

Services Committee  
20 June 2001 Public Minutes

**Services Committee**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**  
**Wednesday 21 March 2001 at 10.30 a.m.**

**Present:**

R J Anderson	Dr C M Begg
A J Cluness	M U Colligan
C B Eunson	F B Grains
I J Hawkins	J C Irvine
J P Nicolson	J M Ritch
F A Robertson	T W Stove

**Apologies:**

L Angus	R I Black
L Hutchison	P Malcolmson
W H Manson	Capt G G Mitchell
W A Ratter	W N Stove
W Tait	

**In Attendance (Officers):**

J Watt, Executive Director, Community Services  
C Medley, Head of Housing Services  
M Miller, Head of Social Care Services  
M Payton, Head of Education Services  
G Smith, Head of Community Development Services  
S Hughes, Financial Support Services Manager  
F Robertson, Divisional Manager, Management Services  
B C Hill, Acting Divisional Manager, Legal Services  
A Jamieson, Acting Divisional Manager/Project Manager  
N Watt, Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services  
J Porter, Area Community Worker  
M Duncan, Grants Officer  
R Lovell, Leisure Facilities Officer  
A Cogle, Senior Committee Officer  
D Haswell, Committee Officer

**Also**

J Johnson, General Manager, Shetland Recreational Trust

**Chairman:**

Mr J M Ritch, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, presided.

**Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

**Minutes:**

The minute of the meeting held on 2 May 2001, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Min. Ref. 80/01- Capital Programme – South Nesting Primary School

Mr J C Irvine referred to the above item and said that the report he had requested had not come forward to the next meeting of the Committee. He said that he would be raising this issue under the first item on this agenda.

**Members' Attendance at External Meetings – Update**

There was nothing to report on this item.

88/01      **Best Value Service Review: Education Service**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Corporate Policy (Appendix 1).

The Chairman said he would like to thank all the staff involved in producing this final audit. He said that a copy of the full audit was in the Members' Room and that he would encourage all Members to take a copy with them so that they could have that as a base line for future discussions on this issue.

The Executive Director, Community Services introduced and summarised the main points of the report.

During the discussion which followed, Members generally welcomed the report and were in agreement that early seminars should be held for Members so as to decide on the way forward. It was also agreed that it was very important that there was as wide a public consultation as possible, with stakeholders, community councils and school boards.

Some Members expressed concern about the reference in paragraph 4.9 to centralisation, particularly in relation to schools in the remote islands and also generally how the closing down of small schools in rural areas could affect the whole social and economic structure of an area.

A Member referred to paragraph 2.7 (third bullet point) and was concerned that the extension to the South Nesting Primary School might now be delayed further. He said that the project had been initially held up due to road improvements being required. He added that he was concerned about the delay of the building of this school and was disappointed that no report had been prepared for today's meeting on this project, as had been approved at the last meeting of the Services Committee.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.9 and was of the view that Special Needs, Pre-School and Further Education should be included in this list. The Executive Director said that they were concentrating on main stream education at the moment. The Chairman added that these areas would be taken on board at a later date. The point was also made by a Member that a decision

on the future of the Anderson High School was a crucial factor in this debate.

A Member queried the figures in paragraph 4.4 in relation to the costs of educating pupils in Shetland. The Section Leader, Corporate Policy, said that these were the published figures but more detailed work would require to be done to check if these figures were for "like to like".

In reply to a question from a Member regarding how much consultation would take place, the Executive Director, Community Services said that there would be extensive consultation with stakeholders, School Boards, etc in the Autumn, after there was a clear proposal from the Council on the way forward. She added that they were committed to as many different ways of consultation as possible, which would include public meetings.

After more discussion, the Committee approved the recommendations in the report, on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr M U Colligan, with an addition that Seminars be set up for Members to discuss the proposals at the earliest possible date.

89/01      **Proposed Nursery Provision for 2001-2002 – Bell's Brae Primary School**

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

After the Chairman had explained the background to this report, he moved the following:-

"The current staffing quota of 2 nursery teachers and 2 nursery nurses at Bell's Brae for the session 2001/2002 be retained and that the education service carries out a full audit on supply and demand for pre-school provision and childcare in Lerwick during that session".

Mr L Angus seconded.

During the brief discussion which followed Officers clarified points raised by Members on the report.

There was no amendment and Mr P Malcolmson's motion was declared the finding of the meeting.

90/01      **Tender Exercise – Whalsay Sports Development Trust – Proposed Sportsfield, Symbister, Whalsay**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 3).

Mrs L Hutchison said that she would like, through the Chairman, to thank all the Council staff who had worked on this project. She went on to say that, in her view, a synthetic pitch would be much more suitable for the island allowing all sports to be played all the year round, would have low maintenance costs, and also would be a good facility for visiting sports groups to use, etc. She added that the children in Whalsay had never had a proper sports field. She accordingly moved recommendation 7.2 in the report. Mr P Malcolmson seconded.

During the discussion which followed Members were generally supportive of a synthetic pitch being built. Some concern was expressed, however, that the existing synthetic pitch in Brae may not be maintained if new ones were built elsewhere. The Chairman noted these concerns.

A Member asked if the costs quoted here included maintenance costs. The Section Leader, Sports and Recreation Services said that he understood that these figures were only the capital costs of the project. He added that in terms of maintenance the costs for synthetic pitches were much less but that there would be additional costs in relation to the flood lighting.

A Member made the point that over some time there would be specialist maintenance required for these synthetic pitches and suggested that provision should be made in the Council and Charitable Trust estimates over the longer term.

There was no amendment and Mrs Hutchison's motion was declared the finding of the meeting.

91/01 **Housing Services – Review of Housing Functions Remaining with the Council, in the event of a Stock Transfer**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Service (Appendix 4).

(Mr A J Cluness, Mrs I J Hawkins and Capt G G Mitchell declared non-pecuniary interests as Chairman (Mr Cluness) and Members of the new Shadow Board and said they would be taking no part in the discussion)

Mr A J Cluness also intimated that he would be standing down as Spokesperson of the Housing Forum.

After a brief discussion, the Committee, on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr J C Irvine, approved the recommendations contained in the report.

92/01 **Towards a Shetland Youth Strategy**

The Committee considered a report by the Youth Development Officer (Appendix 5), and on the motion of Mr J M Ritch, seconded by Mr W N Stove, approved the recommendations contained in the report.

93/01      **Standards and Quality Report**

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

After a brief discussion, the Committee approved the recommendations in the report, on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr J C Irvine.

94/01      **Shetland Sports Association – Junior Inter-County 2001**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer (Appendix 7) and, on the motion of Mr W Tait, seconded by Mr W N Stove, approved the recommendations contained therein.

95/01      **Grants to Play Areas – Stage 2 – Design Grant – Brae Community Association**

The Committee considered a report by the Leisure Facilities Officer (Appendix 8) and on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr F A Robertson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

96/01      **Capital Grants to Voluntary Bodies – Feasibility Grant for Community Projects – Old Haa Trust – Re-Roofing and Refurbishment of Old Haa, Yell**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer (Appendix 9) and, on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr L Angus, approved the recommendations contained therein.

97/01      **Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Shetland Storytelling Festival**

The Committee considered a report by Acting Section Leader, Community Education (Appendix 10), and on the motion of Mr J C Irvine, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendations contained therein.

The Head of Community Development Services referred to paragraph 3.4 of the report and said that the lottery funding of £5,000 was now secure.

98/01      **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Proposal for Financial Assistance to New Marinas**

The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 11).

A Member asked if any conditions would be put on this grant as there were sometimes problems with the management of these marinas. The Head of Community Development Services said that

standard conditions would apply but if there was specific disquiet, these matters, if they arose, would be looked into.

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report, on the motion of Mr W N Stove, seconded by Mr F A Robertson.

- 99/01      **Tendering Exercise – North Mainland Pool Extension**  
The Committee considered a report by the Section Leader, Sport and Recreation Services (Appendix 12), and on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr W H Manson, approved recommendation 7.1 (a) of the report.
- 100/01     **Shetland Accordion and Fiddle Festival 2001**  
The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer (Appendix 13), and on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Capt G G Mitchell, approved the recommendations contained therein.
- 101/01     **General Fund Project Selection Study – To Extend Library Provision in Scalloway**  
The Committee considered a report by the Acting Chief Librarian (Appendix 14).  
  
Mrs I J Hawkins moved recommendations 9.1 and 9.3 of the report. Mr W A Ratter seconded.  
  
During the brief discussion which followed the Executive Director, Community Services advised that phase 2 of the Best Value Review would be looking at library provision Shetland wide. She said that what was decided here today would pre-empt that debate.  
  
There was no amendment and the motion was declared the finding of the meeting.
- 102/01     **Church of Scotland Board of Social Responsibility (Walter & Joan Gray Eventide Home) Sale of Property at Spindrift, Houl Road, Scalloway**  
The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Service (Appendix 15), and on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, approved the recommendations contained therein.
- 103/01     **Service Planning and Restructuring – Community Services Department: Progress Report**  
The Committee noted a report by the Executive Director, Community Services (Appendix 16).
- 104/01     **McCrone Agreement**  
The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Service (Appendix 17).

105/01     **Quality Management in Education**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Service (Appendix 18).

In response to a question from a Member who raised the issue of health and safety, the Executive Director, Community Services said that it would be up to the Education Service how they used this model of change but health and safety would be included in all aspects of it.

(Mrs F B Grains attended the meeting)

106/01     **Hamnavoe Primary School – Report by HM Inspectors of Schools**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Service (Appendix 19).

107/01     **Rebuild a Traditional Norwegian Hjeltabaatar or Fourern and Introduction to the Norboat Project**

The Committee noted a report by the Museum Curator (Appendix 20).

108/01     **Note of Children & Young People's Services Forum – 18 May 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 21).

The Chairman proposed that the following item on the agenda which was marked "exempt" should be taken in public. The Committee agreed.

109/01     **Future Use of the Former Leasks/Market Green/Hydro Premises**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Central Services (Appendix 22).

After some discussion the Committee, on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mrs L Hutchison, approved the recommendations in the report which included the selection of either option 1 (8.2.1) or option 2 (8.2.2).

A Member expressed concern that the car park at the Market Green was being used as a builder's yard without authority.

**In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, the Committee resolved, on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following items.**

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

110/01     **Retreat and Spiritual Centre – Request to Charge a Reduced Rental**

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Manager, Housing Management and after a brief discussion, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report, on the motion of Mrs M U Colligan, seconded by Mr R J Anderson.

111/01     **Joint Partnership Working: Transfer of Land to Hjaltdland Housing Association**

(Capt G G Mitchell and Mrs I J Hawkins declared non-pecuniary interests in this item as Vice-Chairman (Capt G G Mitchell) and Member of Hjaltdland Housing Association).

The Committee considered a report by the Divisional Manager, Housing Management Services, and on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendations contained therein.

112/01     **Vacancy on Adoption and Fostering Panel**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Legal and Administrative Services , and on the motion of Dr C M Begg, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendations contained therein.