

Services Committee
24 October 2001 Public Minutes

Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday 24 October 2001 at 10.30 am

Present:

P Malcolmson	R J Anderson
Dr C M Begg	M U Colligan
C B Eunson	I J Hawkins
L Hutchison	J C Irvine
W H Manson	Capt G G Mitchell
W A Ratter	J M Ritch
F A Robertson	

Apologies:

L Angus	R I Black
A J Cluness	F B Grains
J P Nicolson	T W Stove
W N Stove	

In Attendance (Officers):

G Smith, Head of Community Development Services
N Watt, Sport and Recreation Services Manager
M Duncan, Grants Officer
M Payton, Head of Education Services
F Robertson, Senior Service Manager, Housing Operations
M Miller, Head of Social Care Services
S Hughes, Financial Support Services Manager
S Brunton, Solicitor
D Garden, Acting Chief Librarian
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Also:

A Carter, Manager, Shetland Careers Service
A Watt, Shetland Arts Trust
K Hubbard, Shetland Arts Trust

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 5 September 2001, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Attendance at External Meetings:

The Chairman advised that himself, the Executive Director - Corporate Services, the Head of Housing Services and Tavish Scott, MSP had attended a meeting regarding community ownership of housing on 3 October with

Margaret Curran, Deputy Social Justice Minister. At that meeting a commitment in writing had been received regarding servicing of the housing debt. He read from the letter in which a categorical assurance was made that resources would be made available to service the residual housing debt after a stock transfer. He added that there were no details of how and when the debt would be serviced but that they had pressed for details of this. Margaret Curran, had answered a question put to her by Tavish Scott, MSP and had said that she was aware of the situation and was confident that these matters would be brought to an early resolution. The Chairman said that this was a major step forward, and added that the Council had passed all the information asked for to the Scottish Executive after the meeting and were hopeful of an early reply.

A Member congratulated officials and staff for the work carried out, and questioned from when the housing debt arose, and where monies would be circulated.

The Financial Support Services Manager said that this was a complex question and that he would have to be briefed before supplying a specific answer, but that information along these lines had been supplied to the Member beforehand.

The Chairman added that further information regarding the housing debt could be circulated to the Member.

A Member commented that tenants now had a good opportunity to vote for a transfer but, if they opted to remain within the SIC, they may face high rents. He added that a stock transfer would also be of benefit to the wider community and that it was important for everyone to understand that.

In response to a query, the Chairman confirmed that the finer details regarding servicing of the debt would have to be in place before the tenants' vote.

Before the meeting commenced, Mrs L Hutchison said that she had been led to believe that, due to a lot of hard work that had been going on for some months, a report on the Whalsay Midden Court Complex would be presented to the Services Committee today. However she had been advised that it had been withdrawn from the agenda and she asked for an explanation, as she understood the report had been ready to be presented and that there were no financial or technical difficulties with it. She expressed concern that she had not been consulted regarding this, and asked if it could be presented at the full Council meeting.

The Chairman advised that the Convenor should be contacted to discuss whether it would be appropriate to present it at the Council meeting.

128/01 **Shetland Careers Service**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 1).

A Member said that he felt that, whilst the new structure would help deal with Central Belt problems, it was over-bureaucratic and complex in the local context. The Chairman concurred and said that he felt that it was providing a solution to a problem that did not exist in Shetland.

Mr A Carter, Manager, advised that many of the developments being pursued by Careers Scotland were already in place in Shetland, especially adult guidance, partnership working and involvement in the Community Learning Strategy. He added that Shetland had gained extra resources, and that a Key Worker for the Inclusiveness Project had recently been appointed, so there were some positive things happening.

Mr Carter also responded to queries from Members regarding line management of the locality manager for Shetland, and the role of the Local Advisory Boards.

A Member commented that the progress of "Careers Scotland" could be monitored through the Local Advisory Board. The Head of Education Services added that Mr Carter was also invited to the Education Forum on an annual basis, and that this arrangement would continue.

129/01 **Shetland Alcohol Trust – Proposals for Expenditure of Surplus – 2000/2001**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 2).

Mr R J Anderson declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Shetland Alcohol Trust.

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

130/01 **Direct Payments Scheme**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 3) and on the motion of Mr J C Irvine, seconded by Mr C B Eunson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

131/01 **Draft Criminal Justice Strategic Plan 2002-2005**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 4) and approved the recommendation contained therein on the motion of Dr C M Begg, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell.

The Head of Social Care Services confirmed that the draft had been sent to the Scottish Executive, but it had been made clear that this would be subject to approval by Committee.

A Member referred to page 22 of the Appendix, regarding Community Service, and questioned the criteria relating to unpaid work to the benefit of the community. She said that her community had requested help to clear up beaches along with members of the community but she had been told that this was not under the remit of the Scheme, or that offenders only undertook this type of work for very short periods. She said that, if it were possible that offenders could assist in beach clearing, she would like to see this happen as part of Community Service.

The Head of Social Care Service said that she would find out the correct criteria.

132/01 **Support for Child Day Care Providers**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 5) and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mrs M U Colligan, approved the recommendation contained therein.

133/01 **Shetland Community Drugs Team – Proposals for Retention of Surplus – 2000/2001**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 6) and on the motion of Dr C M Begg, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, approved the recommendation contained therein.

134/01 **Care Home Fees**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 7).

The Head of Social Care Services outlined the main terms of the report, and the background relating to the additional funding made available by the Scottish Executive.

Captain G G Mitchell said he was aware of a number of people awaiting care packages, and it was important to take advantage of any opportunity to increase the number of these packages. He therefore moved that the Committee approve recommendations 7.1 and 7.2.1 in the report. Mrs I J Hawkins seconded.

(Mr W A Ratter left the meeting)

135/01 **Funding of Community Care Services**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 8).

The Head of Social Care Services summarised the main terms of her report, and said that there was an increasing demand for community care services, but this had to be set in the context of the current financial situation. The report offered some possible solutions which took into account the Regulation of Care Act and free personal care. She referred to the incapacity of the Council to meet the demands, in terms of finance and infrastructure, and said that the report attempted to highlight all the issues in order for the Committee and the Council to take this forward, but that the current rate of growth of the service could not be contained within the present budget.

(Mr W A Ratter returned to the meeting)

A Member stated that he did not agree with charging for home care services, and said that it was a case of the Council getting its priorities right. A Member concurred and said that it was important to look after the elderly and disabled in the community.

Mr C B Eunson moved that the status quo be maintained. However this did not receive a seconder.

A Member referred to the special Council meeting scheduled to take place next week and said that it would be necessary to examine the situation closely. Some Members were of the opinion that a decision should be deferred until the Special Council meeting had taken place.

Captain G G Mitchell said that this report impinged on vulnerable members of the community, and that more debate on the subject was required. He felt that the appropriate place for this discussion to take place was at the Community Care Forum and accordingly moved that recommendations 9.1.1 and 9.1.3 be approved, and that the various options referred to in 9.1.2 should be referred to the Community Care Forum for consultation, with recommendations coming back to the Committee. If necessary, a special meeting of the Community Care Forum should be arranged. Mr P Malcolmson seconded.

Mr J C Irvine moved, as an amendment, that 9.1.1 and 9.1.3 be approved, but that 9.1.2 should be deferred for a cycle until the outcome of the forthcoming special Council meeting. At that point the report that comes back for presentation should contain recommendations on how to overcome difficulties by, if necessary, reduction in services and introduction of charges, and also identify funding to keep the service going as it is at the moment. Mr C B Eunson seconded.

After some further discussion Captain G G Mitchell, with the consent of his seconder, agreed to withdraw his motion on

condition that Mr J C Irvine agreed to incorporate in his amendment that the report that comes back for presentation is presented to the Community Care Forum before Services Committee.

With the consent of his seconder, Mr J C Irvine agreed to incorporate this.

A Member pointed out that by the time this had gone through the process of going to the Forum and Committee again, it would almost be time for setting the budget for next year. He was of the opinion that, if the additional budget required referred to in 3.5.1 could be found, the Committee should resolve to maintain the status quo for this financial year, and make decisions as normal for next years budgets when the time comes. He suggested that Finance Services should be tasked to explore where additional budgets should come from.

The Head of Social Care Services confirmed that, to continue delivering the service, more money would be required and that this could not be fund within the existing budgets. She clarified that she could present a report with suggestions that were within her remit, but that the additional budget requirement referred to within the report was not within her remit.

136/01

Cinema and Music Venue – Proposed Way Forward

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 9).

The Head of Community Development Services summarised the main terms of his report.

A Member referred to the current financial climate, and said that he felt that this project was entitled to its place in the queue along with other projects.

Members spoke in support of the project and said that it was something that the community wanted and needed.

Other Members spoke of the need to prioritise and highlighted other specific projects and services which also required funding and a 'place in the queue'. A Member commented that the question of external funding would be the most important aspect when the Council was considering this project further.

Mr W A Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report. Dr C M Begg seconded but added that she was concerned about the strength of the wording in the recommendations and felt that something stronger than 'noting' the Feasibility Study was required, particularly as the Culture and Recreation Forum had endorsed the recommendations

in the Feasibility Study. She added that it would also be important, when seeking external funding, to make clear that the Council were accepting the recommendations.

A Member commented that Shetland College was hoping to utilise learning aspects of the project and needed a decision within the years timescale suggested in order to seek external funding for this. He proposed that the timescale in 6.2 should be reduced and suggested that the recommendations be altered accordingly.

Some discussion took place regarding the membership of the Steering Group. Members suggested that it should be an Officer and Member Steering Group and that delegated authority should be given to Community Services, if necessary, to make adjustments to the Group.

The Head of Community Development Services said that it may have been more appropriate to call it a 'Stakeholder Group', as it was intended to include representatives from several Council departments as well as some of the Trusts. He added that it was intended to be a 'short life' group.

With the consent of his seconder, Mr W A Ratter agreed to incorporate these suggestions and amended his motion, to read as follows:

6.1 - that the recommendations contained in the Feasibility Study produced by Ron Inglis and outlined at paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 are endorsed;

6.2 - that delegated authority should be given to Community Services to set up and lead a Steering Group to include Members and Officers, particularly those involved in education, to explore the likely extent of external funding for this project and report back to the Committee within the financial year;

6.3 - a budget of £15,000 be made available to Community Development Services from GCT 4700 to meet the costs associated with identifying potential external funding.

137/01 **Capital Grants for Voluntary Bodies – Stage 2 Design Grant –
Sandwick Social and Economic Development Company**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development Services (Appendix 10).

A Member commented that this provided an interesting opportunity for genuine partnership between different organisations such as the RSPB, and questioned whether this had been considered.

The Head of Community Development Services said that discussions had taken place with a number of organisations and that there was involvement with other groups, so there were considerable opportunities for partnership working. In response to a query, he confirmed that approval of the recommendations did not commit the Council to fund further stages of the project.

A Member questioned why a request concerning economic development was being presented to Services Committee rather than the Development Committee, as he felt it would come under that Committee's remit.

The Grants Officer confirmed that the Development Department had been involved at the Feasibility Stage and had indicated that they would consider being involved in the funding package at the construction phase. The Head of Community Development Services added that it was a community-based organisation looking at a project with both social and economic development potential, and that discussions had taken place with Development as to where respective responsibilities lay. He suspected that there may be a joint report in future.

A Member enquired if the RSPB had been approached regarding funding of the Sandsayre Pier. The Head of Community Development Services advised that he did not have this information to hand but could enquire further.

(Mr R J Anderson left the meeting)

On the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr W H Manson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

138/01 **Pilot Project to Support Adult Literacy in Learning Centres**

The Committee considered a report by the Community Education Worker (Lerwick & Bressay) (Appendix 11).

The Head of Community Development Services summarised the background to, and the main terms of, this report.

(Mr R J Anderson returned to the meeting)

The Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr F A Robertson.

139/01 **Whalsay Golf Club**

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 12), and on the motion of Mrs L

Hutchison, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

140/01 **Shetland Library – Progress Report on Conversion of Former St Ringan’s Church and Hall to New Library**

The Committee noted a report by the Acting Chief Librarian (Appendix 13).

The Acting Chief Librarian summarised the main terms of his report. In response to queries he confirmed that specialist contractors were currently awaiting a supply of materials in order to finish the water repellent work, and he gave details of the art works that had been commissioned. He also extended an invitation to Members to visit the new buildings on or around 27 and 29 November.

The Chairman thanked the Acting Chief Librarian for this invitation.

141/01 **World Pool Championships 2002**

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 14).

The Sport and Leisure Services Manager summarised the main terms of his report and provided background information to Members. In response to a query, he confirmed that the event would be taking place in the Clickimin Leisure Complex, but that bar facilities were a separate area within the Complex. He also confirmed that commercial sponsorship was still at the negotiating stage, and that Council support would help secure this. He concluded by saying that the Pool Association were hopeful that they would not require the full grant requested, but needed a decision in order to confirm that the event would go ahead and appropriate arrangements could be made.

A Member enquired about television coverage. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager said that the BBC were interested in making a documentary about the event, and that satellite channels were also intending to do live coverage of the event.

Dr C M Begg moved the recommendations contained in the report with the addition that the Council would not support any external funding from cigarette manufacturers. Mr R J Anderson seconded.

142/01 **Proposed School Term Dates 2001/2002 and 2002/2003**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 15), and on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mrs L Hutchison, approved the recommendation contained therein.

Mrs M U Colligan, Spokesperson for Education Services, added that term dates, in the longer term, would be considered at the Education Forum.

143/01 **Budget 2001 – Additional Financial Resources for Schools**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 16).

On the motion of Mrs L Hutchison, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, the Committee approved the recommendation contained therein.

144/01 **Supporting People**

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Service Manager, Housing Operational Services (Appendix 17).

The Senior Service Manager provided Members with background information to the report. In response to a query she confirmed that, in the event of a stock transfer, the Council would be the statutory body to which money would be paid, and that they would be responsible for a service level agreement with the agency involved to provide support services. She added that it was vital to find out what services would be covered by "Supporting People" in order that Shetland did not lose any funds, and that the Scottish Executive would be visiting in November to assist with this.

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

(Mr J C Irvine left the meeting)

145/01 **Nomination of Member to Local Advisory Board – Careers Scotland**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Legal and Administrative Services (Appendix 18), and on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mr W A Ratter, nominated Mr W N Stove, in his absence, to the Local Advisory Board.

The Committee agreed that if Mr Stove declined the nomination, it should be referred back to the Committee to nominate another Member.

146/01 **Minute of Inspections Advisory Sub-Committee held on 25 September 2001**

The Committee considered the minute of the above meeting (Appendix 19), and on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr P Malcolmson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

(Mr J M Ritch left the meeting)

The Head of Social Care Services advised that there was a short timescale between now and 1 April when the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care took over the responsibility regulation of care services. She said that there were still a lot of uncertainties, and a lot of work to be done before that date. Concerns had been expressed about the number of visits each establishment would receive, and it was anticipated that there would be one less visit per annum. She added that this also meant that there would no longer be a need for the Inspections Advisory Sub-Committee, and that the final meeting of this Committee would take place in March. Local input was likely to continue at a macro level, but she was unsure about how Shetland would be able to impact.

A Member suggested using the Community Care Forum as a means of monitoring the new system.

(Captain G G Mitchell left the meeting)

147/01 **Note of Culture and Recreation Forum – 20 September 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 20).

148/01 **Note of Children and Young People's Forum – 21 September 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 21).

149/01 **Note of Community Care Forum – 26 September 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 22).

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, the Committee resolved, on the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mr W A Ratter, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following item.

(Representatives of the media left the meeting)

(Captain G G Mitchell returned to the meeting)

150/01 **Restructuring in Community Services Department**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Community Services.

On the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report,

151/01 **Property at Twageos**

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Service Manager, Housing Operational Services.

Captain G G Mitchell and Mrs I J Hawkins declared non-pecuniary interests as Vice-Chairman and member of Hjaltsland Housing Association respectively.

An additional page, omitted from Appendix A, was tabled at the meeting.

On the motion of Dr C M Begg, seconded by Mrs L Hutchison, the Committee approved recommendations 8.1, 8.4 and 8.6 contained in the report.

(Mr W A Ratter left the meeting)

152/01

Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 – Homelessness Strategies

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Service Manager, Housing Operational Services.

On the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr P Malcolmson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.