

Services Committee
28 November 2000 Public Minutes

Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Tuesday 28 November 2000 at 10.30 a.m.

Present:

R J Anderson	R I Black
Dr C M Begg	A J Cluness
M U Colligan	C B Eunson
C A Goodlad	F B Grains
I J Hawkins	L Hutchison
J C Irvine	P Malcolmson
W H Manson	J P Nicolson
W A Ratter	J M Ritch
F A Robertson	T W Stove
W N Stove	

Apologies:

L Angus	Capt G G Mitchell
W Tait	

In Attendance (Officers):

M Miller, Head of Social Care Services
G Smith, Head of Community Development Services
N Watt, Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services
R Lovell, Leisure Facilities Officer
G Johnston, Head of Finance Services
M Payton, Head of Education Services
M Robertson, Divisional Education Officer, Policy and Quality Assurance Division
C Medley, Head of Housing Services
M Craigie, Projects Co-ordinator
L Bisset, Projects Co-ordinator
L Geddes, Contract Administration Officer
D Haswell, Committee Officer

Invited to Attend

J Johnston, Shetland Recreational Trust
A Watt, Shetland Arts Trust
K Hubbard, Shetland Arts Trust
D Gardiner, Shetland Arts Trust
J Grant, Shetland Welfare Trust
J Jamieson, Music Venue Steering Group

Chairman:

Mr P Malcolmson, Chairman of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Minutes:

The minute of the meeting held on 26 September 2000, having been circulated previously, was confirmed.

Members' Attendance at External Meetings – Update

The Chairman gave members an update on his attendance at the CoSLA Education and Children's Services Network. A number of current issues had been highlighted, including the importance of the classroom teacher, the situation regarding the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the McCrone Report. The possibility of setting up a commission for children in Scotland had also been discussed.

Mrs F Grains advised members that she had recently attended a meeting of the Scottish Museums Council and that some useful suggestions had been made regarding the running of small museums by volunteers. She suggested that this should be followed up.

The Head of Community Services advised that his Division were currently in the process of looking at some of these issues, and they hoped to build on successful training carried out locally by the Scottish Museums Council.

139/00 **Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust: Shetland Welfare Trust – Staffing Proposals**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 1) and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mr R I Black.

140/00 **Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust – Shetland Voluntary Care Forum**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 2) and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson.

141/00 **Retention of Organs by Health Boards without Permission**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 3) and, on the motion of Mrs I J Hawkins, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendation contained therein.

142/00 **Staffing Allocations**

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

The Head of Education Services updated members on current school role figures which had changed since the report was written. In response to a query from a Member regarding a discrepancy in figures for Bells Brae School, he advised that this was due to the

fact that the Special Needs Unit staffing figure had not been included in the table as staffing was separate for this Unit.

A Member pointed out that the decision of the Council referred to in paragraph 2.2.1 was actually to restore the staffing level at Whiteness until a return visit by HM Inspectors and their report had been produced.

A Member referred to paragraphs 3.4 and 3.10 and pointed out that these must be significant as to why there was a higher number of teaching staff per pupil in Shetland.

The Head of Education Services stated that a more complex formula would be required to take into account promoted staff, composite classes and visiting teachers, and that the formula used in the report was intended to be as close to a 'best fit' as possible.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Education Services advised the report concerning the Best Value Review should be presented to the Council this cycle, and the Review would take approximately six months to complete.

The Chairman reiterated that this was intended to be an interim report which would be looked at in Best Value terms at a later stage. He clarified that staffing variations should be reported to the Services Committee for approval, although changes required by an increase in roll could take place immediately, as per paragraph 6.1.6.

A Member enquired as to whether School Boards had been consulted on this report. The Chairman replied that this had not taken place as it was intended to be an interim report, although School Boards would be consulted on the Best Value Review of Education Services.

Mrs L Hutchison referred to paragraph 3.15 of the report and enquired if any progress had been made regarding the vacancies at Symbister House Junior High School.

The Head of Education Services replied that, out of the four vacant posts, two had been filled and interviews were being conducted on the third in the next fortnight. However there had been no applicants for the final post yet.

Mrs L Hutchison replied that she was very pleased to hear of the progress made in relation to Symbister, however she felt that it was important to look at the wider picture and the long-term implications. Mrs L Hutchison moved the Committee approve the recommendations with the addition of the following recommendation added as paragraph 6.3:

1. That a working group be formed under the leadership of Mrs M U Colligan, Spokesperson of the Education Forum, and that the membership of the group should consist of Councillors, Department Officials and Education Forum Representatives.
2. That the Working Group examines the effects on Shetland regarding the national teacher shortage and that they look at ways to help address the short and long-term problems of this issue, taking into consideration that already suggested by the Education Forum, and letters from Whalsay parents.
3. That the Group also confers with School Boards and presents a report within two cycles to the Education Forum and Services Committee suggesting solutions and a way forward.

Mr J M Ritch seconded.

The Committee Officer enquired if this Group was to be a decision-making body, and was advised that it would be an informal, non-decision making body.

143/00 **Pre-School Education Funding - Virements**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Education Officer, Policy Development and Quality Assurance (Appendix 5), and on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

144/00 **Proposed Play Area – North Roe Primary School**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Education Officer, Policy Development and Quality Assurance (Appendix 6) and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr W N Stove.

145/00 **Proposed Play Area – Brae High School**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Education Officer, Policy Development and Quality Assurance (Appendix 7), and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr W N Stove.

146/00 **Shetland Arts Trust – Request for Re-Disbursement of 1999/2000 Surplus**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 8), and on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendation contained therein.

147/00 **Shetland Arts Trust – Four Year Plan**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 9), and approved the recommendation contained therein on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson.

Mr J P Nicolson requested that it should be acknowledged that this is subject to the availability of finance.

148/00 **Cinema and Music Venue – Feasibility Studies**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 10). The Projects Co-ordinator also provided Members with a breakdown of costs involved in the Feasibility Study (attached as Appendix 10a) to Members, and gave a brief summary of the costs involved.

The Chairman pointed out that the Corporate Plan stated that the Council should promote developments such as these, but did not state that the Council should provide them.

Members stated that the £70,000 required for the feasibility study was quite high, and in particular referred to the £8,000 relating to establishing need/range in the breakdown of costs, and enquired if this was necessary when studies had already addressed this.

The Projects Co-ordinator replied that he hoped that economies would be made as the study progressed, and that the costs for identifying the establishment of need/range were related to the clear identification of a market that would be served by such a venture, and would provide clear and confident quantifiable evidence of the need.

Members enquired if it was possible if some of the work related to the feasibility study could be carried out in-house and locally. The Head of Community Development Services pointed out that, due to the specialist nature of the project, expertise was not available in-house or locally. He added that if the project was properly packaged it may help attract external funding and resources.

A Member felt that it was important to get such specialist projects right initially. He added that both in-house and local resources were currently at full stretch anyway.

A Member stated that there appeared to be a clear need in the community for such facilities, and it was possible that with skilful marketing the projects could be financially viable.

(Dr C A Goodlad left the meeting).

A Member felt that economies could have been made in the first instance, before the budget for the feasibility study had been announced. Another Member expressed concern at how complicated this project had become, and drew comparisons with sports projects in the past where the economic viability of them had rarely been discussed. Another Member agreed and stated that he felt that commercial provision should be extended.

A Member felt that if the Forums at which the presentations had been made had been better attended, many of the issues being discussed today could have been cleared up.

In reply to a query from a Member regarding if tenders would be sought for the consultancy work, the Projects Co-ordinator replied that the Department were looking for specialists in this field of work with experience and cultural appreciation of Shetland. He added that there were a number of firms shortlisted.

Mr R J Anderson referred to an earlier report regarding lack of accommodation for Shetland Arts Trust (SAT), and moved that the provision of offices in the venue(s) for SAT be included in the feasibility study. This, however, did not receive a seconder.

The Chairman suggested that he and Mr R J Anderson should meet with Officials in order to see if economies could be made in the cost of the feasibility study. Members agreed to this suggestion and it was stated that Mr W N Stove should also be included.

On the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mrs L Hutchison, Members approved the recommendation contained in the report on the proviso that the feasibility study did not exceed £70,000.

149/00 **Whalsay Integrated Learning and Training Centre – Feasibility Study**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 11), and approved the recommendations contained therein, including the accommodation of a playground in paragraph 2.5, on the motion of Mrs L Hutchison, seconded by Mr W H Manson.

150/00 **Request for Museum and Heritage Grant – Underhoull Artefact Assemblage: Further Research**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 12), and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr W N Stove, seconded by Mr F A Robertson.

151/00 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Future Proposals including Support for Water-Based Facilities**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 13).

(Mr J M Ritch left the meeting).

Mr R I Black moved that the Committee approve the first recommendation. This, however, did not receive a seconder.

A Member felt that this recommendation was only a continuation of the situation which had resulted in the report being written in the first place, and, in his view, the second option was the best way forward.

(Mr J M Ritch returned to the meeting).

Another Member stated that he felt that the recommendations were not mutually exclusive, and that a specific water-based budget of £250,000 could be identified, whilst continuing to approve individual grant applications on their merits.

On the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, the Committee agreed to approve the second recommendation in the report and that individual applications for grant assistance for water-based facilities be considered on their individual merits, subject to funding being available.

152/00 **Report on Lottery Bid Submission – Hay's Dock Museum and Archives**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 14), and on the motion of Mr W N Stove, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, approved the recommendations contained therein.

(Mr J C Irvine left the meeting).

153/00 **Disability Shetland Recreation Club – Running Costs**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 15), and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

154/00 **Feasibility Grant for Community Projects – Hayfield Play Area Development**

The Committee considered a report by the Leisure Facilities Officer (Appendix 16), and approved the recommendations contained therein. on the motion of Mr R J Anderson, seconded by Mr A J Cluness.

155/00 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Bodies – Unst Heritage Trust**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 17), and on the motion of Mr J

M Ritch, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, approved the recommendations contained therein.

156/00 **Shetland Housing Charter, New Housing Partnership Community Involvement Agreement**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Manager, Housing Administration and Strategy (Appendix 18).

A Member advised that tenants had confirmed to her that they felt they would have more options if they knew that the Scottish Executive would be taking on the debt, and that something legally binding had been agreed.

Another Member pointed out that there was agreement in principle and this had been announced in Shetland on 16 September by Wendy Alexander, who had been the Minister for Communities at the time.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Housing Services confirmed that all tenant households would be receiving a copy of these documents.

The Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mrs M U Colligan.

157/00 **Rural Partnership for Change – Invitation for Contributions**

The Committee considered a report by the Project Manager, New Housing Partnership (Appendix 19) and approved the recommendations contained therein on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mrs M U Colligan.

A Member felt it would be useful for Members to be provided with information on the Human Rights Act. Members agreed.

The Chairman said that he would raise this with the Head of Legal and Administrative Services with the possibility of a report being brought forward.

158/00 **Minute of Meeting of Advisory Sub-Committee on Inspections**

The Committee noted the record of the aforementioned meeting (Appendix 20).

The Chairman suggested that in future he would like the appendices for this report, and any similar ones, placed to the Member's room for perusal, rather than being included in the agenda papers.

159/00 **Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust – Shetland Befriending Scheme**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 21), and that this report would be going to the SIC Charitable Trust.

160/00 **Education Forum – 31 October 2000**

The Committee noted the record of the aforementioned meeting (Appendix 22).

161/00 **Culture and Recreation Services Forum – 2 November 2000**

The Committee noted the record of the aforementioned meeting (Appendix 23).

162/00 **Children and Young People's Services Forum – 6 November 2000**

The Committee noted the record of the aforementioned meeting (Appendix 24).

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Community Development Services confirmed that the report entitled 'Joining In: The Integration of Children with Special Needs into Mainstream Social and Leisure Activities' would be presented at the next Services Committee meeting.

163/00 **Community Care Forum – 8 November 2000**

The Committee noted the record of the aforementioned meeting (Appendix 25).

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, the Committee resolved, on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mr W N Stove, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of Appendices C and D to agenda item 164/00, and agenda items 165/00-167/00.

164/00 **Acquisition of the 'Pilot Us'**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 26).

On the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, Members approved the recommendations contained therein.

165/00 **Employment of a Member of Staff Over Retirement Age**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Manager, Housing Management Services.

The Committee approved the recommendation contained in the report on the motion of Mr R J Anderson, seconded by Mr C B Eunson.

166/00 **Tendering Exercise – Skerries School**

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The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services.

On the motion of Mr F A Robertson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, the Committee approved a slight change to the recommendations contained in the report.

167/00 **Shetland Recreational Trust – Provision of Workshop/Store**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services.

On the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.