developing this good integrated working.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Funding of £18k has been received as part of the redetermination of RSG. The Scottish Executive have indicated in their circular that these monies were originally intended to be used for Youth Justice, however given that this funding is unhypothecated a decision by the Council is required before any allocation of funding can be made.

6. Policy & Delegated Authority

- 6.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to the Services Committee. The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. Ref. SIC 70/03.)
- 6.2 The proposals in this report include a request for funding from the Scottish Executive to be allocated to Social Work budgets therefore a decision of the Council is required.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Areas of need identified by the Scottish Executive in relation to youth

justice are present in Shetland. The proposals outlined above are thought to be the best way of meeting these needs in Shetland.

8. Recommendations

I recommend that the Services Committee recommend to the council that: -

8.1 The proposals outlined in Section 4 of this report are implemented.

8.2 That £18,000 for Youth Justice is allocated to Social Work.

Date: 16 March 2006

Report No. SW08-06-F



REPORT

To: **Employees JCC**
Services Committee

21 February 2006
16 March 2006

From: **Community Care Manager**

Report No: SW02-06F
Guaranteed Hours for Social Care Workers

1 Introduction

1.1 This report presents proposals that would give delegated authority to the Head of Service for adjustments to the working patterns of all care workers in all care settings including the ability to offer staff guaranteed hours.

2 Links to Corporate Plan

2.3 *Social Justice, Active Citizenship and Achieving Potential:* Social Care Workers (SCWs) provide care to some of the most vulnerable people in our community; promoting their independence and helping them achieve their full potential.

2.4 *Developing the Workforce:* There is a need to attract more staff into caring roles in order to meet the increasing levels of need in the community. Establishing more posts with guaranteed hours and more full time posts is one of a number of developments being considered in order to do this. Guaranteed hours will help support staff who must gain professional qualifications and become registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

3 Background

3.1 Currently the staff complement in each Social Work care setting comprises a number of established posts, many part time, supported

by a bank of relief workers on temporary contracts with no guaranteed hours.

- 3.2 The staffing levels required in each care setting at any time must comply with recommendations made by the Care Commission, based on minimum national standards. This includes ensuring cover for absences due to annual leave and sickness. The current practice of using relief workers on temporary contracts on an 'as and when' basis with no guaranteed hours means that it is often difficult to find staff to cover shifts, especially at short notice. Relief workers often have more than one job and are already committed elsewhere.
- 3.3 Individuals who take on work on a relief or casual basis, with no guaranteed pay, face difficulties in securing financial support from banks and building societies. This causes anxiety amongst this group of workers and does little to make people feel valued by the Council as their employer.
- 3.4 Senior Social Care Workers, Unit Managers and admin support staff spend many hours on the phone trying to organise cover.**
- 3.5 In August 2004, a pilot scheme of flexi-relief working was introduced at Banksbroo. The principle behind the pilot was that a number of relief SCWs were guaranteed hours over a certain period thereby ensuring they would be available to cover absences at Banksbroo.**
- 3.6 There have been a number of difficulties with the pilot, not least the inflexibility of the Council's computerised payroll and human resources system, CHRIS. However, the pilot has allowed these difficulties to be explored and overcome.
- 3.7 The outcome for the care service has been positive with relief cover more readily available and providing consistency and continuity for service users.
- 3.8 As part of the redesigned Care at Home Service, the Council agreed delegated authority for the creation of posts with guaranteed hours within the overall budget allocation. Work is on going in this area and it is anticipated that more posts will become full time with staff working both in the care centres and in people's own homes. This will hopefully make posts more attractive to workers and help them achieve their SVQ awards.**
- 3.9 Other proposals designed to make jobs in care more attractive include proposals for a complete career grade for SCWs. This is the subject of a separate report on today's agenda.**

4.1 It is proposed that the Head of Social Work is allowed to change the work patterns and number of hours guaranteed for care workers in all care settings not just Care at Home. The changes would be made within the existing total of full time equivalent posts and associated employee costs in each area.

4.2 It is also proposed that posts in the relief pool are designated Flexi Social Care Workers and contracts assigned with guaranteed hours within a set period which may be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually depending on the anticipated needs of the service.

4.3 All recruitment to vacant posts would be subject to existing recruitment and selection policies. This currently includes additional processes in line with the Council's current restrictions on recruitment. No change would be made to the terms and conditions of any individual worker's employment without individual consultation.

4.4 Initially contracted hours would be offered to all existing SCWs including relief workers.

4.5 *Staff and Union Consultation*

The proposals have been circulated to all SCWs, their managers and union representatives. Meetings with staff groups are being held in each locality, some have already taken place. The unions have expressed their support for more guaranteed hours consistently through work on the Care at Home service redesign. Some staff have written to managers asking for more guaranteed hours. The proposals will be presented to the Joint Future Joint Staff Forum (JFJSF) for further discussion in relation to the opportunities this may create for better partnership working with community nursing in localities.

4.6 *Generic Support Workers*

The proposals are supported by the findings of a recent study on the roles of health and social care workers in the community undertaken by Robert Gordon's University.¹

4.7 Single Status

The proposals are consistent with the principles of Single Status.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.2 The changes to guaranteed hours will be made within the existing staff complement and therefore can be implemented within existing budgets.

¹ "Generic Support Workers in the Community: Determining the knowledge, skills and training requirements" October 2005. Simon Naji, Valerie Maehle – Robert Gordon's University; Susan Masnie – NHS Grampian.

- 5.3 Members should note that the Council General Fund Revenue Estimates and Council Tax Setting Report F-002-F states that the budget is £5.878 million in deficit and all service areas are required to undertake a critical review of cost implications to their services, in order to make savings and achieve a balanced budget.

6 Policy and Delegated Authority

- 6.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to Services Committee. The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. ref. SIC 70/03).
- 6.2 As the proposals recommend the establishment of additional posts within Social Work, a decision of the Council is required.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposals in this report should help make social care posts more attractive to workers.
- 7.2 Staff and the unions support the proposals.
- 7.3 The proposals should relieve the difficulties currently experienced in finding cover for absences among staff providing care to some of the most vulnerable people in the community.
- 7.4 The proposals can be implemented within existing budget provision.

8 Recommendations

I recommend that Services Committee recommend that Council:

- 8.1 Agrees delegated authority to the Head of Social Work for the implementation of the proposals on guaranteed hours and Flexi Social Care Worker posts set out in Section 4 of this report.



Shetland Islands Council

REPORT

To: **Employees Joint Consultative Committee
Services Committee**

**21 February 2006
16 March 2006**

From: **Community Care Manager**

Report No SW01-06F
Career Grades for Staff in the Social Work Service

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 This report presents proposals for a career-graded structure for Social Care Worker posts in all Social Work Service care settings.
- 1.2 Members are asked to approve the proposals on the basis that the grades will be subject to change on implementation of Single Status.
- 1.3 The report seeks delegated authority to the Head of Social Work for the implementation of career grades in all care settings and for other groups of staff; initially Social Workers and Occupational Therapists.

2. **Links to Corporate Plan**

- 2.5 *Social Justice, Active Citizenship and Achieving Potential:* Social Care Workers (SCWs) provide care to some of the most vulnerable people in our community; promoting their independence and helping them achieve their full potential.
- 2.6 *Developing the Workforce:* There is a need to attract more staff into caring roles in order to meet the increasing levels of need in the community. Introducing complete career grades for all care workers from trainee to senior grades should make posts more attractive.

3. **Background**

Social Care Workers

- 3.1 Currently the staff complement in each Social Work Service care setting comprises a number of posts at Senior Social Care Worker (SSCW) level

and others at Social Care Worker (SCW) level. Progression to SSCW is by a full recruitment process to any vacancies as they arise.

- 3.2 There is no clear arrangement for the appointment of trainees, however, skill seekers are employed and some students on temporary contracts during their vacation to help with annual leave cover.
- 3.3 The Social Work Service finds it difficult to recruit SCWs in some parts of Shetland and to some services. It is hoped that work to complete the redesign of care services delivered at home which includes the introduction of guaranteed hours for a larger number of workers will go some way towards addressing staff shortages in this service. Introducing a career-graded structure for SCW posts is expected to also make these posts more attractive to workers.
- 3.4 All Social Care Workers and Social Care Managers are required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) within the next 5 years if they wish to continue to work in this field. In order to register with SSSC, staff must acquire a recognised qualification. This requirement has been taken into account in looking at career grades for SCW posts.

Social Workers

- 3.5 Similar issues exist for social worker posts. There is a career grade for qualified social workers that applies to some posts but trainee posts are separate and the Social Work Service does not have flexibility to re-designate posts to suit changing needs within the fieldwork teams.

Occupational Therapists

- 3.6 No posts in the Social Work OT Service are career graded.

Other Posts in Social Work

- 3.7 In order to fill some posts in the Planning and Information team, career grades have been applied on an ad hoc basis.

4. **Proposals**

Social Care Workers

- 4.1 It is proposed that a continuous career grade is established for all Social Care Worker posts in the Social Work Service.

- 4.2 The initial proposal for the career grade is shown in the table below.

| | | |
|-----|--------|---|
| AP2 | SCP 19 | Trainee appointments |
| | SCP 20 | SCWs accepted onto SVQ3 programme following a selection process |
| | 21 | |
| | 22 | |
| AP3 | SCP 23 | SCWs progression to SCP23 would be dependent upon achieving SVQ3 award |
| | 24 | |
| | 25 | |
| | 26 | |
| AP4 | SCP 27 | SSCWs accepted onto SVQ4 programme following a selection process. Progression to SCP28 would be dependent upon achieving SVQ4 award |
| | 28 | |
| | 29 | |
| | 30 | |

The salaries for 2005/2006 are attached for information.

- 4.3 Appointment to any SCW post could be made at any point within the career grade. Advertisements could focus on the grade where the staff team needed to be strengthened or left open.
- 4.4 The overall staff complement would not change as a result of introducing the career grade.

Qualification Bars and Selection Processes

- 4.5 All SCW appointments would have a clear expectation regarding the qualification they must have or obtain.
- 4.6 Trainee appointments would have a maximum of 2 years to gain sufficient experience and knowledge to be accepted onto the SVQ3 programme. There would be a selection process to ensure trainees had reached an appropriate level before progressing to SCP20.
- 4.7 All SCWs would be expected to gain SVQ3 within 2 years of commencing SVQ training. There is provision for up to 70 candidates on the SVQ3 programme at any one time. Failure to complete SVQ3 in 2 years may result in termination of their employment unless there was good cause for the delay and an extension had been agreed. There would be no progression beyond SCP22 without SVQ3. Any action taken would follow consultation with personnel in line with existing procedures.
- 4.8 There would be a selection process for SCWs with SVQ3 who wished to progress to the next level of the career grade. Applications would be invited

Agenda Item No. 05 - Public Report

internally for any SSCW vacancies or for a place on the SVQ4 programme. There are 16 places for SVQ4 training. Successful applicants for a SSCW post would be automatically placed on the SVQ4 programme unless they already held SVQ4 or an equivalent qualification.

- 4.9 All SSCWs must achieve SVQ4 within 2 years of commencing their training. Failure to do so would result in the staff member returning to SCW grades, unless there was good cause for the delay and an extension had been agreed.
- 4.10 There would be no progression beyond SCP27 until SVQ4 had been completed.
- 4.11 All staff would be expected to move between services as required e.g. in either a care home setting or in the Care at Home Service.
- 4.12 The role of SSCWs would vary depending on the needs of each care setting. Some SSCWs would be involved primarily in management, others would be senior practitioners.
- 4.13 Experience of the SVQ programme suggests that not all staff will wish to progress to SSCW level. This together with the turnover of staff and length of time it will take to progress through the career grade from trainee level means that the proposals do not require additional funding for the foreseeable future.
- 4.14 *Job Profiles and Person Specifications*
New / revised job profiles and person specifications are needed. These would include job profiles reflecting the different roles of
- Trainees
 - SCWs
 - SSCWs as senior practitioners, and
 - SSCWs working primarily in management.
- 4.15 *Staff & Union Consultation*
The proposals were discussed at the Joint Future Joint Staff Forum on 24 August 2005, where they were welcomed. The details have been made widely available to staff and discussed in staff meetings across the service. Concerns raised by staff are that opportunities to progress through the career grade will be restricted by the number of places available on the SVQ training programmes. This is true, however, there will still be more opportunities than currently exist for progressing to SSCW, currently staff can only progress to SSCW grades if a vacancy arises.
- 4.16 *Single Status*
The grades in the proposals at paragraph 3.2 above will be revised on implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

Social Workers, OTs and other posts in Social Work

4.17 It is proposed that the Social Work Service is given delegated authority to implement similar extended career grades for Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and other posts in Social Work.

4.18 The details would be drawn up following consultation with the unions and staff.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.2 The SVQ programme is fully funded.

5.3 Turnover rates in SCW posts and flexibility over the level at which appointments can be made within the overall staff complement will allow the proposals for SCW posts to be implemented within existing budget provision.

5.4 Members should note that the Council General Fund Revenue Estimates and Council Tax Setting Report F-002-F states that the budget is £5.878 million in deficit and all service areas are required to undertake a critical review of cost implications to their services, in order to identify savings and achieve a balanced budget.

6. Policy and Delegated Authority

6.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to the Services Committee. The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. Ref. SIC 70/03.)

6.2 This report recommends changes to the staffing arrangements in Social Work and seeks delegated authority to the Head of Social Work to implement the changes. Therefore a decision of the Council is required.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The introduction of complete career grades from trainee to senior practitioner should help make posts in the Social Work Service more attractive to workers.

7.2 The proposals would give a clear career path in all care settings from trainee to SSCW without the need for vacancies at a particular level occurring.

7.3 Extending the career grade for Social Workers and introducing career grades for Occupational Therapists and other posts should go some way towards alleviating the recruitment and retention problems currently experienced across the service.

8. **Recommendations**

I recommend that Services Committee recommends that Council

- 8.1 agrees to create a continuous career grade for all Social Care Worker posts in the Social Work Service;
- 8.2 agrees the proposals for the implementation of the scheme set out in Section 4 of this report
- 8.3 notes that the grades will be subject to change on implementation of Single Status.
- 8.4 agrees delegated authority to the Head of Social Work to introduce complete career grades for other groups of staff initially Social Workers and Occupational Therapists.

Date: 9 February 2006
Ref: SC'AN'SW01-06

Report No SW01-06F

| SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL APT & C EMPLOYERS COSTS 1/4/2005- 01/03/2006 | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Scale | SCP | Salary (2.95% Award) | Salary + Isl. Allow. 1545 | Nat. Ins. Employer | Superann. Employer 14.4% | Total Cost | Resid'l. Grades | Tech. Gr'de. |
| GS1 | 3 | 10670 | 12215 | 676 | 1759 | 14649 | 1 | |
| | 4 | 11033 | 12578 | 709 | 1811 | 15099 | | |
| Min. at 18 Years | 5 | 11408 | 12953 | 744 | 1865 | 15562 | | |
| | 6 | 11771 | 13316 | 778 | 1918 | 16012 | | |
| Min. at 21 Years | 7 | 12135 | 13680 | 812 | 1970 | 16461 | | |
| | 8 | 12502 | 14047 | 846 | 2023 | 16916 | | |
| | 9 | 12928 | 14473 | 886 | 2084 | 17443 | | |
| GS2(min)/GS1(max) | 10 | 13553 | 15098 | 944 | 2174 | 18216 | | |
| | 11 | 13894 | 15439 | 975 | 2223 | 18638 | | |
| | 12 | 14218 | 15763 | 1006 | 2270 | 19039 | | |
| GS3 | 13 | 14467 | 16012 | 1029 | 2306 | 19346 | | |
| | 14 | 14727 | 16272 | 1053 | 2343 | 19668 | | |
| AP1(min)/GS3(max) | 15 | 15062 | 16607 | 1084 | 2391 | 20082 | 2 | 1 |
| | 16 | 15405 | 16950 | 1116 | 2441 | 20507 | | |
| | 17 | 15697 | 17242 | 1143 | 2483 | 20868 | | |
| | 18 | 16113 | 17658 | 1182 | 2543 | 21382 | 3 | 2 |
| AP2 | 19 | 16516 | 18061 | 1219 | 2601 | 21881 | | |
| | 20 | 16963 | 18508 | 1261 | 2665 | 22434 | | |
| | 21 | 17433 | 18978 | 1305 | 2733 | 23015 | | |
| | 22 | 17876 | 19421 | 1346 | 2797 | 23564 | 4 | 3 |
| AP3 | 23 | 18379 | 19924 | 1393 | 2869 | 24185 | | |
| | 24 | 18966 | 20511 | 1447 | 2954 | 24912 | | |
| | 25 | 19545 | 21090 | 1501 | 3037 | 25628 | | |
| | 26 | 20167 | 21712 | 1559 | 3127 | 26397 | 5 | 4 |
| AP4 | 27 | 20808 | 22353 | 1618 | 3219 | 27191 | | |
| | 28 | 21476 | 23021 | 1681 | 3315 | 28017 | | |
| | 29 | 22306 | 23851 | 1758 | 3435 | 29044 | | |
| | 30 | 23034 | 24579 | 1825 | 3539 | 29944 | 6 | 5 |
| AP5 | 31 | 23738 | 25283 | 1891 | 3641 | 30815 | | |
| | 32 | 24433 | 25978 | 1956 | 3741 | 31675 | | |
| | 33 | 25151 | 26696 | 2022 | 3844 | 32562 | | |
| | 34 | 25858 | 27403 | 2088 | 3946 | 33437 | 7 | 5 |
| PO1 | 35 | 26377 | 27922 | 2136 | 4021 | 34079 | | |
| PO2 | 36 | 27055 | 28600 | 2199 | 4118 | 34918 | | |
| | | | | | | | 8 | |

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 05 - Public Report

| | | | | | | | |
|------|----|-------|-------|------|------|-------|---|
| PO3 | 37 | 27822 | 29367 | 2271 | 4229 | 35867 | 9 |
| PO4 | 38 | 28632 | 30177 | 2346 | 4346 | 36869 | |
| PO5 | 39 | 29542 | 31087 | 2431 | 4476 | 37994 | |
| PO6 | 40 | 30289 | 31834 | 2504 | 4584 | 38922 | |
| PO7 | 41 | 31069 | 32614 | 2604 | 4696 | 39915 | |
| PO8 | 42 | 31860 | 33405 | 2705 | 4810 | 40920 | |
| PO9 | 43 | 32630 | 34175 | 2804 | 4921 | 41900 | |
| PO10 | 44 | 33424 | 34969 | 2905 | 5035 | 42910 | |
| PO11 | 45 | 34174 | 35719 | 3001 | 5144 | 43864 | |
| PO12 | 46 | 34965 | 36510 | 3103 | 5257 | 44870 | |
| PO13 | 47 | 35748 | 37293 | 3203 | 5370 | 45867 | |
| PO14 | 48 | 36621 | 38166 | 3315 | 5496 | 46977 | |
| PO15 | 49 | 37458 | 39003 | 3422 | 5616 | 48042 | |
| PO16 | 50 | 38295 | 39840 | 3529 | 5737 | 49106 | |
| PO17 | 51 | 39164 | 40709 | 3640 | 5862 | 50212 | |
| PO18 | 52 | 40097 | 41642 | 3760 | 5996 | 51398 | |
| PO19 | 53 | 40997 | 42542 | 3875 | 6126 | 52543 | |
| PO20 | 54 | 41945 | 43490 | 3996 | 6263 | 53749 | |
| PO21 | 55 | 42944 | 44489 | 4124 | 6406 | 55019 | |
| PO22 | 56 | 43946 | 45491 | 4252 | 6551 | 56294 | |
| PO23 | 57 | 44984 | 46529 | 4385 | 6700 | 57614 | |
| PO24 | 58 | 46082 | 47627 | 4526 | 6858 | 59012 | |
| PO25 | 59 | 47177 | 48722 | 4666 | 7016 | 60404 | |
| PO26 | 60 | 48268 | 49813 | 4805 | 7173 | 61792 | |
| PO27 | 61 | 49359 | 50904 | 4945 | 7330 | 63180 | |
| PO28 | 62 | 50457 | 52002 | 5086 | 7488 | 64576 | |

Islands Allowance calculated:- (6 months at £1516) + (6 months at £1546) = 1531

Maternity for

APT&C is

calculated:

6 weeks @ 9/10's of Salary (most will be just basic + IA) (get 92% back from govt)

12 weeks @ 5/10's of Salary (most will be just basic + IA)

20 weeks @ £8 net (is £100 but we get 92% back from the government)



Shetland Islands Council

REPORT

To: **Services Committee
Shetland Islands Council**

**16 March 2006
29 March 2006**

From: **Head of Housing Service**

Report No: HS-02-06

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN LERWICK AND LANDWARD AREAS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is facing ever increasing demand for affordable social housing at a time when many properties are lost to the Council through Right To Buy (RTB).
- 1.2 At the same time recent changes in legislation, increases in property values and social changes across the country have compounded the demand for affordable social houses.
- 1.3 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 seek to place greater responsibilities on local authorities as housing providers and strategic facilitators.
- 1.4 This report seeks to recommend to Council how they might meet those responsibilities.
- 1.5 The Housing Service was making plans for renewal of the Hoofields chalets in any event. This report seeks to bring that part to Members immediate attention and expand upon that particular planning, to propose a wider strategic response from the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 As the Housing Service now have rents under control, the Housing Revenue Account is currently able to contribute to reserves in the Housing Repair and Renewal fund (HRA, R & R fund). The HRA, R & R fund currently stands at approximately £13m and so allows Members to consider its use to help fund the proposals within this report. The proposed mechanism for application is set out in section 6.7 below.
- 2.2 Historically, the Council has lost approximately one third of its available properties through RTB. It might be argued that all things being equal this

should not increase demand, as those occupying the RTB properties are no longer in need of a Council house.

- 2.3 However, since the introduction of RTB there have been many social, economic and legislative changes, which have increased demand for affordable social housing across Shetland. The huge numbers on waiting lists exemplifies that demand for Lerwick and Shetland as a whole.
- 2.4 As of 31st January 2006, there were a total of **856** applicants for properties of all sizes in Shetland. In addition there may be up to a further 60 homeless applicants currently being processed in the system that are not included in these figures.
- 2.5 A breakdown of these figures shows that there are currently **600** applicants for Lerwick and **467** applicants for landward areas. These two figures do not add up to 856, as the same applicants will be expressing Lerwick and some landward areas as their areas of choice.
- 2.6 The vast majority of these applicants have been waiting between 1 – 7 years but there are a few examples of longer waits, with one applicant waiting 30 years as an extreme example. Clearly, however it is viewed, this represents a lot of unmet demand.
- 2.7 While there are currently 856 applicants this does not mean that 856 new houses are required. This is because many will already be housed but simply want a move to something bigger, smaller or in another part of Shetland. Also the circumstances of applicants change and the external factors that affect supply and demand change also. For example, some may find their own house or move to another area. Similarly, Hjaltdland Housing Association (HHA) will house some of these applicants as their new developments become available.
- 2.8 More recently the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003, gives priority need, to several new groups of people. This effectively increases the numbers of people to whom the Council has a statutory responsibility.
- 2.9 In addition the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 also seeks to abolish the category of priority need by 2012. This will have the added effect of widening again the number of people to whom the Council has a statutory obligation.
- 2.10 At the same time, the same legislation will soon suspend the local connection test and so suspend the Councils powers of referral. At present anyone without a local connection will eventually be referred back to their own local authority for housing. The suspension of this referral system will mean that anyone from any area can present as homeless here and expect this local authority to house them. This will likely add to the demand already identified.
- 2.11 As the number of applicants classified by legislation as homeless increases, the Council is forced to designate more and more properties as temporary to provide a short-term solution. This further clogs up the system by making fewer properties available for permanent letting. It also reduces the chances of

anyone on the existing transfer and waiting lists, from ever receiving an allocation.

- 2.12 If left unchecked the logical consequence is that by 2012, most if not all SIC allocations will only be directed at those classified as homeless, with little or no chance of any permanent allocations becoming available for the Council to use. A cynical view may be that this is the unwritten intention of national policy as Registered Social Landlord's only continue to receive funding, steadily increase their stock and granting permanent tenancies.
- 2.13 HHA will assist SIC by taking some homeless applicants through the section 5 referral process. However, this still leaves the local authority with statutory responsibility for homelessness. Those applicants that do not go to HHA will have to be housed by SIC. Thus leaving SIC with the need to provide landlord services for some of the most needy in our society. The natural consequence of this will be a disproportionate increase in costs for managing what remains of local authority housing.
- 2.14 Also Shetland as a community is working to promote the economy locally. If this is in any way successful, there will be a general requirement to house and retain all those that are already in Shetland and all those that come to Shetland to undertake work.
- 2.15 The failure to increase the net supply of housing will be a disincentive to economic growth and it will act as brake to some economic development proposals.
- 2.16 The Housing Service has already sent a questionnaire to key employers in Shetland and they have indicated that at least some of those employers will need housing for incoming workers.
- 2.17 Taking into account the points in 2.1 to 2.16 above, it is my view that the current high demand is likely to increase and continue to cause a serious social imbalance for those seeking to access affordable housing. This will likely have a detrimental knock on effect in terms of health, education and social work provision into the future. As a further logical consequence this will also likely have serious financial implications for the whole of Shetland in general and the Council in particular.
- 2.18 At present any money from the Scottish Executive for new houses is directed via Communities Scotland to HHA and not the Council. Therefore, SIC cannot rely on direct funding from Communities Scotland. Regardless of the outcome of this report, the Housing Service will continue in its enabling role by providing as much support as practicable to HHA, in order that they can attract as much additional funding as possible to Shetland.
- 2.19 By supplementing funding from Communities Scotland with their own money, HHA are committed to spending £6m per year over the next five years. The same development plan also aims to produce 171 units within Lerwick and 155 in landward areas. This commitment is commendable and welcomed.

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

- 2.20 The help HHA are able to offer is of great value and fully supported. However, in my view despite their best efforts and intentions the existing HHA development plan is unlikely to meet the total of prevailing demand in the short term (1 – 5 years).
- 2.21 Therefore, there is likely to be a gap between what HHA are able to complete and the overall demand in the next five years and immediately beyond.
- 2.22 With respect to our colleagues within HHA already working hard to help, if their current development programme slips for any reason, the gap in the supply of houses will be made worse.
- 2.23 It is hoped that this will not happen but in strategic terms it remains a risk for the Council, who will always have the statutory responsibility but may not have the resources available in the form of available houses to SIC.
- 2.24 The commencement of a 6-year housing development programme would move the Council closer towards a housing supply equilibrium and reduce the risk of a worsening housing crisis as 2012 approaches.
- 2.25 An investment of £13m over 6 years would yield approximately 130+ houses. £2m per year on new build is similar in scale to what is recently spent on refurbishments. Therefore, expenditure of this scale should not seriously distort the local construction markets. The remainder could be spent on acquisition of existing houses.
- 2.26 In the meantime, the SIC chalets at Hoofields are reaching the end of their useful economic life. While they currently remain serviceable, they will require investment soon, either by extensive refurbishment or replacement. The investment in new general needs houses to replace the older units would in my view represent better value in the longer term.
- 2.27 In addition, the layout of the Hoofields site and its existing infrastructure makes it ripe for redevelopment. Any such re-development could at the same time regenerate the area to remove the stigma that currently exists.
- 2.28 Funding available for Councils seeking to build new houses for themselves is nil. However, a small sum might be available from the Housing Estate Regeneration Fund (HERF). The Housing Service has already made a bid to Communities Scotland under HERF for a sum of £200k as a contribution to the demolition and environmental costs at Hoofields and Ladies Drive between now and 2008. A decision is awaited.
- 2.29 The detail of financing these proposals from the HRA, R & R will be the subject of a further report from the Head of Finance. The finance report will set out a longer term financial plan that proves the prudence of this approach to all interested parties including the Scottish Executive.
- 3. So what could be done (subject to planning permission)?**

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

- 3.1 The existing tenants at Hoofields could be re-housed across Shetland in phases to allow regeneration of the area. This process could be begun by construction in the first year of up to 5 properties in the large un-used car park area to the rear of Ladies Drive (subject to planning permission).
- 3.2 As the upper floor of the Ladies Drive office space is no longer used, this could also be converted into additional housing units.
- 3.3 Hoofields can then be re-developed in phases as each square is emptied and replaced with permanent units that can then be let on a permanent basis.
- 3.4 As a contribution to a mixed tenure community, serviced sites could be created. The serviced sites could then be offered at a discount to anyone freeing up a Council house elsewhere in Lerwick or Scalloway (the current high demand areas) to build their own home at a lower cost. This has the effect of freeing up Councils houses for much less than the cost of building a new property. The details of such an incentive scheme would be subject to a further report to Services Committee.
- 3.5 Through the pilot at Rudda Park, the Housing Service has developed a standard house design that can be utilised as 2,3 or 4 bed house or flat. Similarly, the design is such that bedrooms can be exchanged between units to meet the changing needs of families into the future. This will allow the houses to be genuinely considered as homes for life.
- 3.6 Once the whole of Hoofields is re-developed, subject to planning permission, building can continue in the area immediately outside of the current Hoofields perimeter and / or the land at the top of Staney Hill. Development in either area will be on the basis of which is technically easier and so the most cost effective. The name of the scheme/s could also be changed to finally lay the stigma attached to the existing community aside.
- 3.7 A development at the Ness of Sound was considered. However, development of this site would require further additional investment to lay down a new access road. Such costs for a road could be spent on houses elsewhere in Lerwick. Therefore, taking into account the support for the current proposals, I am unable to recommend such action at this stage.
- 3.8 A development of £2m per year could be done with existing housing staff at cost, using standard designs developed as part of the Rudda Park pilot scheme. Therefore, ensuring that as much as possible of available funding goes into new properties.
- 3.9 The contract for this work over a 5-6 year period could be let as two contracts with repeat phases. One in Lerwick the other landward areas. This contract would be written for pricing, to seek % reductions in cost in return for guaranteed work over 5-6 years. Each contract would also include a requirement for the contractor to put at least three youngsters through an apprenticeship scheme while the contract is in operation. I am advised by Careers Scotland that CITB funding would be available to contractors taking part in such a scheme. Advantages of this approach are:

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006
Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

- 3.9.1 Less administrative costs due to reduced tendering and documentation;
- 3.9.2 Less cost in fees and so more units per pound spent;
- 3.9.3 Greater certainty for the contractor who can plan work more cost effectively;
- 3.9.4 Enhanced training from the investment by provision of places for apprentices;
- 3.9.5 The cost of apprenticeships in Shetland as a whole can be shared with the private sector and so diverts some of the cost falling on the Council. Thus saving the Council a small amount into the future, while maintaining the number of apprentices;
- 3.9.6 Flexibility for the Housing Service who can simply order the quantity of houses in the sizes they need each year to meet the prevailing demand as it changes.
- 3.10 I should emphasise that, this proposal is intended to augment the valuable contribution that HHA are already making to the supply of affordable housing. In order to make sure that HHA development proposals were not compromised, all SIC development proposals would be in areas that:
 - 3.10.1 Had either been offered to HHA and turned down;
 - 3.10.2 Or, if in the same area, house sizes that were different to those proposed by HHA thereby avoiding competition for the same client groups.
- 3.11 An outline of a proposed development plan for Lerwick is set out in *Appendix A*. The residents of Lerwick North have been consulted and their comments are attached as *Appendix B*. The Lerwick Community Council has been consulted and their comments are attached as *Appendix C*. The recommendations from the Capital programme Management Team (CPMT) are attached as *Appendix D*. This part would total £10m, with a further £3m available to purchase existing properties on the open market. CPMT generally support the project.
- 3.12 If the Council were to purchase existing properties it would have to be for a realistic price that made an allowance for bringing such properties to a similar standard of other Council houses.
- 3.13 The timing of this report has not allowed time for consultation across the whole of Shetland. Therefore, the proposals for developments in Landward areas is still subject to consultation with the relevant Community Council's, the residents of schemes affected by proposals and the Council Member for the particular area. An outline of a proposed development plan for landward areas is set out in *Appendix E*. All proposals are subject to a further detailed technical appraisal.
- 3.14 The proposals for development in landward areas is where there is a known demand and the land is immediately available to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). One noticeable absence in this proposed programme is the

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

Scalloway area. This is because there is very little land available to the HRA in Scalloway. Also as part of the ongoing partnership working, HHA already have significant housing developments in the pipeline for the Scalloway area to meet some of the immediate demand.

3.15 The proposals in Brae are on the basis that existing infrastructure can support the developments on / within the existing schemes. If we have to await further investment by Scottish Water, the houses as planned will have to be completed towards the end of the programme rather than at the beginning.

3.16 As part of the process it is desirable to promote a multi-tenure community. Therefore, by the Council developing solely under the HRA, RTB could continue and the mixed tenure approach secured into the future by a more natural process.

3.17 The numbers of properties lost through RTB is only an issue when there are not enough houses available for the Council to meet demand. As this proposal would move towards reducing demand, the effects of RTB are less damaging to long term housing provision and overall supply. Also in order to achieve a mixed tenure community, RTB might be considered favourable from a strategic point of view in the longer term.

3.18 As these proposals would bring a change to the financing of new Council houses, the Rudda Park scheme already underway would be the odd one out. Therefore, to ensure consistency it is proposed that funding for the existing Rudda park scheme be drawn from the HRA resources outlined in this report, if agreed by Services Committee.

3.19 In order to avoid the risk of over supply and to ensure there is sufficient flexibility into the future, it is proposed that the Head of Housing consults each year with the Allocation Monitoring Group, HHA and Council Member for the relevant area to decide the housing mix (e.g. 1,2,3 or 4 bed houses), to meet the prevailing demand.

3.20 The Council has to approve HHA proposals with Communities Scotland in any event. Therefore, we can collectively ensure that the investment in Shetland via HHA is maximised and any proposal by the Council adds to HHA's efforts to boost the supply overall.

3.21 If any other sites become available to the Council in Lerwick, they will be subject to further reports to Services Committee.

3.22 For estimating and developing proposals within this report an average cost of £100k per additional unit is assumed. Clearly, this will vary depending on size of units and location.

3.23 The aim will be to increase the number of Council houses available by purchasing existing houses. This will be linked to a further planned spend of approximately £2m per annum on new affordable housing, building as many houses as possible in the right combinations to meet the prevailing demand.

3.24 If the opportunities arise to spend more than £2m per annum, then the programme can be accelerated to make provision up to the maximum of £13m.

3.25 If existing houses can be purchased for the right price (market price less the cost of repair / refurbishment) the need to build new ones is reduced. Therefore, it is proposed within the total £13m to spend some of that money on purchasing existing properties by actively seeking enquiries and consideration of any suitable houses on the open market.

3.26 The housing supply and demand situation would have to be critically appraised again at the end of this development programme (2012). However, if it was found that equilibrium was reached in the meantime, the proposed expenditure could be curtailed.

3.27 The chalets that are removed from Hoofields can be set aside for future temporary use or disposed of by sale. One idea is to give them over to local contractors who may wish to house key workers on a temporary basis if the larger projects on the capital programme go ahead.

3.28 Comments of the Shetland Tenants Forum are attached as Appendix F.

4. Links To Corporate Priorities

The contents of this report links through the Local Housing Strategy to the corporate themes of Benefiting People and Communities and Looking After Where We Live.

5. Proposals

5.1 It is proposed that the Services Committee instruct and authorise the Head of Housing to:

5.1.1 Take forward the development programme as presented in 3.0 above;

5.1.2 To spend up to £13m (at 2006 prices) on behalf of the Council to acquire as many houses and sites as possible over the next 5-6 years in Lerwick and Landward areas to meet prevailing demand;

5.1.3 Subject to consultation with the Member for the local area, to utilise as much of the £13m as possible by expression of interest and invitation, to purchase existing properties for use as Council housing where there is existing demand.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Despite giving Local Authorities the responsibility for meeting the challenging changes to national housing policy, it remains unlikely that any significant funding will be made available to the Council for new housing.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

6.2 Capital investment on new houses will be offset by additional rental income in the future. This additional income will be added to the income on HRA, R & R balances to support the remaining funds into the future.

6.3 By utilising the HRA, R & R fund in this way, the Council's other funds remain available for use as required by the Council into the future.

6.4 The additional units available to SIC will be managed by existing staffing levels and so offset rising unit costs that occur due to RTB. This will help sustainability and assist with overall reduced costs into the future.

6.5 The use of in-house staff and standard designs will allow the Housing Service to produce housing units at cost price, without reduced additional costs to meet profit and professional fees.

6.6 The inclusion of a contract condition to promote apprenticeships will be an additional but marginal additional cost to the contract. However, promoting construction skills within Shetland into the future will offset this.

6.7 These proposals could be funded by using the Housing R & R fund to support revenue repair and maintenance expenditure. In turn the revenue expenditure that is then released can be used to meet the financing costs associated with this proposal and associated investment.

7. Conclusions

7.1 It seems clear that no one could reasonably disagree with the Scottish Executives aspirations to eradicate homelessness in Scotland. It is also clear that with the current levels of demand, the trauma of inadequate housing will continue for many families, unless the Council is able to act in a proactive way by providing a local solution.

7.2 It remains fortunate that SIC can at least consider options in a way that many local authorities simply cannot, without becoming subservient to national policy of stock transfer, regardless of the cost to tenants.

7.3 However in my view, it is also clear that to place responsibility for implementation on local authorities without proper or timely resources and at the same time divert available resources towards Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), serves only to purposefully promote RSL's to the detriment of Council housing. This would seem to be the logical consequence without regard for the effect on Council applicants as a whole.

7.4 The level of resources given over to Hjaltland and the very need for SIC to consider this report, suggests that the resources from Communities Scotland is too little too late in Shetland's case.

7.5 Also in my view, this process as an integral part of national policy, seeks to undermine and reduce the ability of local authorities to cope. This seems to me to demonstrate, no real care for the many families or the social cost in emotional and monetary terms of failing to properly house the nation. By acting in this

way the Scottish Executive have demonstrated that dogma comes before the needs of individuals by focusing on tenure and not outcomes. It is in my view not enough to boast about what is being done and ignore what is not done.

7.6 By accepting the proposals within this report SIC will be recognising the investments of the Scottish Executive and their agents as inadequate. In doing so, SIC would be accepting responsibility for attempting to properly house its own community and meet the demands of challenging legislation. This would in my view be a credit to the Council. It will also be a relief to all Council and NHS staff having to deal with the negative aspects of the current situation.

7.7 More importantly, it will provide the much needed relief to those whose housing needs would otherwise remain unmet by current levels of investment from the Scottish Executive. Thus, enhancing the quality of life for many. At the same time it would allow housing staff to focus their energy on provision of quality services, instead of trying to limit the damaging effects of national housing policy.

7.8 It remains a sad reality that, if this proposal is accepted it will be in spite of national housing policy and not because of it.

8. Policies And Delegated Authority

8.1 All matters relating to Housing stand referred to the Services Committee (Min Ref: SIC70/03). However the Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within approved policy, and for which there is a budget. As the recommendations in this report fall outwith delegated authority, a decision of the Council is required.

8.2 Approval for Capital Expenditure is a matter for the Council (minute reference 122/03).

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Services Committee recommends that Council instructs and authorises the Head of Housing to:

9.1.1 Take forward the development programme as presented in 3.0 above;

9.1.2 To spend up to £13m (at 2006 prices) on behalf of the Council to acquire as many houses and sites as possible over the next 6 years in Lerwick and Landward areas to meet prevailing demand;

9.1.3 Subject to consultation with the Member for the local area, to utilise as much of the £13m as possible by expression of interest and invitation, to purchase existing properties for use as Council housing where there is existing demand.

Appendix A – Development proposals for Lerwick

Appendix B – Comments from residents of Hoofields and Ladies Drive

Appendix C – Comments from the Lerwick Community Council

Appendix D – Comments from CPMT

Appendix E – Development proposals in Landward areas

Appendix F – Shetland Tenants Forum comments

Appendix A

Shetland Islands Council

Housing Service

Housing Development Proposals – Lerwick

| <u>Year</u> | <u>No of units</u> | <u>Cost £m</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2006-07 | | |
| New houses Ladies Drive | 6 | 0.6 |
| 2007-08 | | |
| New houses Hoofields | 14 | 1.4 |
| 2008-09 | | |

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Report

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| New houses in Hoofields | 14 | 1.4 |
| 2009-10 | | |
| New houses in Hoofields | 14 | 1.4 |
| 2010 – 11 | | |
| New houses beyond Hoofields | 14 | 1.4 |
| 2011-12 | | |
| New houses beyond Hoofields | 14 | 1.4 |
| Totals | <u>76</u> | <u>7.6</u> |

Less the existing 35 chalets to give a net gain of 41 units

Plus any existing properties that might be purchased up to but not exceeding £3m
(approx 30+ properties)

Current waiting list for Lerwick = 600 applicants

13 February 2006 – 6.00pm Public Meeting

Venue: Staney Hill Hall

Attendees: Chris Medley
Councillor Gordon Mitchell
Councillor Leonard Groat
Theo Nicolson
Shirley Mills
Brian Leask Hjaltland Housing Association
26 members of the public.
(Private Owners, Ladies Drive Tenants, Hoofields Tenants)

Chris Medley: -

No decisions made about shortage of Housing. Hoofields property is spaced out. If chalets wiped them new properties can be built instead.

Hoofield Chalets can be moved to another site so that new houses can be built on the site. If more money is available then one possibility of building up at Voderview/Staney Hill. If people are in temporary tenancy, then would be moved within other temporary accommodation. If people have Scottish Secure Tenancies, then negotiations and decant accommodation would be planned whilst works going on.

Stage 1

Ladies Drive office to be refurbished into a couple of flats and back car park could have at least 4 houses built on that site. 6 of Ladies Drive Units could be used as decant to allow to build back permanent houses on hoofields sites.

Gordon Mitchell:-

Pointed out that Hjaltland Housing Association (HHA) and Shetland Islands Council (SIC) housing stocks are being lost to Right To Buy and stock will continue to decrease.

Chris Medley: -

Changes in Government Legislation will be that all Local Authorities will only be re-housing homeless applicants. No waiting list or transfer applicants will get a look in. There is no housing solution within the next 5 to 6 years. HHA can build another 175 houses over the next 5 years.

Q: What will happen to the private Chalet at Hoofields?

Reply: Owners of Caravans would have to seek grants from HHA and possibly negotiations will have to take place. There could be a possibility of selling site to the private owners.

Q: What can we do? Why is the Council Tax the same for someone who has a £100,000 house in Walls to us that has a Private Chalet up at Hoofields?

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Appendix

Reply – I don't know. Council Tax money doesn't cover Housing money and vice versa. It is a reflection of service as Council.

Q: If I cannot return to my private chalet in Hoofields due to the icy roads. What can I get for my Council tax? Why does the Council stop gritting the road at the bottom of the Hoofields hill?

Reply: This is not a housing query. You would need to take this query up with Infrastructure re: road gritting.

Q: Do we still have a housing debt?

Reply: Yes, £52.7 Million. It is historic debt. The council spent money in a past era.

Q: What are the timescales for the hoofields site and the field beyond? Will it be a tandem event?

Reply: HHA have a development program for the next 5 years. The SIC will try and add to it, possibly over and above. For example: If Housing has up to £10 million to spend. Then SIC could build up to 14 houses per year over the next 5 years. Staney Hill land is HRA. Planning permission would have to be transferred over, where as the Hoofields site has already been zoned for housing. This makes an easier site to develop.

Q: Would there be a mix of private and public occupants?

Reply: This is just an idea, but if we were able to offer building plots then the council would need numbers of interest parties. There could be a mix of sites as best as we can but this depends on where the money comes from. For example: there could be a survey with local employers, NHS, Police, etc on how many houses would be needed for staff housing? This would help to re-generate the area.

Q: What would happen to the Hoofield Chalets? Would you create another Hoofields 2 situation?

Reply: Chalets could be swapped with the existing isles chalets depending on their conditions.

Reply: Building works could be done within the timescales up at the existing Hoofields sites.

Reply: We could not sell the chalets unless planning permission was requested on where it would be sited.

Q: How many houses would be built within the existing 8 Chalets?

Reply: It would be similar to the Rudda Park Housing of 2 bedroom houses, although the design could allow to have a 3^d or 4th bedroom in the roof space. This depends on how many we can fit in to the land area.

Q: What is the progress on the Grantfield Site?

Reply: SLAP is selling the land to HHA.

Q: Once a fixed link is to Bressay, how many houses would be built?

Reply: None for SIC. Anyway, if we waited for a fixed link to Bressay, it would be too late for housing crisis.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 06 - Public Appendix

Q: Could you please clarify the Right to Buy (RTB) Scheme and where the money comes from?

Reply: **The issues are that there is not enough housing in Shetland. If the money used comes from the SIC Reserve Fund, the houses are likely to be eligible for the RTB. If there is not enough money from the Reserve Fund, then we will have to request to borrow from SLAP. Only then, the houses and the land will not be RTB. You cannot buy a house that doesn't belong to the SIC.**

Q: whose money is SLAP?

Reply: **SLAP lends money out and then they get the returns on it. Shetland's money being used for Shetland people. HHA gets money from the Scottish Executive. 70% cost comes from Scottish Executive and mortgages on the remainder. The SIC does not get any direct money to build houses.**

Q: How would the public feel about the Ladies Drive Office and back car park space being used for housing and conversion?

No Objections from the floor.

Q: What are the plans for Ladies Drive? Would they be made into permanent tenancies?

Reply: **Hoofields and Ladies Drive have served its time. Homeless survey proposes that Ladies Drive Service has to stop. Ladies drive will just become part of the GN Stock. The office accommodation will have to end. I would imagine that the housing would have to be kept to the lower raised levels.**

Q: The young folk are having problems in getting onto the property ladder. Would the SIC have to look forward and accommodate them?

Reply: **House prices are a problem. The SIC and HHA have a duty to provide affordable housing. Any private builders would need at least 70% return if renting to public and that rental charge would show in the high charges.**

Brian Leask/HHA – **The uptake in Shared Ownership was poor originally. However, the scheme has a popular interest. You only need a 25% mortgage plus weekly rent costs.**

Chris Medley – **If someone declares themselves as homeless in Shetland and they currently have no local connection, they can be returned to wherever they came from.**

With the changes in homeless legislation, by 2012, for example: you can be a millionaire from EEC with no local connection and declare yourself homeless, the Council would have an obligation to re-house you. This is the reality of Legislation within Scotland.

Q: Is the Government still pushing for Stock Transfer?

Reply: **With the debt of £52.7 million, the SIC and Scottish Executive could not agree on the cost of stock. We are not keen to becoming a housing association.**

Q: Where does the money come from to keep the rent down?

Reply: **The cost of housing service is £2.4m; any money received goes back into the reserve fund. For example: £5 million rent money received less £3 million to run the housing service leaves a remainder of £2 million to build new houses. At the moment, any rent money received goes back into paying off the current debt.**

Appendix E

Shetland Islands Council

Housing Service

Housing Development Proposals – Landward

| <u>Year</u> | <u>No of units</u> | <u>Cost £m</u> |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2006-07 | | |
| New houses in Brae | 4 | 0.4 |
| 2007-08 | | |
| New houses in Brae | 6 | 0.6 |
| 2008-09 | | |
| New houses in Burra | 2 | 0.2 |
| New houses in Bressay | 6 | 0.6 |
| (not near proposed football field) | | |
| 2009-10 | | |
| New houses in Sandwick | 2 | 0.3 |
| 2010 – 11 | | |
| New Houses in Virkie | 4 | 0.4 |
| Totals | <u>24</u> | <u>2.4</u> |

Plus any existing properties that might be purchased up to but not exceeding £3m
(approx 30+ houses)

Current waiting lists for Brae = 39

Current waiting lists for Burra = 27

Current waiting lists for Bressay = 29

Current waiting lists for Sandwick = 82

Current waiting lists for Virkie = 27

Appendix F

- On balance the building of new houses in Shetland is welcomed, but concerns must be where people/tenants are going to be housed when rebuilding of Hoofields takes place.
- We are happy to see new build taking place but do realise there are things which must be clarified yet.



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Interim Head of Education

SHARED MANAGEMENT FOR SCHOOLS IN SHETLAND: PILOT PROJECT CULLIVOE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND MID YELL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval from Council Members for a two-year pilot of shared management between Cullivoe Primary School and Mid Yell Junior High School.

2. Link to Council Priorities

- 2.1 Strengthening Rural Communities - The Council will do this by supporting commercial activities throughout Shetland with preferential assistance for remote areas and seeking to decentralise some public sector employment away from Lerwick.
- 2.2 Active Citizenship - Supporting groups and individuals in their efforts to maintain high quality facilities and community life. Working to ensure that everyone who wants to do so can take part in their community.
- 2.3 Achieving Potential - The Council will continue to provide the best learning environment for all. A Best Value Education Service continues to be Council priority.

3. Background

- 3.1 The principles of Shared Management in Shetland's schools were approved at the January cycle (Min Ref: SC 03/06). This provided for a strategic direction in taking forward shared management in Shetland's schools.

- 3.2 These guidelines allow for full consultation to take place where a particular project for shared management of schools is proposed, without the requirement for specific Council approval to proceed to consultation on every occasion.

- 3.3 Final decisions on shared management remain with Council. Once consultation and consideration by the Education Service has taken place, projects will be presented to Members for final approval.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 In December 2005, the Teaching Head Teacher of Cullivoe Primary School was appointed to the post of Head Teacher, Mid Yell Junior High School. He is due to take up post in Mid Yell on 17 April 2006. At the time of his appointment to the Mid Yell post, he expressed a desire to continue involvement with the management of Cullivoe Primary School.
- 4.2 In January 2006, Cullivoe Primary School Board requested a meeting with the Quality Improvement Officer for the school to discuss the Shared Management. This meeting took place on 24 January 2006. Prior to this the School Board had held a parents' meeting.
- 4.3 At the meeting on the 24 January, the Board made a formal request to the Education Service to seek approval for a two-year pilot of shared management for their school with Mid Yell Junior High School and requested the appointment of a Principal Teacher to Cullivoe Primary School.
- 4.4 On 30 January 2006, consultation took place with the management team at Mid Yell Junior High and with Mid Yell Junior High School Board. Agreement was reached with the Management Team and the School Board to proceed with shared management pilot with Cullivoe Primary School, pending consultation with the wider parent body of Mid Yell Junior High School.
- 4.5 Parents of pupils at Mid Yell Junior High School were consulted via a letter. A parents' meeting was then held with Education Service representation. The management team of Mid Yell Junior High School and the Head Teacher of Cullivoe Primary School attended. A meeting was also held on the same date with the staff of Mid Yell Junior High School.
- 4.6 Pupils from Cullivoe Primary School attend nursery at Mid Yell Junior High and transfer there for their secondary education. Cullivoe Primary School pupils also travel to Mid Yell Junior High School on a Thursday to participate in Expressive Arts classes. It was recognised that extending these links would only be a further support for the pupils.
- 4.7 There are currently fifteen pupils on the roll for 2005/06 at Cullivoe Primary School, and a projected roll of sixteen for 2006/07.

- 4.8 As a courtesy, a meeting also took place between the Education Service and Burravoe Primary School Board on 23 February 2006. This was to inform them of the proposal brought forward by Cullivoe Primary School.

5. Proposals

It is proposed that:

- 5.1 Shared Management of Cullivoe Primary School and Mid Yell Junior High School become a pilot project for two years, commencing 17 April 2006. A two-year period is considered as an appropriate timescale, as this allows for proper monitoring and evaluation processes to occur. A two-year fixed term Principal Teacher post may also be more attractive for primary staff wishing to evaluate their suitability for school management.
- 5.2 The post of a Principal Teacher in Cullivoe Primary School is advertised as a two-year fixed term post.
- 5.3 For the duration of the pilot Cullivoe Primary School is managed by the Head Teacher, Mid Yell Junior High School, with the full support of the rest of the management team in Mid Yell Junior High School.
- 5.4 This pilot will be reviewed every six months. After the final review, a further report on the management of these schools will be presented to Services Committee.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 A table explaining the differences between the Revenue Estimates of Teaching Staff (2005/06) and Proposed Expenditure (2005/06) is included as Appendix A to this report. In this proposal, there would be a saving of approximately £18,039 on this year's revenue estimates.

7. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 7.1 All matters relating to the provision of Education stand referred to the Services Committee (Min Ref: SIC 70/03). The Services Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within approved policy and for which there is a budget.
- 7.2 As the recommendation falls outwith delegated powers, a decision of the Council is required.

8. Recommendation

I recommend that Services Committee recommend to Shetland Islands Council to agree to:

- 8.1 a two-year pilot for the shared management of Cullivoe and Mid Yell Junior High School;
- 8.2 the supporting arrangements outlined in section 5 of this report.

March 2006

Our Ref: HB/AE/ME

Report No: ED-06-F



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Interim Head of Education

SHARED MANAGEMENT FOR SCHOOLS IN SHETLAND: PILOT PROJECT FETLAR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND BALTASOUND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval from Council Members for a two-year pilot of shared management between Fetlar Primary School and Baltasound Junior High School.

2. Link to Council Priorities

- 2.1 Strengthening Rural Communities - The Council will do this by supporting commercial activities throughout Shetland with preferential assistance for remote areas and seeking to decentralise some public sector employment away from Lerwick.
- 2.2 Active Citizenship - Supporting groups and individuals in their efforts to maintain high quality facilities and community life. Working to ensure that everyone who wants to do so can take part in their community.
- 2.3 Achieving Potential - The Council will continue to provide the best learning environment for all. A Best Value Education Service continues to be Council priority.

3. Background

- 3.1 The principles of Shared Management in Shetland's schools were approved at the January cycle (Min Ref: SC 03/06). This provided for a strategic direction in taking forward shared management in Shetland's schools.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 08 - Public Report

- 3.2 These guidelines allow for full consultation to take place where a particular project for shared management of schools is proposed, without the requirement for specific Council approval to proceed to consultation on every occasion.

- 3.3 Final decisions on shared management remain with Council. Once consultation and consideration by the Education Service has taken place, projects will be presented to Members for final approval.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 In October 2005, the Teaching Head Teacher of Fetlar Primary School resigned to take up post elsewhere in Shetland. Fetlar Primary School currently has a teacher on a temporary basis, who is being supported by the Head Teacher of Burravoe Primary School.
- 4.2 In November 2005, Fetlar School Board requested a meeting with a representative from the Education Service to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Shared Management. This meeting took place on 9 November 2005.
- 4.3 Following a further meeting of Fetlar School Board which took place on Saturday 12 November 2005, the Board made a formal request to the Education Service to seek approval from Council Members for a two-year pilot of shared management. They requested the appointment of a Principal Teacher to Fetlar Primary School and for the Education Service to seek a school in the North Isles willing to take part in a shared management pilot with Fetlar Primary School.
- 4.4 Following approval of the principles of Shared Management for Shetland's schools, further discussions took place between the Education Service and Fetlar School Board on 6 February 2006. It was agreed at that meeting to discuss a possible shared management pilot with Baltasound Junior High School.
- 4.5 Baltasound Junior High School is currently experiencing a significant decline in its primary department roll owing to the drawdown of RAF Saxaford. At present the school has twenty-nine pupils in three primary classes. It is expected that the roll will continue to fall until Summer 2006, stabilising at around twenty pupils. Thereafter, there will only be a requirement to have two primary classes in the school.
- 4.6 Consultation has taken place with the management team at Baltasound Junior High on 9 February 2006, and with the School Board. There was an agreement to proceed with shared management pilot with Fetlar Primary School. It was acknowledged that this would be a good way of making use of the existing staffing at the school. The Depute Head (Primary) at Baltasound was identified as the specific manager who would provide direct support to Fetlar Primary School.
- 4.7 Fetlar Primary School pupils currently travel to Mid Yell Junior High School on a Thursday to participate in Expressive Arts classes. In

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 08 - Public Report

the pilot project, the Fetlar pupils would travel to Baltasound Junior High School instead.

- 4.8 There are currently five primary pupils and no nursery pupils on the roll for 2005/06 at Fetlar Primary School, and a projected roll of three primary pupils for 2006/07.

5. Proposals

It is proposed that:

- 5.1 Shared Management of Fetlar Primary School and Baltasound Junior High School become a pilot project for two years commencing on 17 April 2006. A two-year period is considered as an appropriate timescale, as this allows for proper monitoring and evaluation processes to occur at this remote location. It also allows for the changing position of Baltasound Junior High School to be monitored. A two-year fixed term Principal Teacher post may also be more attractive in a remote location than an established post.
- 5.2 The post of a Principal Teacher in Fetlar Primary School is advertised as a two-year fixed term post.
- 5.3 For the duration of the pilot Fetlar Primary School is managed by the Depute Head Teacher (Primary), Baltasound Junior High School.
- 5.4 This pilot will be reviewed every six months. After the final review, a further report on the management of these schools will be presented to Services Committee.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 A table explaining the differences between the Revenue Estimates of Teaching Staff (2005/06) and Proposed Expenditure (2005/06) is included as Appendix A to this report. In this proposal, there would be a saving of approximately £14,724 on this year's revenue estimates.

7. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 7.1 All matters relating to the provision of Education stand referred to the Services Committee (Min Ref: SIC 70/03). The Services Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within approved policy and for which there is a budget.
- 7.2 As the recommendation falls outwith delegated powers, a decision of the Council is required.

8. Recommendation

I recommend that Services Committee recommend to Shetland Islands Council to agree to:

- 8.1 a two-year pilot for the shared management of Fetlar and Baltasound Junior High School;
- 8.2 the supporting arrangements outlined in section 5 of this report.

March 2006

Our Ref: HB/AE/ME

Report No: ED-07-F

APPENDIX A

The following table shows the costs that **would be incurred** by all teaching staff salaries in Fetlar Primary School and the costs of management posts in Baltasound Junior High School if the two schools retained the current model of provision i.e. a Teaching Head Teacher in Fetlar Primary School.

Structure Using Teaching Head Teacher for Fetlar Primary School and Maintaining Management Structure at Baltasound Yell Junior High School:

| <u>Teaching Head Teacher for Fetlar and Current Baltasound Management Structure</u> | <u>£ Annual Cost (including on-costs)</u> |
|--|--|
| <u>Fetlar</u> | |
| Teaching Head Teacher | 48,924 |
| Admin Support Teacher (0.2 FTE) | 7,691 |
| Sub-total | £ 56,615 |
| <u>Baltasound</u> | |
| Head Teacher | 63,573 |
| Formal Depute Head Teacher | 56,577 |
| Other Depute Head Teacher | 47,466 |
| Principal Teacher | 43,616 |
| Sub-total | £ 211,232 |
| Total | £ 267,847 |

For comparison purposes, salaries are based on teachers at the top of the scale. Not all of the present teachers are currently at the top of the scale.

Structure for Proposed Pilot of Shared Management

| <u>Joint Head Teacher Model</u> | <u>£ Annual Cost (including on-costs)</u> |
|---|--|
| Joint Head Teacher Salary (Baltasound and Fetlar) | 47,466 |
| Sub-total | £47,466 |
| <u>Fetlar</u> | |
| Principal Teacher (point 1) | 41,891 |
| Sub-total | £ 41,891 |
| <u>Baltasound</u> | |
| Head Teacher | 63,573 |
| Formal Depute Head Teacher | 56,577 |
| Principal Teacher | 43,616 |
| Sub-total | £ 163,766 |
| Total | £ 253,123 |

Teaching Head Teacher Model: **£267,847**

Shared Management Pilot Model: **£253,123**

Total Difference: £14,724

Additional costs will be incurred in the form of mileage and essential car user's allowance for the Joint Head Teacher to move between the two schools, but this should be less than £2,500 per annum. There are currently no ferry fares charged between Unst and Fetlar.



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Interim Head of Education

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS PROVISION - UPDATE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council made a commitment on 29 June 2005 (Min Ref: SIC 119/05), to increase the provision of Additional Support Needs (ASN) staff within Shetland, in order to prevent staff being transferred from schools to the new additional support base at Gressy Loan.
- 1.2 In addition, an additional ASN auxiliary and a part-time Kitchen Assistant were approved on 20 October 2005 for the new additional support base (Min Ref: SC 66/05).

2. Links to Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Inclusion and Achieving Potential: The ASN service provides support within the bases at Gressy Loan and Bell's Brae, and where identified in all schools in Shetland.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The ASN service has successfully met all demands placed on it within the current year, both within schools and the new Gressy Loan base. In addition, it has provided ad-hoc specialised care for individuals in the new Quarff Additional Support Base and at centres on the mainland.
- 3.2 At Gressy Loan, the service has been successful in recruiting to all posts, and the base is now fully staffed.
- 3.3 The ASN service has managed to stay within the budgets agreed, and is now in a position to confirm an under-spend on employee costs for 2005/06.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is anticipated that approximately £38,000 will remain unspent, and will be transferred to savings, after taking the following proposals into account:
- Virement of £43,950 to meet the costs of off-island care for one client. This is being jointly financed by Education and Social Work
 - Virement of £3,000 to meet the costs of specialised equipment at Bell's Brae Special Department
 - Virement of £12,333 to meet the additional costs of the speech therapy service
 - Virement of £10,000 to meet the costs of supply cover during the establishment of the Gressy Loan facility
- 4.2 In addition to the proposals above, approximately £67,000 has already been vired out to meet additional costs elsewhere in Education.
- 4.3 It is also proposed to revisit the annual ASN audit, which aims to identify and quantify need in schools. This audit may lead to reductions in service, for example, where pupils move from primary to secondary school, therefore it is anticipated that savings for 2006/07 can be made without compromising the quality of provision.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Under the Financial Regulations, the Council is required to authorise virements in excess of £100,001 between cost centres. Table A below provides a breakdown per cost centre of the anticipated out-turn position, and Table B below provides information on the proposed virements which total £106,887.

Table A

| Cost Centre | Net Controllable Budget £ | Est. Outturn £ | Variance £ |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| GRE3450 - Special Education General | 100,000 | 116,108 | (16,108) |
| GRE3470 - Support for Learning | 2,815,002 | 2,826,850 | (11,848) |
| GRE3471 - ASN AHS | 543,181 | 436,294 | 106,887 |

Table B

| <u>Virement to</u> | Amount £ | Description | Virement From |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Social Work | 43,950 | Off Island Care | GRE 3471 |
| GRE 3450 | 12,333 | Speech Therapy Costs | GRE 3471 |
| GRE 3450 | 3,000 | Spec Equip Bell's Brae | GRE 3471 |
| GRE 3470 | 10,000 | Supply Cover | GRE 3471 |
| GRE00060831 | 37,604 | Additional Savings | GRE 3471 |
| TOTAL | 106,887 | | |

6. Policy and Delegated Authority

6.1 *All matters related to the provision of Education stand referred to the Services Committee (Min Ref: SIC 70/03). The Services Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within approved policy, and for which there is a budget.*

6.2 As the recommendations fall outwith delegated powers, a decision of the Council is required.

7. Recommendations

I recommend that the Services Committee recommends to Shetland Islands Council to agree to:

7.1 give approval to the Interim Head of Education to action the proposed virements; and

7.2 note the achievements made by the ASN service to date.

March 2006

Our Ref: NG/JR/ME

Report No: ED-09-F



Shetland Islands Council

REPORT

To: Employees JCC
Services Committee

13 March 2006
16 March 2006

From: Head of Community Development
Interim Head of Social Work
Interim Head of Education

LOCAL SUPPORT CO-ORDINATORS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of the Services Committee the Review of the Role of the Area based Local Support Co-ordinators and to present proposals for the establishment of Local Support Networks and Local Support Co-ordinators.

2. Background

- 2.1 In February 2003 Services Committee approved a report (Min Ref.: 11/03) that endorsed the establishment of Local Support Networks as a way forward in integrating local provision for children, young people and families.
- 2.2 In August 2003 the role of the Local Support Co-ordinator was established to link with Local Support Networks. The aims of the networks are that anyone, parent or professional, could refer a child or young person about whom they have concerns to a locally based co-ordinator. These concerns could be manifested in school or out of school and the support required by the young person would involve more than one agency. It is envisaged that through early identification the interventions needed would be at the lower level and would not impinge on or divert from child protection procedures, which would always be followed. However, there may be occasions when the co-ordinator is required to continue to be involved in cases that extend beyond lower level interventions. This will always be decided through involvement of the multi-agency management group. The co-ordinator would assess the request for support and arrange a multi-agency meeting to discuss the issues, pull together a co-ordinated plan and

identify a link worker to carry the plan through, using Shetland's Integrated Assessment Framework for Children and Young People .

- 2.3 This role was seen as vital in ensuring that children, young people and families receive the support they need to prevent issues developing whereby the young person requires a greater level of intervention from statutory agencies.
- 2.4 Through early identification and support at lower levels we would lessen the need for more invasive intervention at a later date. As a result we would be better placed to target additional resources at those in most need. This would be helpful in ensuring these resources, which are limited both in terms of qualified staff and in financial terms were used to best effect.
- 2.5 Six Local Support Co-ordinators were put in place to cover the whole of Shetland. These were temporary posts to cover a pilot phase of the project.
- 2.6 Changing Children's Services funding from the Scottish Executive was utilised to fund these posts.
- 2.7 Since August 2003 the initial pilot of the Local Support Co-ordinators role has seen school based staff undertake the role either as an addition to their existing duties, or with backfill being funded through the Changing Children's Services fund.
- 2.8 It was envisaged that Co-ordinators could have been drawn from any of the constituent members of a Local Support Network.
- 2.9 In early 2005 the Integrated Children and Young People's Services Planning Group agreed that a full review of the Role of the Local Support Co-ordinator be undertaken 'in order to assess its effectiveness and assist in the planning of future provision within the six local support networks'.
- 2.10 Kate Gabb was commissioned to undertake the review, the findings from which positively supported the continuation and establishment of the Local Support Co-ordinator role. A full copy of review documents is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.11 Parents, young people and staff who had been involved in the Local Support Networks all felt that the service provided had had a positive impact in addressing issues for the young people and their families and indeed for the agencies responsible for working with young people.
- 2.12 Parents and young people were all pleased that this was a service which they could voluntarily opt into, i.e. there was no statutory requirement to participate.

- 2.13 A key action in the Integrated Children's Services Plan was the consolidation and continuation of the support networks with the establishment of a team of local support co-ordinators being seen as essential. It was decided to make a bid to the Quality of Life funding to supplement changing Children's Services funds in meeting the costs of these posts.
- 2.14 Based on the positive findings from the review, the Integrated Children and Young People's Services Planning Group (ICYPSPG) decided to make a bid for funding through the Quality of Life Fund to support establishment of posts in line with the recommendations from the Review, i.e.
- 1 fte Senior Local Support Co-ordinator - Lerwick
[Indicative Grade PO1-4]
 - 0.5 fte Local Support Co-ordinator - Brae
[Indicative Grade AP5]
 - 3 x 0.2 fte Local Support Co-ordinators for South Mainland, West Mainland and North Isles [supply teacher rate]
- 2.15 This bid was not successful as it was felt that if these posts were key to meeting the strategic objectives of the Integrated Children's Services Plan, they should be established posts with ongoing funding.

3. Present Position

- 3.1 Since completion of the review in June 2005 the existing Local Support Co-ordinators have continued to provide a level of service to the Local Support Networks.
- 3.2 However the co-ordinators are all keen to see a resolution to the temporary nature of the existing arrangements. This view is shared by the ICYPSPG.
- 3.3 All of the co-ordinators have agreed to continue until the end of March 2006 but feel that any further protraction of the 'temporary/pilot phase' would be detrimental to the service.
- 3.4 Whilst there remains a pilot nature to the service, no advertising of the service is being undertaken. In spite of this, over 100 children and young people have been referred to Local Support Co-ordinators to date
- 3.5 Shetland Islands Council will receive a further allocation of Changing Children's Services funding for the period of 2006-2008 totalling £744,000, of which £303,000 will be through GAE and £441,000 specific grant.
- 3.6 The distribution of this funding will move more to being part of the GAE allocation and therefore will be ongoing within Council funding. This will

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Report

allow allocation of this resource to be made with more certainty with regard to its sustainability. Therefore given the high priority put on this service, it is suggested that this would be an appropriate source of funding to establish and meet the costs of the team of Local Support Co-ordinators outlined at 2.14.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 That Services Committee recommends to Shetland Islands Council that a budget of up to £170,000 from the 2006-2008 Changing Children's Services funding allocation be used to fund salary costs for the Local Support Co-ordinator posts as set out in 2.14 above, operational costs of £5,000 per year and training costs of £7,730 .

| | |
|----|-----------------|
| al | £75,000 |
| | £5,000 |
| | £5,000 |
| al | £75,000 |
| | £2'730 |
| | £7,270 |
| | £170,000 |

- 4.2 That the line management responsibility for the Local Support Co-ordinators sit with the Youth Services Manager and that overall responsibility sit with the ICYPSPG.

5. Link to Strategic Priorities

- 5.1 The proposals within this report are in line with Shetland Islands Council priorities, specifically those contained within the Integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan.
- 5.2 The role of the Local Support Networks and Co-ordinators will enable Shetland Islands Council to better meet it's requirements relating to the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act
- 5.3 Corporate Plan – Benefiting People and Communities
Achieving Potential – “Shetland has much to gain economically, socially and culturally from all individuals being able to make the most of themselves and their talents. We recognise that for the future of Shetland, this is particularly important for our young people”.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The costs associated with establishment of the Local Support Co-ordinator posts will be fully met through Changing Children's Services Fund monies.

7. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 7.1 The Services Committee has delegated authority to implement decisions relating to matters within its remit for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (SIC Min Ref.: 199/99). However, the Committee only has delegated authority to make decisions within approved policy, and for which there is budget. As the recommendations in this report fall outwith delegated authority, a decision of the Council is required.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 I recommend that the Services Committee recommends to Shetland Islands Council that:
 - 8.1.1 a budget of up to £170,000 from the 2006-2008 Changing Children's Services funding allocation be used to support salary costs for the Local Support Co-ordinator posts plus operational costs
 - 8.1.2 Line Management responsibility for the Local Support Co-ordinators sit with the Youth Services Manager.

Terms of Reference

‘To review the role of local support co-ordinator in order to assess its effectiveness and assist the planning of future provision within the six local support networks’

Section 1 Methodology

The following information was gathered by asking Local Support Co-ordinators to complete data sheets in respect of each of the children and young people who had been referred to them between August 2003 and 31st March 2005. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all Local Support Co-ordinators and managers involved in the pilot. Additionally staff who referred children and young people and who acted as link workers were interviewed by telephone. Questionnaires used are attached at Appendix 1.

Section 2 Development of the pilot Local Support Co-ordinator project

In August 2003 the role of the Local Support Co-ordinator was established. These were not new posts, but were an additional responsibility for staff working in education that had been identified as having the skills needed to undertake this work. Education staff in established posts were chosen as at that time social work was under staffed and overstretched, Community Schools staff were in temporary posts with uncertainty as to their future and their management. The recently re-structured Youth Work service with its newly created Youth Development Workers was in the process of settling in. Each Co-ordinator covers a geographical area – in the main these are school catchment areas. The aims were that anyone – parent or professional- could refer a child or young person about whom they had concerns to the co-ordinator who would arrange a multi-agency network meeting to discuss the problem and come up with a co-ordinated support plan and an identified link worker to carry that through. A deliberate choice was made not to have strict criteria for referral and look towards being able to intervene at an early stage. This had to be balanced by the co-ordinators with the need to check that single agencies had done what they could within universal services and a wider approach was indicated. A routine check with Social Work Services would establish if the child and family were known and had an allocated social worker. A good understanding of Child Protection Procedures would ensure that any referral that raised concerns about child abuse would be appropriately referred on.

Paperwork was simple and practical – a referral form and a form to be completed that acted both as a note of the planning meeting and the action plan. No formalised review system was put in place, although it was seen as good practice to review. Reviews could be requested by link workers and others. The involvement of children, young people and their families was seen as key.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

All co-ordinators had mobile phones and could be contacted at any time. During school holidays the Education Development Manager and the independent consultant took the phones so that contact and requests for help could be maintained.

An outline plan for the establishment of this service was included in the 2000 to 2003 Children's Service Plan for Shetland and formed the bid to the Scottish Executive's Better Integrated Children's Service Fund. The bid drew together a number of Shetland wide initiatives – a reorganisation of Youth Work Services, work being done by the Education Department to look at how schools could use stages of intervention to improve their handling of pupils with behavioural problems and the development of Community Schools. Local Support Co-ordinators have acted as the referral point for schools wishing to access the Additional Support Needs Team (which now incorporates the support workers originally linked to the Community Schools Service) and have continued to co-ordinate plans for children receiving education by attending the Base rather than a mainstream school. The influence of the national integration agenda and latterly work to look at an integrated assessment framework have also been linked with the role of the Local Support Co-ordinator.

Management of the Local Support Co-ordinators was initially through the Better Integrated Children's Services Manager and then through an Education Development Manager. Support throughout has been provided by an independent consultant employed by Education Services.

In addition to the network meetings called to discuss an individual child or young person it was envisaged that there would be regular meetings of professional staff working in a particular area that would foster interagency relationships and the identification of wider community issues. Already established working relationships and an understanding of different roles and responsibilities would inform and support individual planning. This was already in place in the South Mainland, but has not been established in other areas.

Section 3 Information from Local Support Co-ordinators

All six co-ordinators who began work in August 2003 were interviewed. One member of staff had left and not been replaced, but was contacted by phone and passed on some information.

The full participation of parents, children and young people were seen by all co-ordinators as being very important. Time and effort was put into talking to parents, explaining about the network meetings and encouraging attendance. All felt that this had been successful

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

with at least one parent involved in the process. This was often a mother rather than a father. One co-ordinator had made efforts to contact fathers directly and this had encouraged them to be involved. Young people were encouraged to attend meetings. Co-ordinators commented that young people often had not felt able to attend the initial meeting, but had come along to subsequent meetings. (A flaw in the data gathering was that it focussed on the initial meeting and so participation at a later stage was not necessarily reflected in the information gathered). Local Support Co-ordinators were sensitive to young people and put arrangements in place for a young person to attend part of a meeting. For example one young man had said that he did not want to come along to hear his parents arguing, but wanted to be there for part of the meeting. Small informal meetings gave stressed parents a safe space to sound off and speak about their feelings and problems. This could not always be achieved in front of children. A whole family approach was often recognised as the way to support people. Younger children (broadly those under 12) were not invited. Feedback to families, children and young people was important. In most cases this was given by Local Support Co-ordinators, although parents and link workers sometimes played a part.

Co-ordinators were asked about the availability of resources to meet needs. Most identified the support network as the main resource that they could work successfully within. Imaginative solutions were found to solve problems. For example insurance issues affecting the use of school buildings in holidays were resolved. A specific family therapy resource was identified and funded by NHS Shetland. The support of the local football coach, who was the only person who had a positive relationship with a particular boy, was enlisted.

Local Support Co-ordinators identified after school, school holiday and weekend activities as gaps in provision. This was particularly noticeable for those co-ordinators where there was a poorer link with Youth Work Services. The involvement of police at a community liaison level was a gap. The availability of befrienders –especially male befrienders was a concern. The venue for meetings was a problem for some co-ordinators who did not have good access to non-school buildings and the cost of hiring suitable premises was an issue too.

Specialist resources were a problem. Long waits for psychological and psychiatric assessments were discouraging. The availability of respite care for children with disabilities was a difficulty. Help and advice for parents struggling with aggressive and violent behaviour at home was not easy to find. The human resources to offer a modified timetable in school were not always there.

Planning meetings were seen as purposeful and practical meetings to set achievable goals and to ensure that there was clarity of purpose and role. Co-ordinators commented that meetings had proved helpful in getting staff to take a consistent approach. For example in one case a parent struggling to set boundaries for their child was being given two completely different sets of advice by two different professional staff. The monitoring of practical plans varied greatly. Some staff were setting reviews at the initial meeting, others contacted staff and families after a specified period of time to see if a review was needed, others responded to people's request for a review.

In the assessment of most of the Local Support Co-ordinators practical tasks agreed at the meeting were in the main achieved. All co-ordinators commented positively on the way in which staff had engaged in the process and carried through their tasks. In the main link workers had done a good job, but there was concern about a lack of preparation, support and training for them. Some co-ordinators had ended up supporting and guiding link workers and undertaking tasks that they were struggling to do. Some link workers viewed

the plan agreed at the meeting as a minute of the meeting rather than a plan that they had the responsibility to drive forward.

Local Support Co-ordinators were asked if they felt that the service was better at tackling particular problems or specific ages of children. It was difficult to get a view on this other than people wanted to work more at the preventative end of the scale. Staff were aware of the problems faced by certain young people who had left school and who were struggling to make the transition to work or training. Efforts had been made to reach this group. With the exception of one notable success these attempts had not really worked. In one case advice and support was given informally to a parent concerned about her son's difficulty in finding direction in life after leaving school. Older pupils and those who have left and have been disaffected with school may be less able to respond to someone that they see as part of the school hierarchy

All the Local Support Co-ordinators spoke warmly and enthusiastically about the experience of interagency working. They all said that they had learnt from other colleagues and that the "two heads are better than one approach" had been successful. Confidentiality was something that people had been careful about, but it had not been a barrier to the sharing of information. All felt that they needed to take a holistic view of a child and family and not just be school focussed.

Most of the co-ordinators had anxieties about undertaking the role at the beginning, but felt they had 'grown' into it. They had felt involved in the process of establishing the scheme. They had felt well supported through team meetings and the availability of good advice from the consultant employed by Education Services. This support was seen as vital. They had felt clear about their role and what was being asked of them.

Backfill arrangements to free staff time had been variable in success. Even the busiest co-ordinators commented that demand was not consistent and all of them struggled to give data relating to the time spent on this role. Most felt that backfill arrangements had been adequate, but wondered if they would continue to be so if demand increased.

All the Local Support Co-ordinators had felt that there was insufficient publicity and understanding of their role. In some areas there had been a leaflet sent out by 'school bag drop', but this did not appear to be consistent. There was frustration about this. The management of the project was seen as being helpful and appropriate, but not permanent and this gave some cause for anxiety. Schools had been encouraged to see referral to Local Support Co-ordinators as a way to tackle challenging behaviour and there was a concern that this should not be the only reason for referral. This was complicated by Local Support Co-ordinators role in gate keeping referral to the Additional Support Team – although this would appear not to be the only route for such referrals as young people excluded from school are referred directly.

Working relationships with social work were seen as being positive. Co-ordinators had found it easy to check if families were known to Social work and if there was an allocated worker. In non-statutory lower risk cases social workers and family support workers had become one element of the team working with the child and family and the Local Support Co-ordinator had continued to co-ordinate the overall plan. Other more complex cases with a statutory involvement were less clear and there often seemed to be a duplication of interagency meetings.

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

All the co-ordinators felt that their role had been successful in promoting interagency work and meeting children's needs. Most felt that administrative systems were simple and effective. Comments were made about establishing a clearer review system and for noting changes to plans.

All co-ordinators felt that the system had provided effective acceptable support to children, families and young people. This voluntary approach to support was seen to be free of the stigma associated with other services. All the Local Support Co-ordinators commented that they had filled in data sheets for this evaluation in respect of the formal referrals they had dealt with, but that there had been many examples of them being asked to help with a more simple problem or a single agency issue. They had used their role to assist others to a solution. This is not quantifiable – and some of this activity would have fallen into their 'day jobs' - but never the less is a contribution to services for children.

Section 4 Information about Children, Young people and Families referred to Local Support Co-ordinators

4.1 Introduction

For the purposes of this evaluation each of the geographical areas covered by local support co-ordinators was given a number. Local Support Co-ordinators were asked to complete a data sheet for each child referred- this is attached at Appendix 2.

| | |
|------------|--|
| 4.2 Area 1 | Unst, Yell and Fetlar |
| 4.3 Area 2 | North Mainland and Whalsay |
| 4.4 Area 3 | Scalloway, Burra, Hamnavoe and Trondra |
| 4.5 Area 4 | Lerwick, Bressay, Papa Stour and Foula |
| 4.6 Area 5 | Aith, Walls, Skeld and Sandness |
| 4.7 Area 6 | South Mainland and Fair Isle |

Areas 1, 5 and 6 dealt with two or three referrals and information is summarised in the appropriate section without using graphs. Area 3 has not had a co-ordinator since October 2004. I was able to speak to the previous co-ordinator and also get some information relating to the two young people referred. Areas 2 and 4 had a substantially larger number of referrals – 22 and 27 respectively and this information is expressed in graph form. All data relates to referrals received between August 2003 and 31st March 2005.

The conclusion of this section draws out some common themes and comments on the data Shetland wide.

4.2 Area 1 Unst, Yell and Fetlar

The Local Support Co-ordinator received referrals on three children - two girls and one boy. They were all Primary age children (Primary 3 and 5) and were aged from 7 years to 9 years 5 months.

All the referrals were made by school staff- primary head teacher and additional support needs staff. Two children were referred as they had profound disabilities and this was causing stress on the families and problems in school holidays. The children were isolated. The third child was referred due to behavioural problems in school, poor concentration, poor attainment and problematic relations at home.

All the children were known to social work- one in the past and two had current allocated workers. Co-ordinated plans were put in place. There was good parental participation from all the children's mothers (no fathers). One 9 year old girl attended the planning meeting. Two were not invited due to their disability. Link workers were allocated and plans were reviewed after about 6 weeks. Staff involved were primary class teachers, additional support staff and a play worker from the Bruce Family Centre. Advice was sought from the Education Psychologist and from Social Work.

Two of the children were assessed as having high level needs and one as medium.

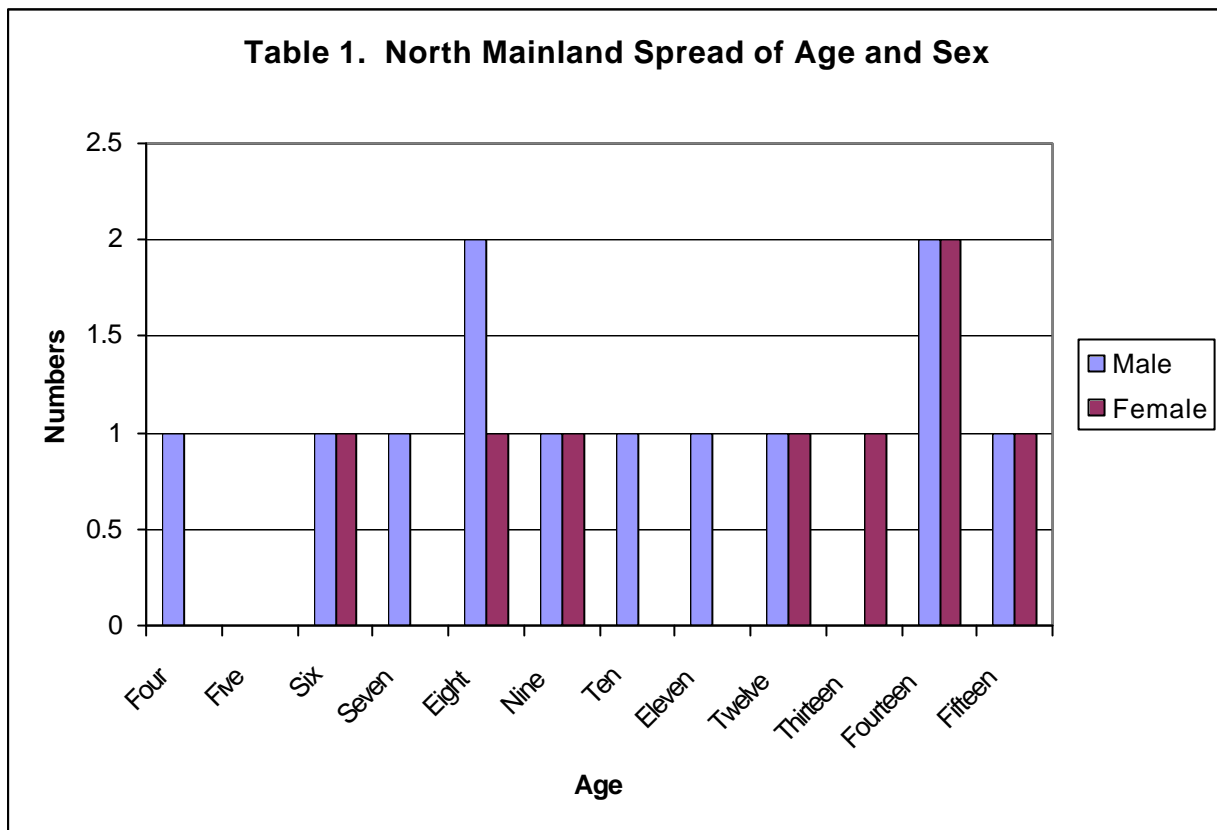
Outcomes were assessed as one child showing significant improvement and the other two as having an improved situation. There were no referrals onto other services.

The time commitment of the Local Support Co-ordinator was difficult to estimate, but dealing with all three referrals took approximately 34 hours over the 20 month period. This included travelling time – a reality for North Isles Services.

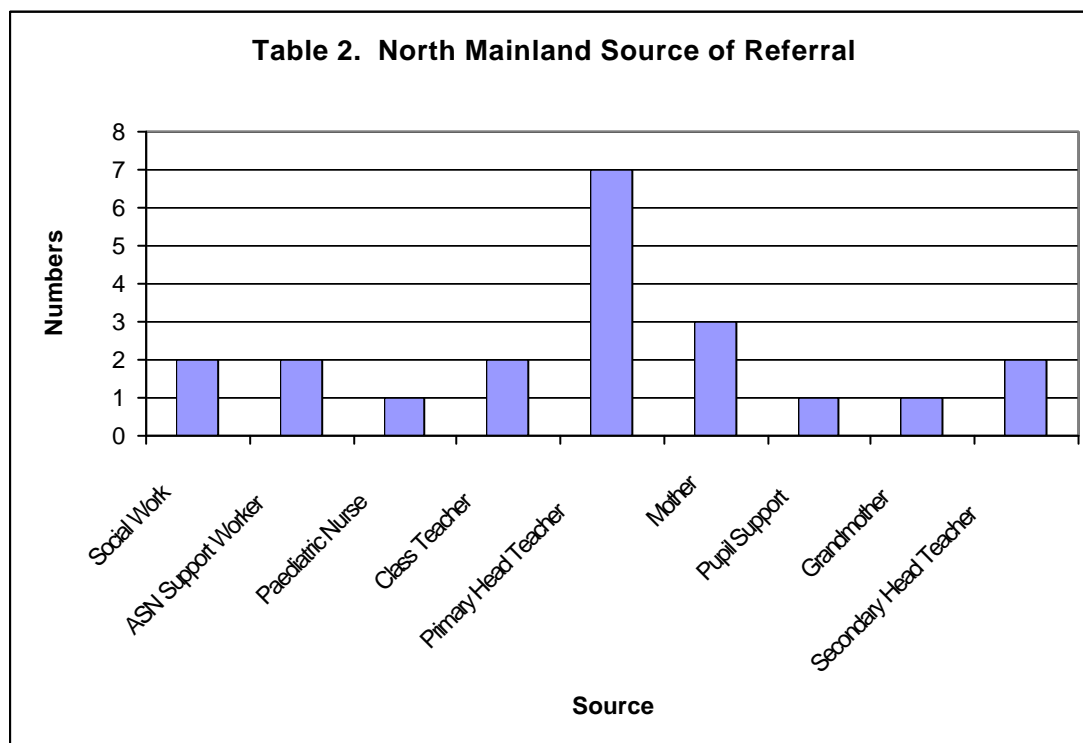
It was difficult to estimate the length of time that each support plan was in place. At the time of collecting the data one plan was still in place and two had lasted for six weeks as they had specifically been put in place for the school summer holidays July –August 2004. Feedback from the one referrer contacted was very positive with a real sense of confidence in the service and what had been achieved for that particular child.

4.3 Area 2 North Mainland and Whalsay

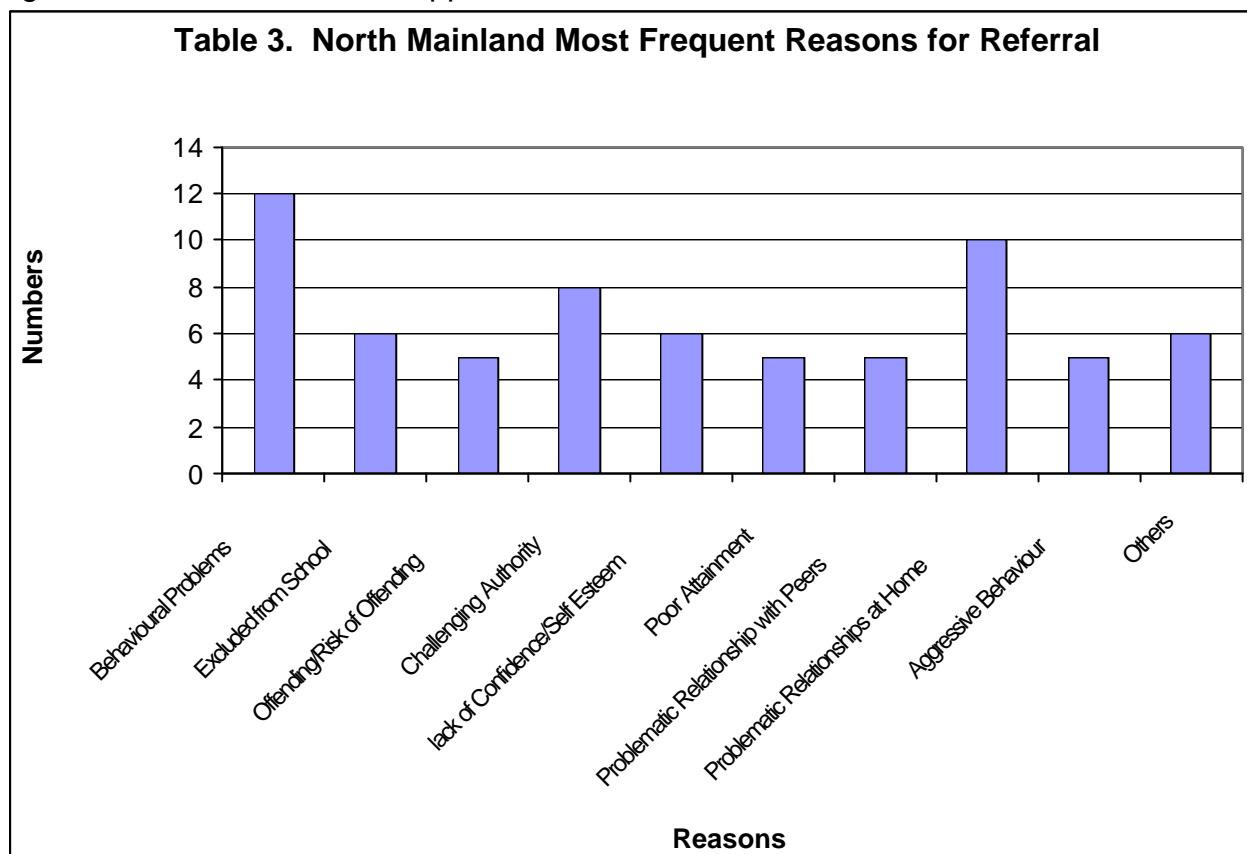
The North Mainland dealt with 22 referrals over the 20 month period. One child from Whalsay was discussed with the Local Support Co-ordinator , but this was resolved informally and is not included in the data. The age distribution and sex of children and young people is shown in Table 1. The source of referral in Table 2 and the most frequent reasons for referral in Table 3



Total = 21 (age not given for 1 child).



Total =21 (information not given for 1 child).

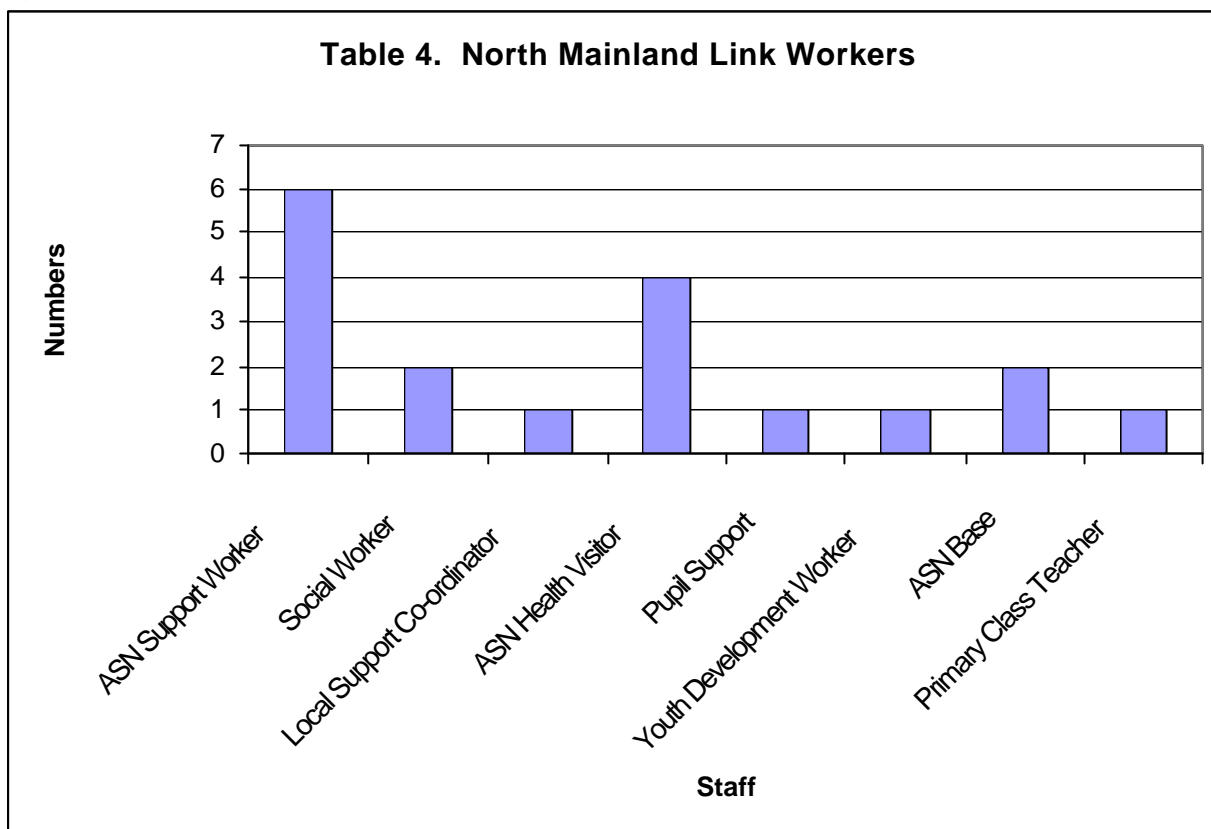


Local Support Co-coordinators were asked to indicate what the presenting problems of children referred to them were. They used the list on the data sheets at Appendix 2. All children and young people had more than one problem recorded.

The category “Others” included bereavement, poor hygiene, sleeping problems in child, unhappiness in child, being underweight.

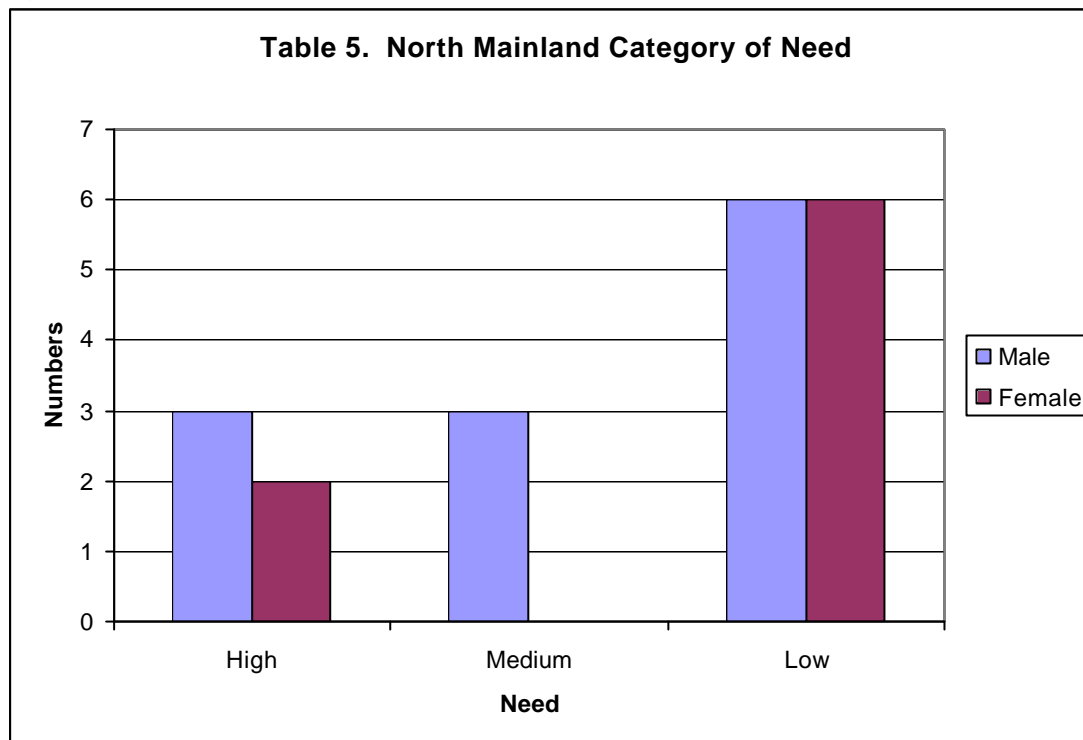
The participation of parents was good with 15 out of 16 initial meetings attended by a parent. All of them are described as taking an active part in the process. There was one young person with no parents, four referrals where no meeting was called and one data sheet was not marked.

Of the 16 initial meetings nine children and young people were invited to attend and three attended the first meeting with two attending subsequent meetings. Six children and young people are described as taking an active part in the process. Eleven children and young people were informed of the outcome of the meeting by the Local Support Co-ordinator. All of the initial meetings put co-ordinated plans in place and appointed link workers. Table 4 gives details of link workers. Table 5 gives category of need and Table 6 gives outcomes.

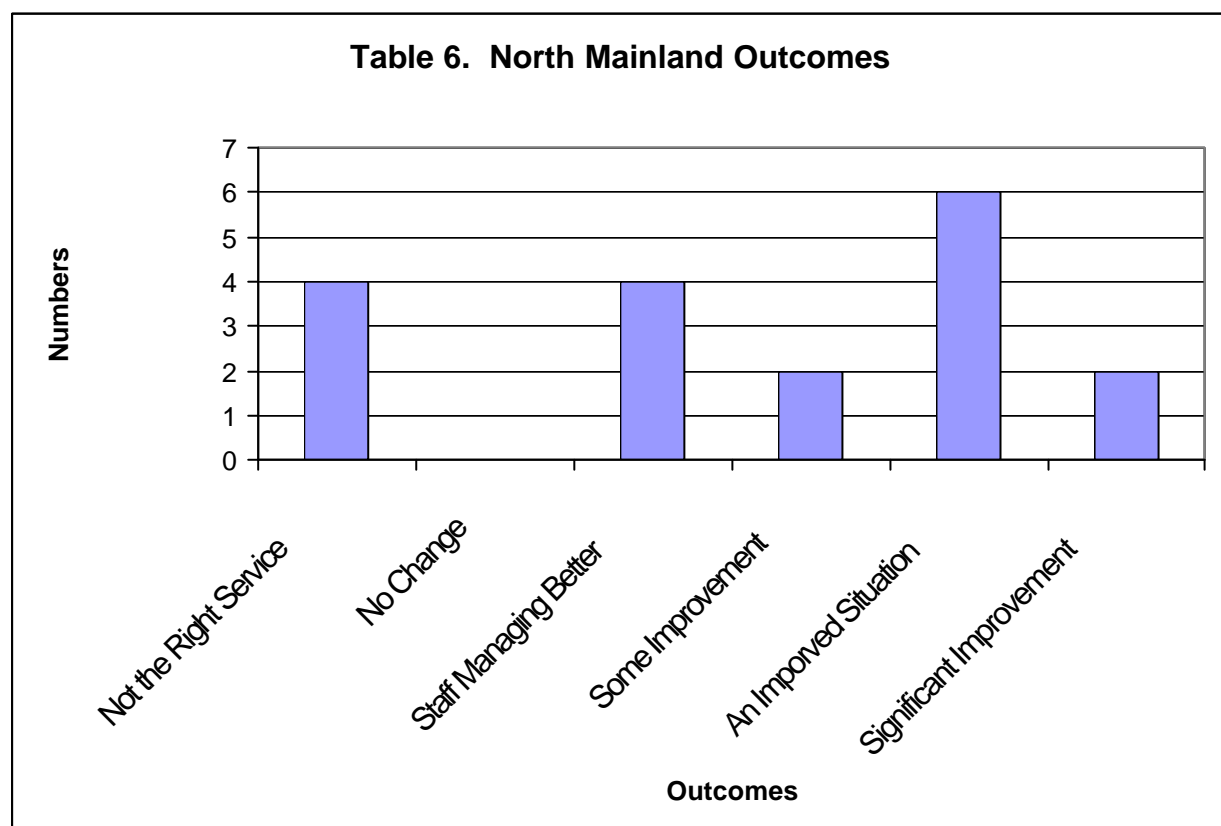


Total adds to 17 Link Workers appointed by 16 initial meetings as one child had 2 Link Workers over a period of time. 10 children and young people were supported by members of the ASN Team who had originally been members of the New Community Schools Team. At the time of gathering the data 5 children and young people had no Link Worker appointed.

Data about reviewing plans was not always clear, but it appears that 13 of the plans were reviewed at least on one occasion. There were six referrals on – one not specified, one to social work, one to health, one to the Additional Support Needs Base, one to Careers Scotland and one to housing. Many of these referrals – especially to careers and housing – served to widen the professional circle around the child or young person rather than a referral that passed on work to another agency. Tables 5 and 6 give data about the category of need and the assessed outcomes for children and young people.



Total adds to 21 as one data sheet did not give level of need. The definitions of High Medium and low are given in the data sheets at Appendix 2



Total is 18. 4 data sheets not marked.

These were recent referrals where it was too soon to assess outcomes. There was a sense that in some cases there had been no observable change in the child, but staff had managed better with a co-ordinated plan in place.

This was a busy area. The Local Support Co-ordinator found it hard to estimate the time taken. Approximately 122 hours over the 20 month period had been spent in processing referrals and managing meetings . This included about 30 hours of direct contact with one young person. Time spent on administration, regular communication and dealing with informal referrals was not quantifiable. Additionally the Local Support Co-ordinator had not felt able to complete data sheets for two referrals where the role of Local Support Co-ordinator was intertwined with that of pupil support. In discussion it would seem that the workload was about one day per week.

It was difficult to assess the length of time that support plans were in place for. Firstly a flaw in the data sheet in not asking for the date of referral was not helpful. At the time of gathering data 12 children and young people had active plans in place, two children had had plans that had lasted for six weeks, three for three months and one for between six and nine months.

Feedback from referrers and link workers in this area indicates that meetings were effectively chaired , short ,purposeful and practical. The co-ordinator kept people well informed and staff felt that parents participated well.

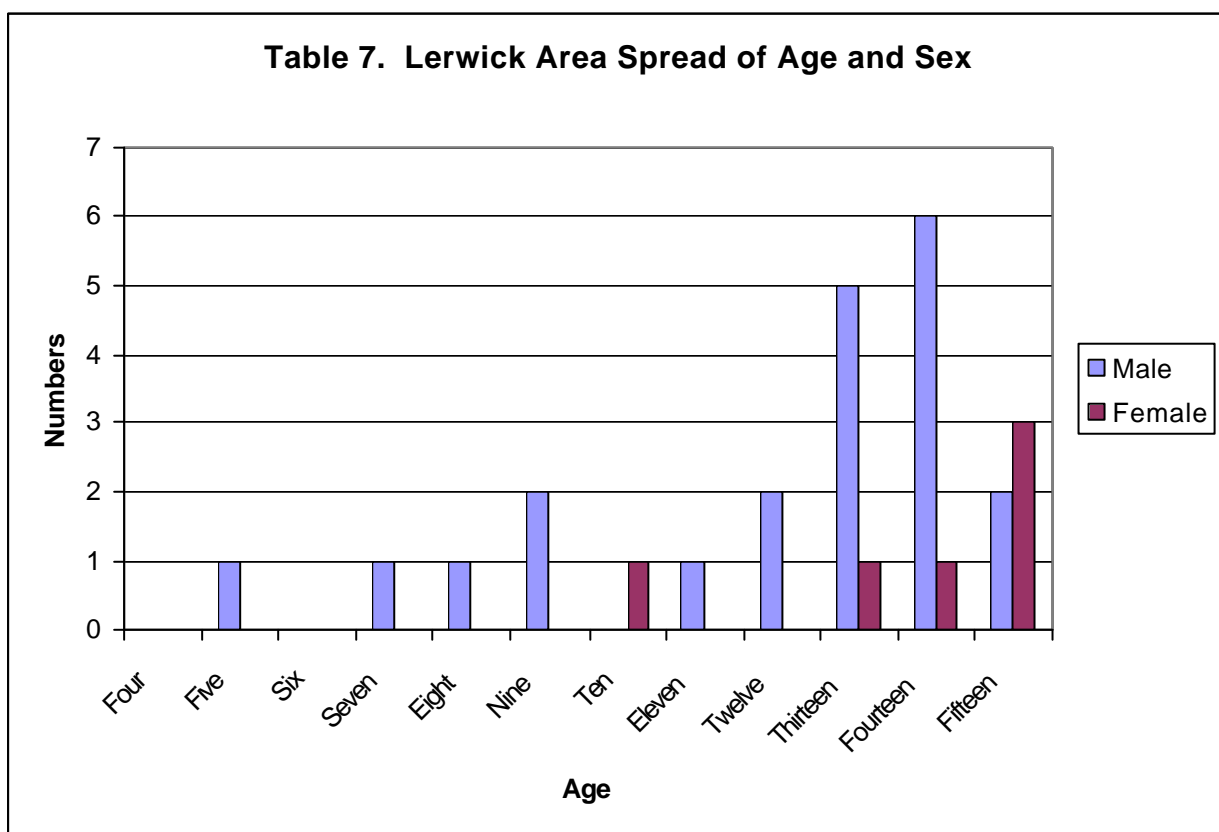
4.4 Area 3 Scalloway. Burra.Hamnavoe and Trondra

As explained in the introduction the co-ordinator left the post in October 2004. Prior to that there had been one referral- for which I was not able to get a full data sheet, but got some information from the link worker. This had proved to be a complex case involving a young person subject to a supervision requirement. The link worker had felt that ultimately it had not been helpful to refer that particular young person to the Local Support Co-ordinator.

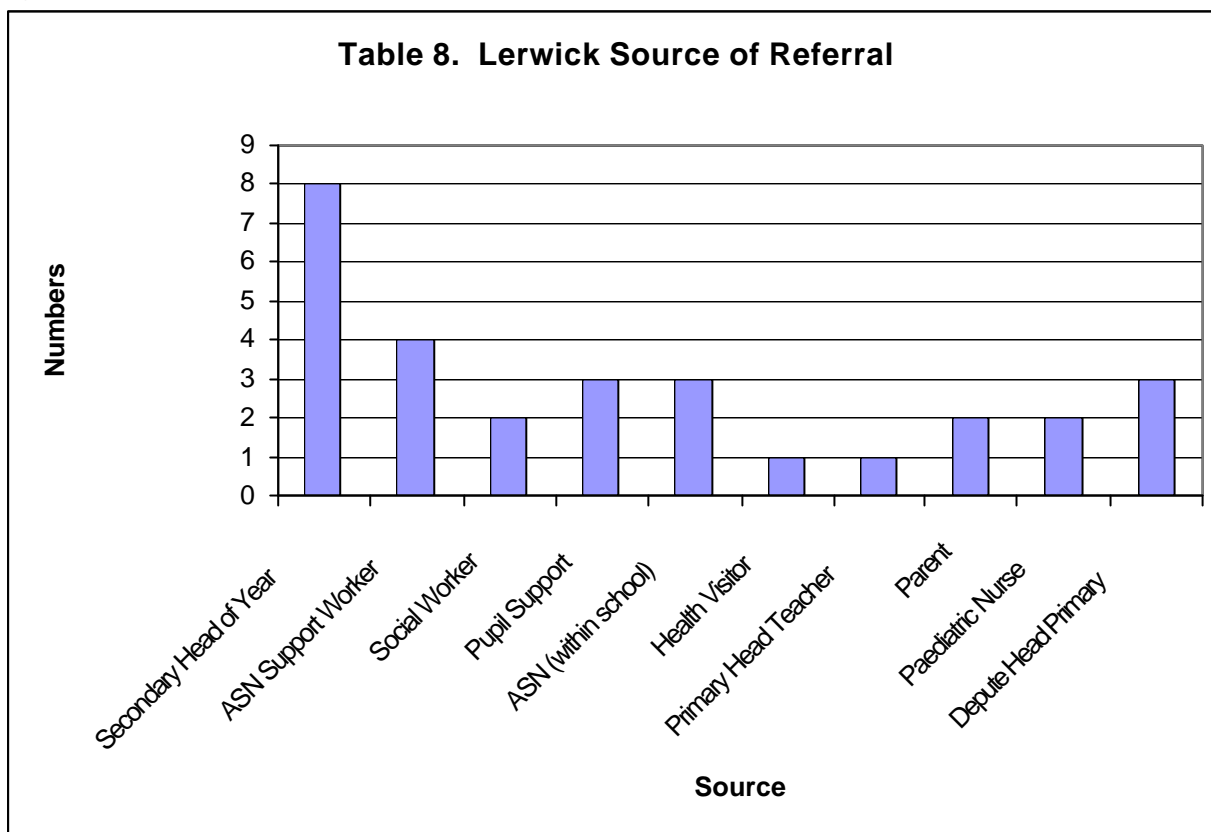
Another referral had been received after the co-ordinator had left and this had been dealt with by the consultant employed by Education Services. This referral related to a 16 year old boy who had left school and who was referred by the children's support worker attached to the Shetland Women's Aid. He had been known to social work in the past. This young man had behavioural problems, was involved in offending, was experiencing problematic relationships at home and with peers, had a lack of confidence and self esteem, was misusing alcohol and drugs and was displaying challenging behaviour. A support plan was put in place following an initial meeting that included the young person. His parents did not attend the meeting, but were involved in discussions. He was assessed as having needs in the 'high' category and it was too soon to be able to comment on any outcomes .The Criminal Justice Team from Social Work became involved. There was no referral on to other services

4.5 Area 4 Lerwick, Bressay, Papa Stour and Foula

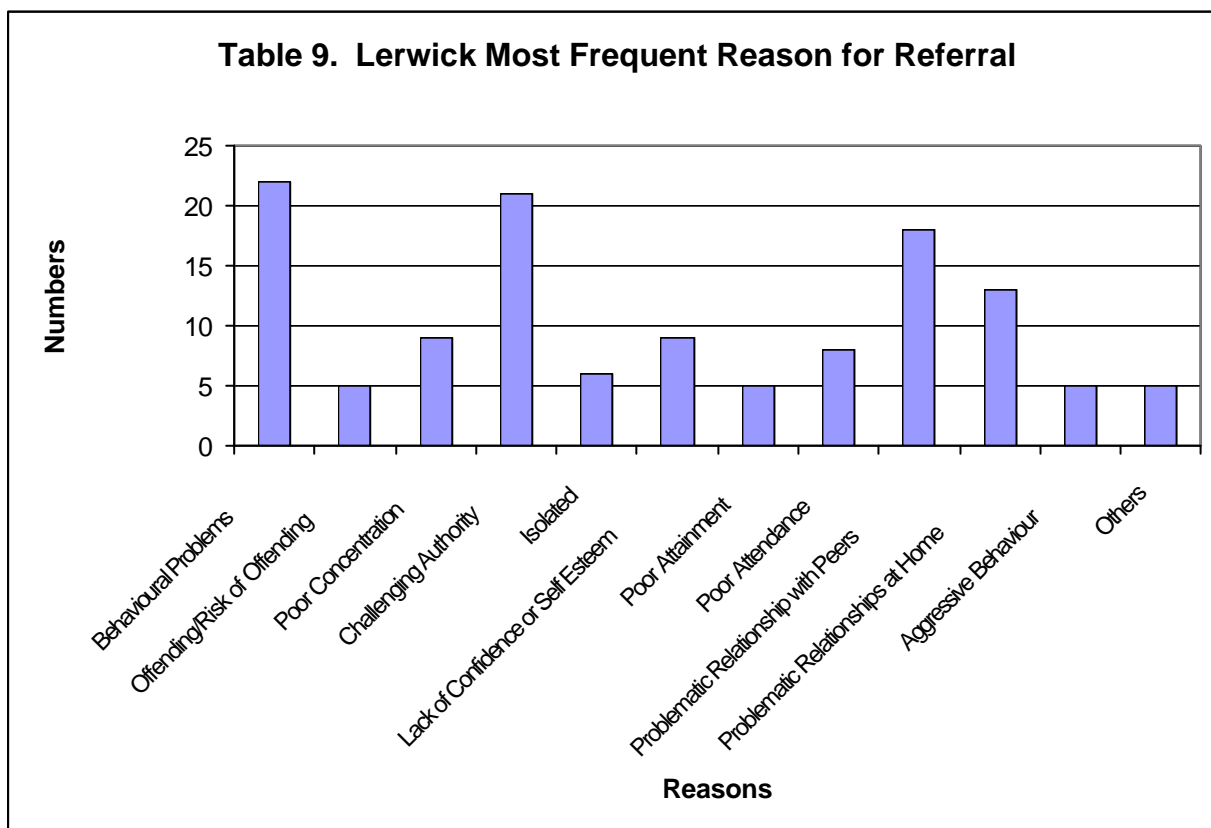
The Lerwick area dealt with 27 referrals over the 20 month period. There were no referrals from Foula and Papa Stour. Table 7 gives the age distribution and sex of children and young people referred. Table 8 gives source of referral. Table 9 gives the most frequent reasons for referral.



Total 21 boys and 6 girls = 27 referrals



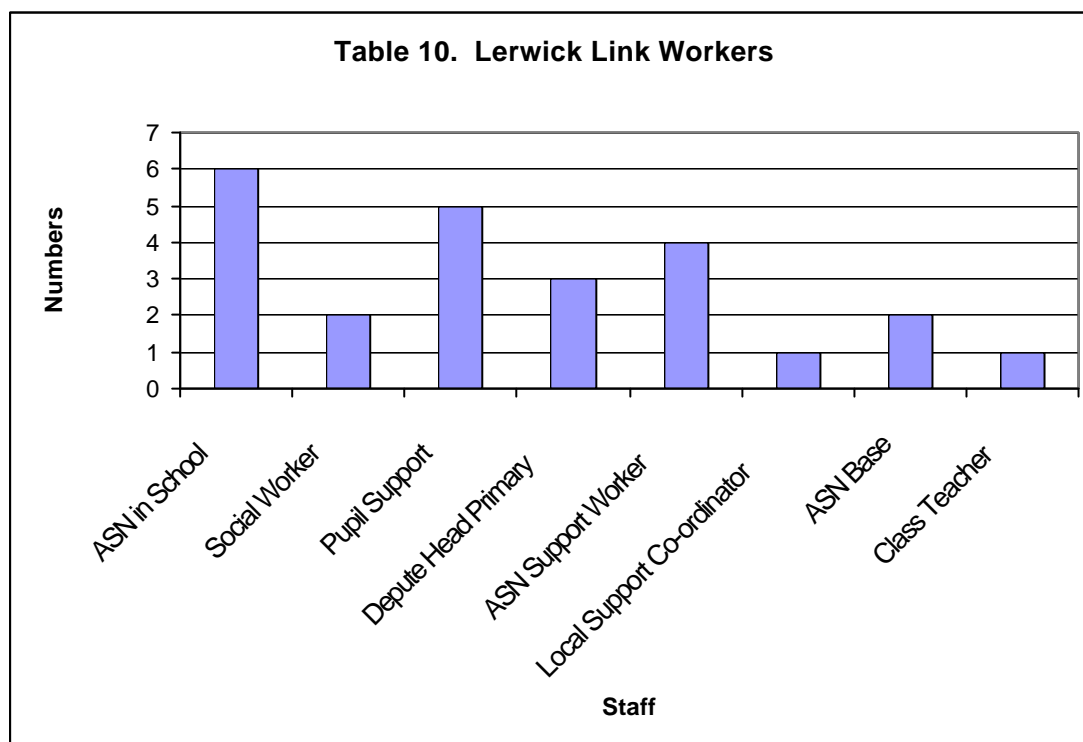
Total = 30. 3 children referred by more than one person



Local Support Co-ordinators were asked to indicate what the presenting problems at referral were. They used the list given at Appendix 2. All the children and young people had multiple problems. 'Others' category included 4 children at risk of being excluded from school and 1 child wanting to change school

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006
Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

The participation of parents was good. There were 25 initial meetings attended by 22 parents. 17 parents were described as taking an active part in the process. Of the 25 initial meetings children and young people were invited to attend 17 of them. Nine did not come and eight attended. It was noted that of the nine who did not come to a first meeting five attended subsequent meetings. Nineteen young people were informed directly by the co-ordinator of the outcome of the meeting. One child or young person was informed by their parent. Three young people were described as taking an active part in the planning to meet their needs. Twenty-three children and young people had co-ordinated plans put in place. There was no data for one and one child was about to leave Shetland. Table 10 give details of link workers.

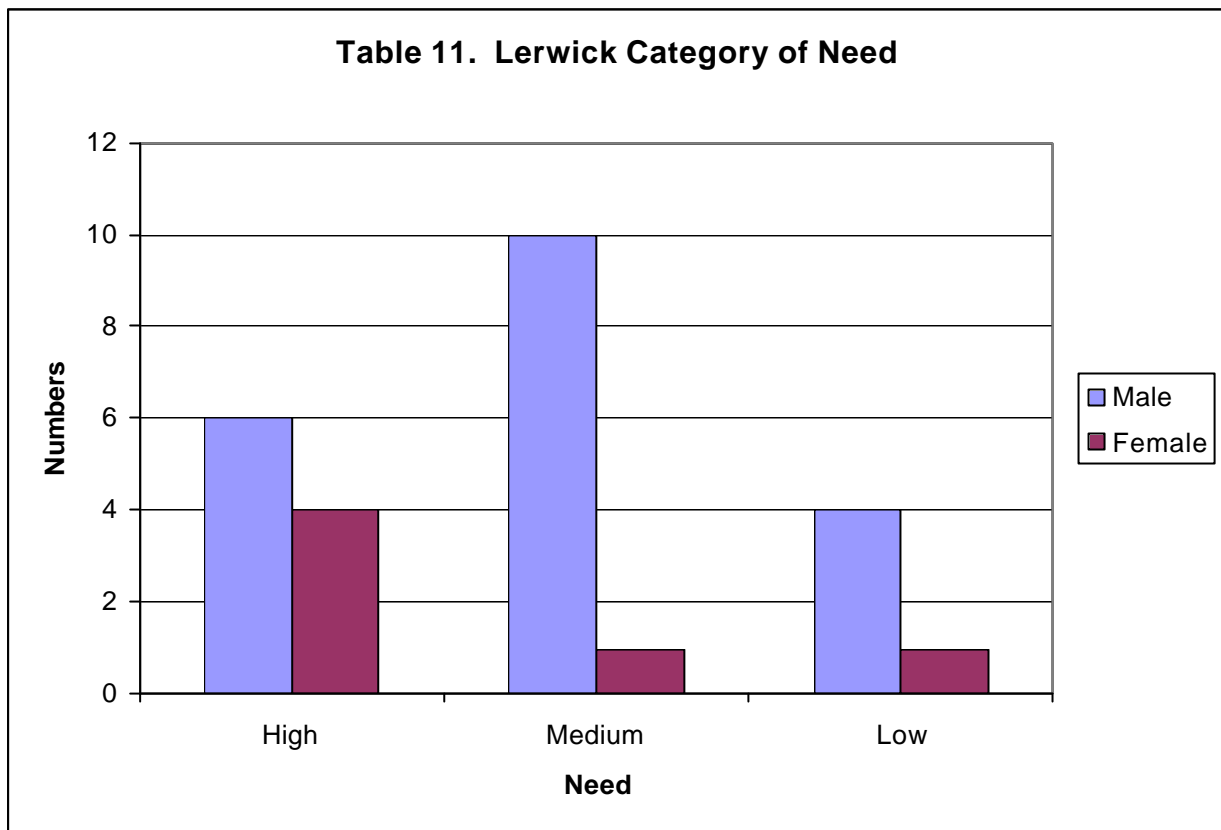


Total = 24 link workers appointed from 25 initial meetings (1 data sheet not clear). 6 children were supported by a member of staff in Anderson High School who has a specific ASN role in the school

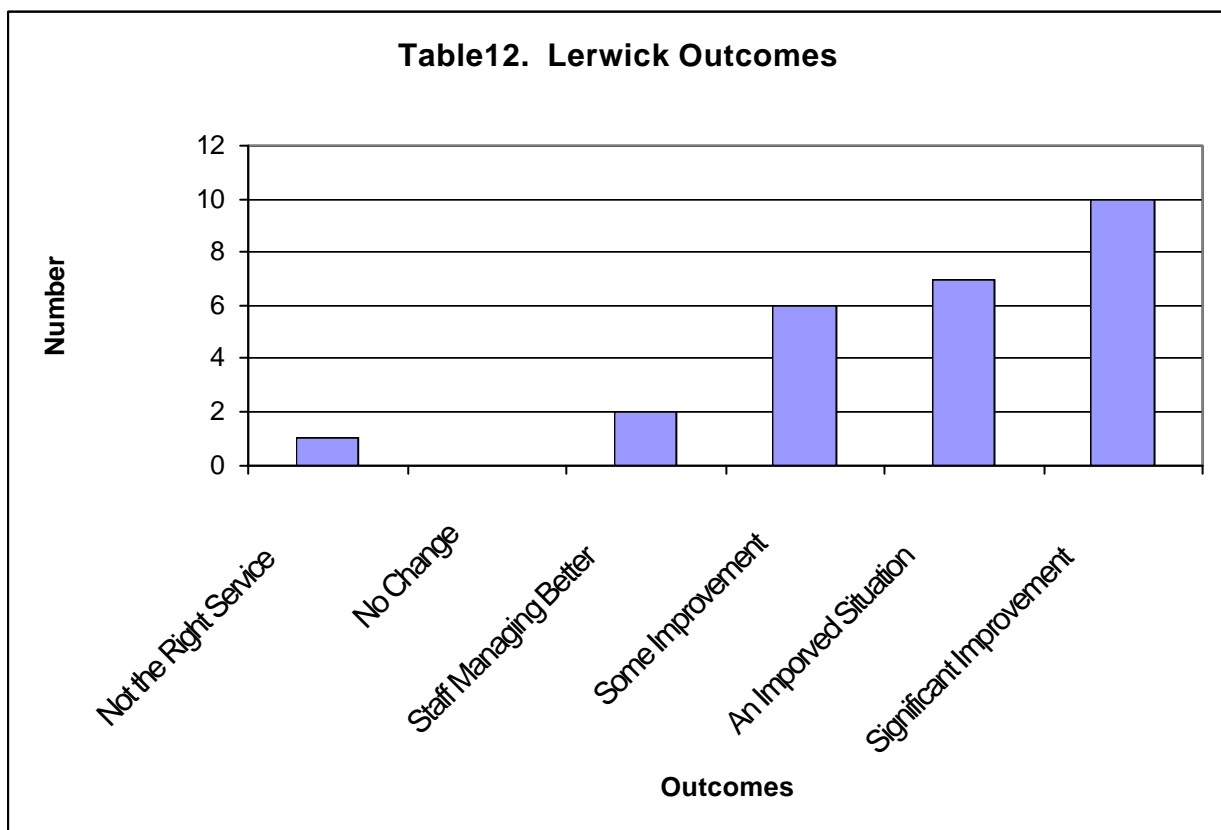
There were eight referrals onto other agencies. For three children and young people it was not specified which agency was referred onto. One child was referred to the Additional Support Needs Base, one to art therapy, one to Careers Scotland, one to Outdoor Education and one to the Homelink service. In most cases this represented other agencies being drawn into the team around the child rather than a referral completely out of the system.

There was good evidence of regular reviewing of plans. All 23 plans had been reviewed at 4, 6, 8 or 12 weekly intervals according to what was seen to be appropriate.

Tables 11 and 12 give details of the category of need and assessed outcomes.



Total = 26. 1 data sheet not clear



Total = 26. 1 data sheet not clear

This was another busy area with high demand on the co-ordinators time. Again the Local Support Co-ordinator found it hard to estimate time spent. In discussion this would appear to be about one day per week . Despite flaws in the data sheet the Local Support Co-ordinator had tried to estimate the length of time that plans were in place for . Of the 23 co-ordinated plans 19 were continuing at the time that the data was collected. Eleven children had had support provide for 6 weeks, 1 for 3 months and 1 for between 3 and 6 months.

Feedback from referrers and link workers was that this had become an essential service . Comments about the meetings were positive and the service valued.

4.6 Area 5 Aith Walls Skeld and Sandness

The Local Support Co-ordinator dealt with two referrals – one boy and one girl. Both were in secondary 2 and aged between 13 and 14. Both referrals were made due to behavioural problems, poor concentration, challenging authority, isolation, lack of self confidence, poor attendance and problematic relationships in and out of school. These difficulties were apparent in all environments. One young person was referred by the secondary head teacher and one by social work services. Both were assessed as having high level needs

The young person referred by social work services was already a ‘looked after’ child and multi- agency planning was in place. The Local Support Co-ordinator was being asked to aid integration in school and the local youth work service. Ultimately this was not successful as the young person voted with their feet and stopped attending altogether. The second young person had a co-ordinated plan put in place that involved them and their parent successfully. Social work became involved subsequent to the referral to Local Support Co-ordinator and the social worker became an integral part of the team around the young person. Other staff involved included additional support needs staff both within and out with the school and a support worker from the community schools team. The outcome was some improvement and small changes. (Maybe the best achievement was to support this young person in a mainstream school and in their community)

The Local Support Co-ordinator estimated they had spent 72 hours over the 20 month period. As the cases were so complex reviews had been almost weekly. Both data sheets noted that plans had been in place for 3-6 months with one plan still continuing.

4.7 South Mainland and Fair Isle

The Local Support Co-ordinator received three referrals- two boys and one girl none from Fair Isle. One boy and one girl were both in Primary 5 and aged 9. The other boy was aged 13 and in Secondary 2. Two children were referred by the local health visitor and one by education development officer. One child had been known to social work in the past and the other two were not known. Social work subsequently became involved in two of the cases. Referrals were made due to concerns about behaviour, being a victim of bullying, poor concentration, being withdrawn and isolated, problematic relationships both inside and outside school, aggressive behaviour and the after effects of violence in the parent's marriage. Planning meetings took place for all the children with full parental participation, but it was not felt appropriate to invite any of the children.

Co-ordinated plans and link workers were put in place and plans reviewed regularly at 5-6 week intervals. Two children were assessed as having needs in the high category and one in the medium.

Staff involved – particularly in one case- were from an array of professional backgrounds. Social worker, family support worker, health visitor, clinical and educational psychologists, counsellor attached to the local GP clinic, family therapist, art therapist, pupil support staff, primary head teacher, primary and secondary class teachers, homelink teacher and education development staff.

Outcomes for children were assessed as being significant improvements for two children and some improvement and small change for the third.

Time spent by the co-ordinator was estimated as being about 80 hours over the 20 month period. It was difficult to assess the length of time that plans had been in place as all three data sheets recorded that plans were continuing without specifying timescales.

Feedback from referrers and link workers was positive about the service and the thorough and participative nature of the meetings. Concern was expressed about the workload on this particular co-ordinator due to their other commitments.

4.8 Conclusion – The Shetland Wide Picture

- 58 children and young people referred to local support co-ordinators between August 2003 and 31/3/2005.
- 18 girls 40 boys
- Age at referral ranges from 4 years to 16 years and 8 months
- Most frequent age of referral is 14
- At least one parent attended 43 out of the 48 initial meetings held
- Of the 29 children and young people invited 14 children and young people attended initial meetings. 7 attended subsequent meetings
- Children and young people were given routine feedback by Local Support Co-ordinators in at least 30 cases.
- The most common reasons for referral included behavioural problems in school, relationship problems with peers and families, poor attendance and attainment and challenging behaviour.
- 22 children and young people were assessed as having a 'high' category of need
- 18 as having a 'medium'
- 17 as having a 'low'
- Outcomes 15 small improvement /some change
 16 improved situations
 17 significant changes
- Additionally most staff felt that even when there were no observable changes in children co-ordinated plans had improved consistency and staff ability to manage difficult situations.
- Known to social work 27 unknown
 8 known in past
 22 currently allocated cases

(One data sheet unmarked)

- The agencies involved were mainly Education, Health, Social Work and Youth work. Others involved were Careers Scotland, Housing Services, Shetland Befriending Scheme, Firth and Mossbank Enterprise (FAME), Out Of School Club, Art Therapist, Outdoor Education, Children's Support Worker from Women's Aid and Play Worker from the Bruce Family Centre.

- Number of Agencies 21 Education Staff Only
2 had 1 agency (not education)
23 had 2 agencies involved
6 had 4 Agencies involved
(4 data sheets not marked and Local Support Co-ordinators not included as an agency)

- Education Staff included ASN Team, ASN staff in schools, Homelink Teacher, Pupil Support, Head Teachers of both Primary and Secondary, Heads of Year, Class teachers, Deputy Head teachers, Education Development Officers and Education Psychologist. Local Support Co-ordinators have helped to co-ordinate plans between different groups of Education Staff both within and out with schools.

Section 5 Information from Referrers and Link Workers

5.1 Introduction and Methodology

The data sheets completed by Local Support Co-ordinators gave details of who had referred, which staff were involved in meetings and who was appointed as link worker. It quickly became apparent that the same staff had undertaken all three roles in respect of different children at different times. School based staff and youth work staff had linked with the Local Support Co-ordinator for their area. The Additional Support Needs Team, social work staff and health staff had linked with a number of different support networks. Comments relating to specific geographical area have been included in the last section. All other comments are summarised here according to the agency that staff worked with. The conclusion draws out some common themes.

From the data sheets a list of 29 staff across all agencies was drawn up. 21 staff were contacted by phone. Staff had no advance warning of what my call was about- although I had left messages on some answer phones. Staff were reassured that any views expressed would be collated and reported anonymously. All staff were asked four questions- how did they find the process, what was their view of the participation of parents children and young people, what did they think that the outcomes were and any other comments relating to the service and its usefulness.

5.2 Information from Social Work Services

All but one of the data sheets completed by the Local Support Co-ordinators were able to say whether or not children and families were known to social work. Local Support Co-ordinators commented that by contacting the Duty Assistant in Social Work Services they could quickly and easily check if children were known. Senior social work staff commented that initially checking had not been consistent, but that had improved.

There appeared to be a problem in what happened after that initial check. Children and young people can be referred to social work services after a check has been made by a Local Support Co-ordinator. Social Work may hold historical information in respect of a child and family that could be of use to Local Support Co-ordinators. Senior Social Workers may not know who has been checked with duty, so they are not able to share existing information, if that is appropriate, or marry up new referrals. (Additionally it must be noted that the workload on Senior Child Care Social Workers does not make any of this easy.)

Social workers and family support workers have been part of the network meetings co-ordinated by Local Support Co-ordinators and part of the team supporting that child. The feedback about this has been very positive. Staff felt that meetings had been well run, practical and focused. Network meetings had been less formal than many social work meetings and this had made it easier for parents and young people to take an active part. Staff commented on the value of being at a meeting as a member of the team rather than lead agency- 'we were all equals'. This was felt to reduce the stigma of contact with social work services. Staff appreciated the co-ordinating role of the Local Support Co-ordinator as it had ensured the sharing of information and been a good support to social work staff. The general opinion had been that it had been of value to children young people and their families.

Criticism was made about the occasional delay in getting paperwork out from meetings. Concern was expressed about the lack of clarity about the role of the link worker. In one case social work staff had ended up undertaking tasks that a link worker from another agency was supposed to do.

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

Concern was expressed by agencies outside of social work services that there was duplication of meetings for 'Looked After' children and young people and those on the child protection register. Additionally a number of these children and young people have complex education needs that need planning (this is also a statutory requirement). Could social work services co-ordinate plans for all 'Looked After' children and young people and for those whose names are on the Child Protection Register? How would detailed education plans fit into this? Would they still need to be co-ordinated by Local Support Co-ordinators or other education staff? How much professional time does this take and how confusing is this for families?

5.3 Information from School Based Staff

Both primary and secondary staff throughout Shetland were contacted. Senior staff that had referred children and young people into the system were very positive about the service. They felt that Local Support Co-ordinators had worked well to co-ordinate plans. There was some comment about delays in calling an initial meeting, but this was not universal.

Comments such as 'How would we manage without this service' and 'it has become an essential service' were made. Appreciation of the interagency approach, the co-ordination of plans and the regular sharing of information were apparent. The participation of parents, children and young people was seen as strength of the system.

One head teacher said that he was very sceptical of the service when it started, but had referred a child for help and been very pleased with the outcome as there had been changes for the better in the child and the parent had had support too. Services were seen to offer support to parents who were struggling to parent. They were also acceptable to families. Most school based staff saw referral to Local Support Co-ordinator as the route into the Additional Support Needs Team. Schools varied in the 'in house' capacity they had to meet the needs of children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural problems. For example a primary school may refer to the Local Support Co-ordinator for advice and guidance about how to manage a child. A secondary school may not refer until it has exhausted its own resources and the young person has been excluded or is at risk of exclusion. Both are likely to be appropriate referrals. This means that Local Support Co-ordinators are dealing with a very wide span of needs.

One assistant head teacher had been very disappointed in the service provided by a particular link worker and felt that the child and family had been let down.

Education staff expressed concern about the overlap with social work in statutory cases. They also worried about the load on Local Support Co-ordinators and whether they were getting enough support.

Pupil support staff had both referred into the system and acted as link workers. Their feedback was positive.

Comments made about the role of the link worker would suggest that staff were not always clear about that role and responsibility.

5.4 Information from Additional Support Needs Team

Teaching staff located in the Base, Additional Support Needs Support Workers and Managers of the service were consulted.

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

The overwhelming view was that Local Support Co-ordinators were doing an effective job in co-ordinating plans that support children and families and ensured an integrated approach. Positive comments were made about the independent chairing of meetings – both in terms of that being someone separate from the ASN team and having a fresh eye on what were often complicated situations. Staff felt that the participation of parents children and young people was good and well facilitated. The ASN team is a busy one and the support given by Local Support Co-ordinators was much appreciated. There were anxieties about losing this support.

Staff wondered if Local Support Co-ordinator s could help in formulating more imaginative approaches to meet needs. For example identifying those parents who may benefit from parenting support groups or children who may do well in a social skills group. The points already made about overlap with social work and other school based meetings were repeated. Questions about the support and involvement of some class teachers were asked .One teacher had upset a parent greatly at a meeting. Another teacher had refused to re-schedule a detention when a child had a meeting with a support worker. Some clarity about the role of Local Support Co-ordinator in regard to the ASN team was needed. Could a Local Support Co-ordinator refer direct to support workers especially where support to parents was identified as a need? Was referral to Local Support Co-ordinators the only route to the ASN team? What about children or young people who had been excluded from school who attended the Base- were they referred direct? Did the co-ordinator for the area the child had come from do the co-ordination of plans or the one for the Lerwick area where the Base is?

What was very clear was the central role that workers in the ASN Team played. Out of the 58 children and young people referred staff had contact in some capacity with 31 of them. 28 children and young people had contact with support workers and this included the health visitor seconded by NHS Shetland.

5.5 Information from Youth Work Staff

Managers of Youth Work Services were involved with and supportive of the establishment of the pilot project.

Youth Development Workers have raised questions about the appropriateness of this service for young people who are already subject to a supervision requirement. There was also a concern about how to refer to the support workers who were formally part of the Community Schools team and are now part of the ASN Team. This was not common knowledge.

There was also concern about the way in which youth work staff were viewed by other professional as not having the same status or skill base. There appeared to be a lack of clarity about when it was appropriate to refer to the Local Support Co-ordinator and what sort of problems they could tackle.

There was an appreciation of the use of the system to co-ordinate plans and the professional way in which individual Local Support Co-ordinators worked. Effective participation of young people (rather than just being physically present at meetings) was a concern and staff were not sure about the benefits to individuals.

5.6 Information from Health Staff

One health visitor (not the person seconded to the ASN team) and a paediatric nurse made referrals into the system.

There had been a lack of publicity about the Local Support Co-ordinators and one person had originally thought that health staff were not allowed to refer into the system. Positive comments were made about the participation of parents 'parents were spoken to first'. The inclusion of social work staff in the meetings was seen as Local Support Co-ordinators supporting the role of social work staff and reducing stigma. Children, parents and young people had benefited from this joined up approach.

One worker commented that good support to vulnerable parents was provided through referral to the Local Support Co-ordinator and this was a better service than they were able to offer as a single worker. Also in one particularly complex case the support network had found an excellent resource that the worker felt would otherwise not have been available.

It was felt that better awareness among health staff was important. That the role of the Local Support Co-ordinator was very useful and should continue. Careful planning would be needed when the introduction of the Integrated Framework for Assessment took place and there would need to be clarity about the support networks role in that.

5.7 Additional Comments

There was concern expressed about the way in which Local Support Co-ordinators had been "anointed not appointed" and whether this process had excluded staff from other agencies that may have had the skills and abilities to undertake the role. There was some concern that all co-ordinators were education staff. There was a great understanding of the complexities of the role of Local Support Co-ordinators and a genuine appreciation of the skills shown by individuals. There were comments made about how differently all the co-ordinators worked. This was not an entirely negative point of view as flexibility is needed, but some consistency is also appropriate.

The discussion with various staff that had been identified as link workers showed that they did not fully understand this role and did not feel trained and supported to undertake it.

There was concern about the future effective management of the project given that there had been so much reliance on the external consultant employed by Education Services (who is about to retire) and whose practical day to day support had been valued by all the co-ordinators. This would need to be replaced by staff that was experienced and available enough to give case work support. Links into a more integrated and secure management structure should be planned. More thought to providing a service in school holidays was also needed.

5.8 The Shetland Wide Perspective

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

- The majority and overwhelming comments were positive from all staff who had had some form of contact with Local Support Co-ordinators and the local network
- There is a sense that this project helped staff to help children and families and should continue
- That in the following fundamental aspects this is a service that needs to be improved and supported
- Management and professional support
- Clarity about the planning for children and young people with complex educational needs, those on supervision requirements and whose names are on the child protection register
- Clarity about referral into all the services that now come under the ASN Team
- Better publicity and an understanding of the role the Local Support Co-ordinator
- Consistency of approach by Local Support Co-ordinators that still allows for appropriate responses to different needs and different geographical areas

6 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Strengths

- Grassroots, interagency, positive way of working
- Acceptable to children and families, good participation, good outcomes
- Can look wider than school
- Practical support from managers
- Effective use of ASN support workers
- Open door referral
- Simple paperwork

Weaknesses

- Not well known/poor publicity
- Lack of clarity -only referral route to ASN Team and Base?
- Overlap with social work for children and young people who are 'looked after' or on the child protection register
- A lack of training and support to link workers
- There was an initial plan to provide services up to the age of 21. Can this service address the needs of young people struggling to make the transition from school? Can school based co-ordinators be effective with young people who are disenchanted with school?
- Consistency of involvement of children and young people in meetings and in the process

Opportunities

- Build on success

Agenda Item No. 10 - Public Appendix

- Better publicity and knowledge
- Be creative!
- Link with new ASN legislation
- Link with integrated assessment framework
- Build in future evaluation and the gathering of some basic statistics
- Improve participation of young people

Threats

- If Local Support Co-ordinator undertake duties in respect of the new ASN legislation will there be time to do anything else and will ASN planning be very education focussed?
- Availability of funding given budgetary constraints
- ASN Support Workers are temporary posts to March 06
- Non integrated Management
- Can we cope if publicity brings more work?

Conclusions

It will be very important to listen to the views of parents, children and young people to see if they concur with the professional view that this is a service that has been effective and enabled participation.

If the project is to become a permanent feature of the Integrated Children's Services in Shetland then careful thought needs to be given to the information that has come from this evaluation.

I have been asked if there would be enough work for a full time Shetland wide co-ordinator. This aspect was not part of the original remit, but I would assess that in terms of the existing work load, let alone any possible increase in referrals if the service was better known, there would be more than sufficient work load to warrant a full time post. My comment would be that a Shetland wide post would lose one of the essential characteristics of the pilot project which is that it provides a local response and uses existing knowledge and working relationships effectively.

I have been impressed with the dedication and skill of the

Local Support Co-ordinators currently in post. I would like to record my thanks for their patience and support in carrying out this evaluation.

Kate Gabb

2/6/2005



REPORT

To: Services Committee 16 March 2006

From: Head of Community Development

REVIEW OF THE ONGOING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PLAY AREAS IN SHETLAND

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members the findings of the Council's Play Area Review - community consultation that has been carried out over the past few months in 9 areas of Shetland - and to present recommendations for the future development of play areas in these communities.

2.0 Links to the Corporate Plan

- 2.1 The recommendations in this report support the Corporate Plan through acknowledgement that the provision of play areas throughout Shetland plays a significant role in improving the health and well being of children and young people throughout Shetland.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Services Committee on 02 December 2004 a report entitled "REVIEW OF THE ONGOING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PLAY AREAS IN SHETLAND" was considered and approved by members (Min Ref: SC 75/04). In this report members were presented with the findings of a detailed, independent inspection and evaluation, of all play areas managed by the Community Services Department. This piece of work was undertaken by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA), and included an assessment of equipment

life expectancy, the condition of equipment, the accessibility of play areas and an overall "play value" rating.

3.2 The main proposals approved in the above report were that Officers in Community Development should undertake community consultation in 9 areas of Shetland, where it was considered that there is either an over provision of play areas or a duplication of the same type of facility e.g. all targeted at one age group; and that the findings of this consultation should be reported back to the Services Committee in order to consider area plans for the 9 areas under consideration.

3.3 The 9 areas proposed for community consultation are Lerwick, Scalloway, Mid Yell, Fetlar, Vidlin, Mossbank, Firth, Hillswick and Sumburgh.

3.4 Shetland Islands Council, through Community Development, is currently responsible for the insurance, inspection, maintenance and where necessary, replacement of equipment at 72 play areas throughout Shetland, plus a further 5 play areas which are inspected by Community Development but are managed by the Education Service. These play areas vary in size from the larger play areas e.g. Brae High School, King George V, and Sandwick Central, to the smaller play areas with a single item of equipment, e.g. Kirkland, Gilbertson Park.

3.5 However, in terms of this review it is only the 41 play areas located within the 9 areas above that have been consulted on.

4.0 Present Position

4.1 Over the past few months staff in Community Development have undertaking an extensive consultation process in the 9 areas identified above. This consultation process has involved:

- attending site meeting with elected members;
- attending Community Council's and, Housing/Tenants Association's meetings;
- hosting public meetings in each of the areas;
- the completion of questionnaires by users and their parents;
- organising focus group discussions in schools, youth clubs and nurseries.

4.2 The purpose of the consultation was to establish how well each play area was used, what the parents/ communities / users thought of each play area and to agree an action plan for each of the 9 areas in terms of future play area provision.

5.0 Recommendations from findings of consultation

5.1 Through the consultation process it has been established that most play areas covered by the review are well used and are of real value to their community. However, the review also found that a number of play areas are of limited value to communities and are not used on a regular basis. The main reasons given for this lack of use by children and their parents/ guardians are as follows:

- The play area has old equipment that has limited play value
- The play equipment provide no challenge or stimulation for the children
- The play area is in the wrong location
- There are no children living in the area where the play area is situated
- There is a better play area nearby
- The access to the play area is very poor

5.2 The consultation process also established that most communities were supportive of the proposal to decommission certain unused play areas, but on the basis that the overall provision of play areas in their communities was addressed i.e. that other well used play areas should be further developed or new play areas be introduced where required.

5.3 The proposed plan of action for each of the play areas can be seen in Appendix A – (Lerwick) and Appendix B (other areas). Each appendix includes a brief summary of the consultation finding for each play area, the proposed course of action for each play area and the estimated cost of taking this course of action. The three possible courses of action for each play area is as follows:

- Option 1 – To decommission the play area
- Option 2 – To maintain the play area in its current condition
- Option 3 – To further develop the play area – sometimes indicating that the play area will be for a specific age group.

5.4 From Appendix A and B members will note that of the 41 play areas reviewed it is proposed to develop and refurbish 12, to decommission 11 and to continue to maintain and inspect 17 to the current standard. A further area at Heddels Park is recommended to be removed from the list of play areas but continue to be maintained as a seating area.

5.4 Throughout the period of the review community groups and individuals have made representations to Community Development seeking support for the development of new play areas in Gulberwick, Vidlin and in Lewick at Sound Primary School.

5.5 The justifications given for these requests is as follows:

- 5.5.1 Gulberwick – Over the last ten years there has been a significant number of houses built in the area, with no consideration given to the provision of play facilities in the new housing developments. The population has risen to the point where there is now approximately 200 children living in the area. At present the only play facility is located in the grounds of the public hall with 2 items of equipment.**
- 5.5.2 A local play area development group has been established in Gulberwick with the intention of providing a new play area. To date the group have been raising funds and have obtained a piece of land, through donation, where a play area can be built. The group have received no financial assistance from the Council. Therefore, on the basis of this lack of provision and the high number of children living in the area is it proposed to support this request.**
- 5.5.3 Vidlin - Over the last 4 years the Vidlin Playpark Group has been working towards the provision of a new play area. The group has received Feasibility and Design Grant assistance from Shetland Islands Council and are due to submit an application for Capital Grant Assistance to Shetland Islands Council for up to £50,000. The total estimated cost of their project is £114,000. However, the group has been unsuccessful in securing their main source of external funding from the Big Lottery Fund – Future Builders Programme and are now approximately £50,000 short in their funding. Therefore, if the whole project is to proceed it is likely that the group will require a further grant of up to £50,000. The exact amount required is not known at present as the group has submitted further applications to other external funders. The decisions on these applications are expected by the end of April 2006.**
- 5.5.4 Members will note from Appendix B that it is proposed to decommission the other Vidlin Play area at Gillside. Therefore in order to ensure that there is at least one play area in the community then it is proposed to support this request for additional funding.**
- 5.5.5 Lerwick – From Appendix A members will note that it is proposed to decommission 8 play areas in Lerwick of which 4 are in the Sound – Nederdale area. In addition, Members should also note that there are no items of play equipment located within the grounds of Sound Primary School. Therefore, the main recommendation from the South Lerwick consultation meetings was that everyone was happy to see the 4 small/ older play areas being decommissioned as long as new play facilities were provided in an accessible location within the area. The consultation also agreed that this location should be at the**

Sound Primary School in order that school children can get access to the facilities during the school day. Therefore, assuming the proposal to decommission the 4 play areas in the Sound area is approved then it seems reasonable that a new play area should be built within the area, with the Sound Primary School being an ideal location. It is therefore proposed that this request be supported.

7.0 Proposals

7.1 That the proposals in Appendix A and Appendix B are approved i.e. that 12 existing play areas are further developed, that 11 play areas are decommissioned and that 17 play areas are to be maintained in their current condition.

7.2 That the area at Heddels Park be removed from the play areas list but continue to be maintained as a seating area.

7.3 That Officers of Community Development be authorised to work in partnership with the Play Park Groups in Gulberwick and Vidlin to ensure that these play areas are developed as indicated in section 6 above.

7.4 That Officers of Community Development be authorised to work with the Head Teacher of Sound Primary School and the Community to provide a new play area in the grounds of Sound Primary School.

7.5 That members agree one of the options below for the funding of the play area development proposals:

7.5.1 that the funding for these proposals be contained within Community Development's existing Capital Rolling Programme for play areas i.e. £100,000 per year over an 8 year period i.e. 2006/07 – 2013/14.

7.5.2 that the funding for these proposals be contained within Community Development's overall existing Capital Rolling Programme by reducing the amount allocated to multicourts by £50,000 to zero; and correspondingly by increasing the amount allocated to play areas by £50,000. This would give a budget of £150,000 per year over a 6 year period i.e. 2006/07 2011/12.

7.5.3 that a recommendation is made to the Council's Capital Projects Management Team that an additional sum of

£115,000 per year be added to Community Developments Capital Rolling Programme for play areas over a 4 year period i.e. 2006/07 to 2009/10. This additional sum to be met by reducing the amount allocated to multicourts by £50,000 to zero, as indicated in 7.5.2 above and by requesting that a further £65,000 per year be allocated to the Capital Rolling Programme budget for play areas. This would give a budget of £215,000 per year over the 4 year period, but would require an additional allocation of £65,000 per year i.e. £260,000, which is not currently accounted for in the Capital Programme. This is the preferred option as it would significantly reduce the time of implementing the play area development programme.

- 7.6 That should the funding for the play area development programme be approved that Officers in Community Development be authorised to agree the programme of works throughout Shetland, and to undertake further consultation, with communities and appropriate bodies on the use of decommissioned play areas.**

Reason – Highlighted through consultation is the low usage of numerous play areas due to low numbers of children in area, poor location, poor access and ageing equipment. In many areas of Shetland there is a fairly even distribution of play areas with limited duplication between different play areas. However it has been noted that there is often a duplication of similar facilities within communities. By rationalising the total number of play areas, areas can be developed which are central to communities and are of higher quality, have higher play values and are accessible to all.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The total cost of meeting the proposals in section 7 of this report is estimated at £792,000. This estimate is based on the provision of new equipment, equipment installation, safety surfacing requirements, earthworks, drainage etc. and an allowance for associated professional fees.**
- 8.2 At present Community Development has number of capital and revenue budgets for the refurbishment and maintenance of all existing play areas. In financial year 2006/07 a capital budget of £135,000 (GCL4311) has been approved in the Council's Capital Rolling Programme for Play areas, which is to be spent on the refurbishment of the King George V Play Area in Lerwick and the Cunningsburgh Primary School Play Area (this area was not within the areas under review). Therefore, as the funding for the King George V refurbishment (£65,000) has already been agreed**

then the total capital funding required to meet the proposals in section 7 of this report is £727,000.

8.3 As the Council has already agreed its financial projections for the Capital Rolling Programme over the next 10 years which includes an allowance for Community Development projects (including play areas), then recommendations 7.5.1 and 7.5.2 can be met from within existing budgets approved for Community Development projects. However, if recommendation 7.5.3 is approved then an additional sum of £260,00 will be required over the next 4 financial years i.e. 2006/07 – 2010/11 to meet this proposal.

8.4 If the proposals in this report are approved then it is estimated that there will be an annual revenue budget saving in the order of £10,000 per year. This figure is based on a reduction in insurance costs of approximately £1,650 per year (11 x £150) and a reduction in maintenance costs of approximately £8,800 (11 x £800). This figure is based on all 11 play areas being decommissioned, which would not happen all at once but would occur over the 4 year period.

9.0 Policy and Delegated Authority

9.1 The Services Committee has delegated authority to implement decisions relating to matters within its remit for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (SIC - Min Ref: SIC/70/03). However, should proposal 7.5.3 be approved then a decision of the Council will be required as all matters relating to capital expenditure stand referred to Council via CPMT (min ref 122/03).

10.0 Recommendations

I recommend that the Services Committee approve:

10.1 the proposals in Appendix A and Appendix B i.e. that 12 existing play areas are further developed, that 11 play areas are decommissioned and that 17 play areas are to be maintained in their current condition.

10.2 that the area at Heddels Park be removed from the play areas list but continue to be maintained as a seating area.

10.3 that Officers of Community Development be authorised to work in partnership with the Play Park Groups in Gulberwick and Vidlin to ensure that these play areas are developed as indicated in section 6 above.

10.4 that Officers of Community Development be authorised to work with the Head Teacher of Sound Primary School and the Community to provide a new play area in the grounds of Sound Primary School.

10.5 one of the funding options as set out in proposal 7.5 and note that should recommendation 7.5.3 be approved then a decision of the Council via CPMT will be required to ratify this decision:

“7.5.1 that the funding for these proposals be contained within Community Development’s existing Capital Rolling Programme for play areas i.e. £100,000 per year over an 8 year period for the play area development programme”.

“7.5.2 that the funding for these proposals be contained within Community Development’s overall existing Capital Rolling Programme by reducing the amount allocated to multicourts by £50,000 to zero; and correspondingly by increasing the amount allocated to play areas by £50,000. This would give a budget of £150,000 per year over a 6 year period for the play area development programme”.

“7.5.3 that a recommendation is made to the Council’s Capital Projects Management Team that an additional sum of £115,000 per year be added to Community Developments Capital Rolling Programme for play areas over a 4 year period i.e. 2006/07 to 2009/10. This additional sum to be met by reducing the amount allocated to multicourts by £50,000 to zero, as indicated in 7.5.2 above and by requesting that a further £65,000 per year be allocated to the Capital Rolling Programme budget for play areas. This would give a budget of £215,000 per year over a 4 year period for the play areas development programme, but would require an additional allocation of £65,000 per year i.e. £260,000, which is not currently accounted for in the Capital Programme”.

10.6 that should the funding for the play area development programme be approved that Officers in Community Development be authorised to agree the programme of works throughout Shetland, and to undertake further consultation, with communities and appropriate bodies on the use of decommissioned play areas.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006
Agenda Item No. 11 - Public Report

March 2006

Our Ref: NWW/lal/PL1

Report No. CD-194-F

Play Area Review - Lerwick Play Area proposals

| Play Area | Feedback from Consultation | Proposals |
|----------------------|--|------------------------|
| Taska | Little evidence of use. Small area with poor quality, un-exciting and un-challenging equipment. | Decommission |
| Sandwall | Little evidence of use. Small area with poor quality, un-exciting and un-challenging equipment. | Decommission |
| Tarland | More popular for younger children/parents. Larger with more equipment. | Develop |
| Kirkland | Little evidence of use. Small area with poor quality, un-exciting and un-challenging equipment. | Decommission |
| Sound School | Community looking to develop a site for play area development. Good centralised location, near community hall and existing multicourt. | Develop |
| Nederdale 1 | Ageing equipment, poor drainage, but well used. More challenging, exciting equipment required. | Develop |
| Nederdale 2 | Ageing equipment but very well used. More challenging, exciting equipment required. | Decommission |
| Sandveien | Well used but mainly by younger residents. Seating area popular. Frequent damage to equipment. Most of equipment in poor condition. More modern equipment requested. | Develop - seating area |
| Burnside | Little evidence of use. Small area with poor quality, un-exciting and un-challenging equipment. | Decommission |
| Voderview | Little evidence of use. Small area with poor quality, un-exciting and un-challenging equipment. | Decommission |
| Staney Hill 1 | Older children (10-14) congregate in area. Nothing for this age group to do in North Lerwick area. People wanted to retain football kick-about area. | Develop |
| Staney Hill 2 | Large area could be better utilised. Equipment old and in poor condition. Room for equipment to suit all ages. Nothing in area for younger children. | Develop - toddlers/c |

| Play Area | Feedback from Consultation | Proposa |
|------------------------|---|---|
| King George V | Well used by children from throughout Lerwick. Equipment, especially for younger children, very popular but ageing and in poor condition. | Refurbish and repla Work allc 2006/07 |
| Hayfield | Well used, very popular. But lacks equipment for younger, pre-school age children. | OK- Keep |
| Gilbertson Park | Well used but mainly, only when games hall or football pitch is being used. | Decomm |
| Bells Brae 1 | Well used and very popular by school children. But people unaware of access to general public. | OK- Keep |
| Bells Brae 2 | Well used and very popular by school children. But people unaware of access to general public. | OK- Keep |
| Church Road | Well used, popular. Recently refurbished. | OK- Keep |
| Stouts Court | Little evidence of use. Small selection of ageing equipment. Not many children reside in area. | Decomm |
| Twageos | Small selection of ageing equipment. Well used by residents, passers by and AHS pupils | Develop : groups |
| Ronald St | Well used, mainly by local residents. Numerous young families in area. | OK- Keep |
| Heddels Park | No play equipment | Remove maintain |
| Laburnum | Not used by general public. | OK- Keep |
| | | Total for |
| | | Professic |
| | | Total |

Play Area Review – Shetland Proposals

| Area | Play Area | Feedback from consultation | Proposals | Approx. Cost |
|------------------|-----------------------|--|---|---------------------|
| <u>Fetlar</u> | Fetlar Primary School | Only two items of equipment. Large area for expansion. Well used by pupils. HMI requirement. Central area. | Develop area for mixed age groups | £35,000 |
| | Staccafletts | Decent equipment, limited space. Popular with older children. Close to area at school. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| Mid-Yell | Burrapark | Area close by school, Leisure Centre and housing. Well used but a number of items of equipment coming to end of useful life. Large, well drained area. | Develop area for mixed age groups | £60,000 |
| | Sunnyside | Small number of ageing items of equipment in poor condition. Very poor drainage, low usage because of this. Poor access. | Decommission | £2,000 |
| Mossbank | Mossbank PS | Area used mainly by pupils. Ageing equipment but popular. HMI requirement. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Sandside | Popular area for older children, numerous items of modern equipment. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Mossbank | Popular area with large selection of equipment used by all age groups, lack of equipment for pre-school age. Close to hall, school and housing. | Develop – add some items of toddler equipment | £10,000 |
| Hillswick | Stucca | Small area with three items of ageing, worn equipment. Well used by residents. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Valladale | Large area, with older | OK – keep on | - |

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| | | equipment, which is in good condition. Well used. | maintenance list | |
| | Urafirth PS | Large modern area with good selection of equipment. Good access. Close to kick about and picnic areas. Well used by pupils and residents to area. Also attracts visitors from elsewhere. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| Vidlin | Gillside | Small area with only one item of equipment. Adjacent to mainly sheltered housing. Low usage. | Decommission | £1000 |
| | New Area | Development of new play area. | Provide financial assistance | Up to £50,000 |

| Area | Play Area | Feedback from consultation | Proposals | Approx. Cost |
|------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Sumburgh | Bigton | Small modern area with new equipment close to football pitch. Well used with good access. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Boddam | Large, very popular area with numerous items of modern equipment for different age groups. Used by residents and visitors from throughout Shetland. Good access with seating area. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Hestingott | Large area with modern equipment for different age groups. Popular and well used. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Maybury | Small area with only two items of equipment (both swings). Little signs of usage, only by a small number of residents. Recently refurbished Hestingott area only 200m away. | Decommission | £1,000 |
| Scalloway | Blydoit | Well used but with ageing, unattractive equipment, good access. New housing schemes under construction in surrounding area. | Develop area for mixed age groups | £40,000 |
| | Fraser Park | Ageing equipment, popular and well | Develop area for mixed age | £65,000 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | | used. In central location close to all public amenities, public hall, shops, public toilets, multicourt and football pitch. Poor access. | groups | |
| | Sycamore Avenue | Poor access but very popular. Sheltered and secluded with some modern equipment. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| | Port Arthur | Small, popular area. Ageing equipment. | OK – keep on maintenance list | - |
| Gulberwick | Gulberwick | Development of new play area. | Provide financial assistance | Up to £80,000 |
| | | | | |
| | | | Total for works | £344,000 |
| | | | Professional fees etc - 10% of total | £34,400 |
| | | | Total | £378,400 |



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Head of Community Development

Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations
Refurbishment of Skerries Public Hall

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider a request for funding from the Skerries Public Hall to refurbish the existing hall facilities.

2. Background

2.1 At their meeting on 6 May 2004 the Services Committee approved a report, which recommended changes to the Capital Grants Scheme and Feasibility and Design Grant Scheme, in order to ensure a more effective use of all available funding. In addition, this report also approved guidelines and standard Council grant conditions for both schemes, including that authority for considering funding requests up to £50,000 is delegated to the Head of Community Development, or his nominee. This decision was subsequently ratified by the Council on 19 May 2004 (Min Ref: 58/04).

2.2 Skerries Public Hall was awarded Feasibility and Design Grant assistance of £5,000 and £15,000 respectively from Community Development for their proposed project, which had an indicative cost of £233,000 exclusive of professional fees and VAT.

2.3 Skerries Public Hall is the only community facility in the isles and serves a population of approximately 80 people. The facility is at the heart of island life and is used for a wide range of activities and functions including indoor sports and leisure pursuits, visitor facility, youth club, senior citizens club,

Agenda Item No. 12 - Public Report

meetings, training events, weddings, church hall, dance hall, and social events.

- 2.4 However members should note that the hall is in need of major refurbishment as the fabric of the building and its interior is deteriorating. The hall is becoming less attractive to the community as a venue and meeting place and is becoming more costly to operate. In addition to this, the hall also requires considerable modernization in order to comply with various legislative requirements.

3. Present Position

- 3.1 The Feasibility and Design stage of work for this project have now been completed including the approval of Planning Permission and Building Warrant.

- 3.2 The work was advertised for tender and 2 tenders were received, the lowest of which was £339,390 excluding VAT, which with an allowance for professional fees, Planning Permission and Building Warrant gives a total project cost of £459,762 including VAT.

- 3.3 Having considered the tenders, the lowest of which is significantly over the budget estimate it has been explained to the Skerries Hall committee that the reasons for this difference is principally due to the following factors:

3.3.1 The original estimate was too low. Not enough cognisance was taken of the “Skerries factor” and the high cost connected with the remote outer island location.

3.3.2 Tender prices have increased since the estimate was prepared.

3.3.3 Due to the current demands and capacity of the local building industry only 3 contractors expressed an interest in bidding for the works when advertised, which in turn resulted in 2 tenders being received.

- 3.4 Following consideration of the tender a series of meetings have since taken place between the hall committee, Officers of Community Development and the Project Design Team. The purpose of these meetings being to consider a cost cutting exercise on the project. This has resulted in savings of £49,216 being identified, which gives a revised project cost of £290,174 for works excluding VAT. Therefore the revised cost of the project is £399,530 including professional fees, statutory consents and VAT.

- 3.5 The items of savings identified from the overall cost have been selected to ensure no loss of amenity to the Skerries Hall. The works will provide the Skerries community with a modern, fully compliant, extensively refurbished energy efficient hall including the following facilities:

- Renewing the roof and ceilings;

Agenda Item No. 12 - Public Report

- Upgrading the existing kitchen facilities;
- Refurbishing the existing toilet facilities;
- Replacing the present heating, plumbing and insulation;
- Upgrading storage area;
- Substantial internal refurbishment including décor;
- Renewal of all exterior doors and windows;
- Access and other necessary environmental health improvements.

3.6 It should be noted that Skerries Public Hall has charitable status but is not registered for VAT.

4. Links to Corporate Plan

- 4.1 This project will assist the Council to achieve its priorities by contributing towards Strengthening Rural Communities through the refurbishment of an important community facility. The project will contribute towards the strengthening of Skerries through the development of a facility that meets a community need and assists in the retention of people living in this area.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The following funding arrangement is proposed:

| | Total Project Costs (£) | Total Paid to Date (£) | Remaining Funding Required (£) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Shetland Islands Council | 120,000 | 20,000 | 100,000 |
| Big Lottery Fund | 198,052 | 0 | 198,052 |
| Lloyds TSB Foundation | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 |
| Shetland Enterprise | <u>50,000</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>50,000</u> |
| Total Public Funding | 378,052 | 20,000 | 358,052 |
| Skerries Public Hall | <u>21,478</u> | <u>15,634</u> | <u>5,844</u> |
| TOTAL COSTS | <u>399,530</u> | <u>35,634</u> | <u>363,896</u> |

5.2 The Big Lottery Fund has agreed to fund the above amount.

5.3 Lloyds TSB Foundation has agreed to fund the above amount.

5.4 Skerries Public Hall has confirmed to Community Development that its contribution is in place.

5.5 At present no decision has been taken by Shetland Enterprise on the above amount although a decision is expected next month.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Community Development Service budget for Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations (GCL4314 2406) for financial year 2006/2007 has sufficient funds to meet the request from Skerries Public Hall.

7. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 7.1 The Council has a general policy to continue to promote improvement in the range and quality of community facilities and services in the islands for all sections of the population (Min Ref: 15/93).
- 7.2 The Services Committee has delegated authority to make decisions regarding Grants to Voluntary Organisations within approved policy and budget (Min. Ref.: 70/03).

8. Recommendation

I recommend that the Services Committee agree that: -

- 8.1 a grant of up to £100,000 are offered to Skerries Public Hall for the purposes outlined in this report. The source of this grant is Community Development's budget for Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations (GCL4314 2406) for financial year 2006/07;
- 8.2 the above grant be subject to the standard Council conditions applying to the Capital Grant Aid Scheme.



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Interim Head of Social Work

CHANGING LIVES - 21ST CENTURY SOCIAL WORK REVIEW

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report informs Services Committee of the main findings of the 21st Century Social Work review and the response from the Scottish Executive.
- 1.2 The review sets out a framework for the delivery of Social Work services in the future and Shetland needs to take account of the recommendations in any consideration of structures and plans to deliver services in the future.

2. Links to Corporate Plan

- 2.7 Protecting and supporting the most vulnerable people are key elements in achieving the Council's vision in ensuring Shetland's population are safe, healthy and have equality of opportunity.

3. Background

- 3.1 The review was commissioned by the Scottish Executive in response to the increasing challenges facing Social Work and a recognition that the current approach and the resources available as well as increasing demands, make the current situation unsustainable.
- 3.2 The review, which has been universally well received, makes clear recommendations as to the direction for the future, clarifying and focussing the role of social work, enhancing the role of the Chief Social Work Officer and ensuring the needs of users and carers are put at the forefront.

3.3 It also sets out proposals to ensure the future workforce is 'fit for purpose'

The report concludes that:-

"We all aspire to live in a society that is healthy, tolerant, safe, fair and inclusive."

3.3.1 Social work services role are crucial to this by:

- Supporting the most vulnerable and excluded people
- Protecting those at risk of harm from themselves or others
- Working with others to close the opportunity gap

3.3.2 However, *Changing Lives* is quite clear that '**more of the same won't work**'.

Currently:

- Not making the most effective use of skilled Social Workers
- A Social Work profession lacking confidence
- High profile service failures
- Lack of clear leadership
- Focus on process rather than outcomes
- Insufficient clarity of priorities

3.3.3 The report contains a range of recommendations of particular note;

- The call for clearly stated priorities for what Social Work should and should not do
- Clarifying the key role of a qualified Social Worker to work directly with people alongside their families and carers where there are complex, unpredictable, longer term needs and risks and to engage in early intervention with high levels of vulnerability and risk
- Encourage the development of a new para-professional role to free Social Workers to undertake these tasks
- An enhanced role for the Chief Social Work officer with direct responsibility to the Chief Executive and the Council to advise on all matters related to Social Work functions
- Building the capacity of the workforce by focusing on training and workforce development

4. Scottish Executive Response

4.1 The response of the Scottish Executive has been prompt with an implementation team immediately established who are to visit all Local Authorities before the summer, they will be visiting Shetland on 4/5th April.

4.1.1 The response highlights the actions that will be taken as an immediate priority.

- Establish a system of setting national priorities

Agenda Item No. 13 - Public Report

- A new performance improvement framework to deliver continuous improvement
- Social work service redesign at a local level
- Strengthen the role of the Chief Social Work Officer
- Create the framework and support for front line Social Workers
- New opportunities for front line Social Workers to remain in practice
- Encourage the development of a new paraprofessional role
- Ensure that people who use services and their carers have ever greater involvement in decision making
- Expectations of colleges and universities to work effectively in contributing to workforce development and planning
- Legislate to give Ministers and parliament powers in setting national priorities and the performance improvement framework
- Deliver additional resources to support the change process

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 6.1 All Social Work matters stand referred to the Services Committee. The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within its remit and for which the overall objectives have been approved by the Council, in addition to appropriate budget provision (Min. Ref. SIC 70/03).

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The findings of the Review and the response of the Executive are to be welcomed and we should welcome the opportunity to work with the Implementation Team to ensure the continuous improvement of Social Work services in Shetland.
- 7.2 As the Council continues to face both budgetary and recruitment challenges the recommendations on establishing priorities and clarifying the role of the professional Social Worker are particularly relevant.
- 7.3 The enhanced role of the Chief Social Work Officer needs consideration as the Council considers future structures.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 I recommend that Services Committee notes this report and ensures the outcomes of the review are integral in consideration of service plans and developments in the future.



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: Head of Capital Programmes and Housing

Report No: HS-03-06

GIRLSTA CHALETS – UPDATE

1.0 Introduction

This report is an update to a previous report on the same subject, which was presented to Services Committee on 1st December 2005 (Min ref: 85/05). At that meeting members agreed to defer a decision to allow consultation by the Member for the area and Housing Spokesperson with interested parties and to also seek an extension to the land lease to the end of March 2006, to allow sufficient time for the consultation to take place.

2.0 Update

Following the decision contact was made with the landowner to see if they were willing to extend the lease. A letter has now been received from the landowner's solicitors stating that the landowner agrees to an extension up to the end of March 2006 but not beyond. The chalets will have to be removed from Girlsta and there is therefore no requirement for further consultation.

3.0 Policy and Delegated Authority

All matters relating to Housing come under the remit of the Services Committee (Min ref: SIC70/03). The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions on matters within approved policy, and for which there is a budget.

4.0 Financial Implications

The removal, storage and relocation of the chalets will have to be carried out in the 2006/07 financial year. The exact costs associated with this are not known at this time. A budget heading for Chalets exists in the General Fund Capital Housing Rolling Programme (GCH3102) and will be used to fund the costs. It should be noted that this may mean that other works to chalets will have to be re-prioritised.

5.0 Recommendations

I recommend that Services Committee note the contents of this report.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 14 - Public Report

Date: 14 February 2006

Our Ref: AMJ/SA/HS-03-06

Report No: HS-03-06



REPORT

To: Services Committee

16 March 2006

From: **Head of Community Development**

CINEMA AND MUSIC VENUE – REVIEW OF BUSINESS PLAN

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to bring to Members attention, the conclusions from a review of the business plan with regard to the cinema and music venue project and to indicate the level of revenue funding which might be required for this project.

2. Links to Corporate Plan

2.1 This project will contribute to the Corporate priorities of achieving potential through providing high quality facilities for promotion of learning in creative fields such as music and film. It will also contribute to developing our cultural identity by providing access to arts and music and will contribute to development of tourism.

3. Background

3.1 Members agreed in a report entitled “Capital Programme – Review – June 2004” (Min Ref.:SIC108/04) to support a bid to the Scottish Arts Lottery for £2million towards the capital cost of a cinema and music venue and to undertake to at least match any lottery funding in the longer term. Currently, a sum of £7.15million is included in the Capital Programme and this will be reduced by the amount awarded by the Scottish Arts Lottery.

3.2 I reported to the Social Forum on 21 April 2005 that the Stage 1 bid to the Scottish Arts Lottery had been successful, allowing the project to proceed to a

Agenda Item No. 15 - Public Report

Stage 2 bid. In addition, the Scottish Arts Lottery indicated that an additional sum of about £200,000 could be available to revisit the proposals for a second screen – this had been deleted from the proposals with the intention of the music hall doubling as a second cinema.

3.3 The Stage 2 Bid is required to be submitted within 2 years of the notification of a successful Stage 1 Application and requires a full submission including the following:

- Artistic Strategy
 - A clear and sustainable artistic vision for the project
- Business Plan
 - A business case for a sustainable development
- Building Proposal
 - A set of documents that clearly sets out the detail of the construction project, how the project will be delivered, when, by whom and at what cost? (RIBA Stage D)
- Access and Equal Opportunities
 - A clear strategy on how the organisation will deliver wide public benefit and ensure access to all its activities.

4. Current Position

4.1 In commenting on the Stage 1 submission, the Scottish Arts Lottery required that the project team review the business case submitted as part of the Stage 1 Submission.

4.2 I reported to Services Committee on 26 January 2006 that this piece of work had been tendered and that a report on the review of the current business plan was expected in late February and that I would report on the findings to Services Committee on 16 March 2006.

4.3 An Executive Summary (Appendix 1), along with the full report (Appendix 2) is appended to this report and Brian Beattie, one of the authors of the review report is present today to explain the main findings and to answer any questions.

4.4 In essence, the consultants have focused on the following key assumptions

- ◆ Annual attendance
- ◆ Average cafe bar spend per head
- ◆ Venue staffing costs

and have revised the original assumptions on each of these in line with current trends and their experience from elsewhere.

Agenda Item No. 15 - Public Report

- 4.5 Projected attendances at cinema have been reduced by 20%, projected attendance at music events have been reduced by 25% and cafe bar sales reduced by £30,000 p.a.
- 4.6 A number of costs have been increased, e.g. staffing by £20,000, energy costs by 25%.
- 4.7 The net effect of this is to predict that there will be an operating deficit of approximately £58,000 (compared to a previous expected surplus of £40,000) but that there will inevitably be fluctuations on a year by year basis.
- 4.8 In addition, the outreach element which is central to the project is expected to cost a further £50,000.
- 4.9 If the venue was to be managed as part of the portfolio of the New Arts Development Agency there could be a realistic expectation of staffing savings of up to £30,000 through efficient use of staff.
- 4.10 Therefore the total net annual funding requirement could be expected to be in the region of £80,000 per annum.
- 4.11 The consultants have also applied a sensitivity analysis to the figures and have modelled a
 - ◆ 20% fall in attendances
 - ◆ 20% fall in cafe bar sales
 - ◆ 20% fall in both attendances and cafe bar sales and
 - ◆ 20% increase in each of these elements

This gives a spread from the realistic scenarios with an anticipated deficit of £80,000 on operating costs which shows a requirement of funding of £221,000 where both attendances and cafe bar sales are 20% below anticipated to a surplus of £108,000 where both are 20% higher than anticipated.

- 4.12 It is intended to submit this review of the business plan to Scottish Arts Lottery as part of the project implementation plan in preparation for the Stage 2 application.
- 4.13 In addition, these figures can form the basis for discussions with revenue funders of the new arts development agency if this agency is indeed to be managed by that organisation.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 A budget of £250,000 to take the project from Stage 1 to Stage 2 was agreed by Council in June 2004 (Min Ref.:108/04) and is included in the Council's Capital Programme.

5.2 All costs relating to this review have been met from this budget.

6. Policy and Delegated Authority

- 6.1 All matters relating to cultural activities stand referred to the Services Committee. (Min Ref.:SIC70/03).

7. Recommendations

I recommend that this report is noted.

March 2006
GS/lal/A3

Report No. CD-193-D2

Executive Summary

This review was commissioned by the Project Team for the proposed Cinema and Music venue in Lerwick. The purpose was to assess the business case for the project in order to inform, review and update the Business Plan that the Project Team will need to submit as part of its Stage 2 Lottery application.

In reviewing the robustness of the business case, we **focused on the following key assumptions** :

- **Annual attendances** for different types of event and film (ticket sales representing 40% of expected annual turnover of approx £905,000 – net of VAT – in the second year of operation)
- **Average café bar spend per head** by attendees (café bar sales representing 50% of expected annual turnover)
- **Venue staffing costs** (representing 47% of estimated annual expenditure)

The projections of usage, annual income and annual expenditure have been revised as the review has proceeded to take account of current trends and changes of circumstances since the first business case was prepared in 2001. This has been done in consultation with the Project Team and consultants previously involved.

It is **assumed**, importantly, that the cinema and music venue will become **popular** for a wide range of arts-related events that will appeal to all age groups – for socialising and music performance and practice, as well as to attend events.

The following significant changes have been made to the Business Plan projections through the review:

- We considered it prudent to **reduce cinema attendance projections by 20% from the original 42,000**. The revised increase of 70-75% on current Garrison audiences to 36,444 p.a. is considered achievable, particularly as films are currently shown on only four days per month, and as a wider range of films will be shown.
- It was considered similarly prudent to **reduce the number of music events per year by 64** – an overall reduction of 20%. **Attendance projections for all music events** have correspondingly been **reduced by 25%**.
- Café bar spend projections per head have been increased for some types of event and reduced for others. Overall, the **annual café bar sales forecast** has been **reduced by £30,000 p.a.**
- **Staffing costs** have been **increased** by approximately **£20,000 p.a.**, based on further analysis of requirements and comparisons with other venues.
- **Energy costs** have been **increased by £6,000 p.a.** to an estimated **£30,000** to reflect recent price increases (although savings could be made by linking to the District Heating Scheme)
- **Council tax charges** have been **reduced by £6,000 p.a.** on the assumption that SIC will give 100% de-rating to the venue as a not-for-profit organisation
- Income assumptions for hires of the recording studio, rehearsal room, educational facilities, etc, and for private hires of the music hall, conferences, etc are considered to be modest, but at this stage have not been amended.

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006
Agenda Item No. 15 - Public Appendix

- The assumed **maintenance spend** of **£10,000 p.a.** should be sufficient in the early years, but the need will steadily increase with normal 'wear and tear'.

Our **main conclusions** on the **robustness of the income and expenditure projections** are that:

- The detailed projections are based on extensive local survey and evidence on existing attendances in Shetland at music events and films; unmet demand by audiences and performers; existing venue employment levels; market rates for event entry and sales of consumables; profit margins on sales of drinks, confectionary; etc. This level of research and the way that the projections have been built up event-by-event are unusually detailed in business planning for new venues.
- Although there are important assumptions underpinning the projections, the "realistic" figures do not depend on all aspects of the project performing to their potential maximum. Rather, many of the target averages could be exceeded if the venue is well run and becomes, as expected, a highly valued part of Shetland's cultural scene.
- Notwithstanding the above, forecasting demand for any new facility is inevitably subject to a fairly wide margin of accuracy, and a **20% downward sensitivity** was **considered prudent** (see below). Once the facility is up and running, the experience gained should narrow that margin.
- Operational experience will enable changes to be made in response to market demand.

In short, the venue is now expected to incur an **operating deficit** of approximately **£58,000 p.a.** in its early years of operation, compared with the previous surplus of around £40,000, with inevitable year to year fluctuations in financial out-turn.

The costs of outreach activities, considered an integral part of the new Cinema and Music venue project, were provisionally estimated at approximately £34,000 p.a., excluding outreach development staffing. Adding this to outreach and development staffing plus overheads might give an overall **additional outreach and development cost** in the region of **£50,000**.

If the **venue** is operated through the **new Shetland Arts Development Trust**, it is estimated that staffing **efficiency gains** of some **£30,000 p.a.** should be achievable to set against the above deficit funding requirement.

This would give a **total net annual funding requirement** for venue operation, development activities and outreach of approximately **£80,000 p.a.** in the early years of operation.

In addition, finance should be set aside for **major maintenance, repairs, refurbishment and improvements** that will inevitably be required **in the medium to longer term** over and above annual maintenance. In our experience, an annual allowance should be made. We estimate this at approximately **£30,000 p.a.**

Costs prior to opening should also be allowed for, including the employment of a manager (eg for 6 months), staff recruitment and training, advance marketing, building overheads, café bar stocking, etc.

In our experience, it is prudent to apply sensitivity factors of plus or minus 20% to the financial projections for venue operation, as outlined in the table below.

Annual Venue Surplus/Deficit (£)

Services Committee - Thursday 16 March 2006

Agenda Item No. 15 - Public Appendix

| | |
|--|-----------|
| "Realistic" Projection (early years) | - 58,000 |
| Attendances down 20% | - 175,000 |
| Café bar spend per head down 20% | - 115,000 |
| Attendances and bar spend per head both down 20% | - 221,000 |
| Attendances up 20% | + 57,000 |
| Café bar spend per head up 20% | - 15,000 |
| Attendances and bar spend per head both up 20% | + 108,000 |

Applying this sensitivity indicates that the venue could make an operating surplus of £108,000, or a deficit of up to £221,000 – although with economies in core costs possible to help offset any venue deficit in excess of £100,000 p.a. Nevertheless, we believe that the **realistic annual funding requirement** would, as stated previously, be in the region of **£80,000**.

Steve Westbrook, Economist
Bryan Beattie, Creative Services
March 2006