

Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Wednesday 5 December 2001 at 10.30 am

Present:

P Malcolmson	R J Anderson
L Angus	R I Black
M U Colligan	C B Eunson
F B Grains	I J Hawkins
J C Irvine	W H Manson
Capt G G Mitchell	W A Ratter
J M Ritch	T W Stove
W N Stove	

Apologies:

Dr C M Begg	A J Cluness
L Hutchison	J P Nicolson
F A Robertson	W Tait

In Attendance (Officers):

J Watt, Executive Director – Community Services
G Smith, Head of Community Development Services
N Watt, Sport and Recreation Services Manager
M Duncan, Grants Officer
T Watt, Museum Curator
M Payton, Head of Education Services
H Budge, Divisional Education Officer
M Miller, Head of Social Care Services
H Sutherland, Policy and Development Co-ordinator
L Bisset, Projects Co-ordinator
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Also:

A Watt, Shetland Arts Trust
J Bulter, Islesburgh Trust
S Inkster, Islesburgh 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 24 October 2001, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Attendance at External Meetings:

There was nothing to report.

153/01 **Proposed Museum and Archives – Additional Revenue Expenditure**

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

The Chairman summarised the background to the report, advising that securing the additional funding requested would help strengthen the bid for Heritage Lottery funding.

The Head of Community Development Services added that, in order for Shetland Amenity Trust to secure this funding, the Council was being asked to commit the additional revenue funding requirement in its long term financial planning grant support in 2005/06 and successive years.

In referring to the appendices, a Member pointed out that there appeared to be a number of things that were not being done properly. She questioned if the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) had taken account of the size and location of Shetland, and questioned if they were driving the Council to spend more and more money.

The Head of Community Development Services explained that the HLF had experts who looked at bids to see how they could be improved to meet the criteria. He was of the opinion that the things they required were reasonable, and would lead to a better service at the end of the day. He went on to say that the submission would be presented in December, and would be taken forward in January. However he could not confirm when a decision would be taken by the HLF.

A Member pointed out that the Charitable Trust has already budgeted for the draw down of funds referred to in 6.2.

In response to a query from a Member, the Projects Co-ordinator confirmed that the relevant elements in the figures quoted included VAT, although some elements were VAT exclusive.

On the motion of Mr W N Stove, seconded by Mr L Angus, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

154/01 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Ness Boating Club – Provision of Boat Shed and Store**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer, Community Development Services (Appendix 2), and on the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr T W Stove, approved the recommendations contained therein.

155/01 **Shetland Museums Service – Collections Management Policy 2002-2005**

The Committee considered a report by the Museum Curator, Community Development Services (Appendix 3).

A Member referred to page 16 of the Appendix, and enquired if there was any chance that Shetlandic material held by other institutions, such as the St Ninian's Isle treasure, could come back to Shetland.

The Museum Curator said that this would not happen unless there was a change in the law. However it was possible that items such as this may come back on loan at some point in the future.

Some Members commented that they had been approached by a member of the public regarding the possibility of the Council purchasing a fishing boat for the museum's collection.

The Chairman pointed out that he had approached the Head of Community Development Services regarding this, and the matter would be resolved.

In response to a query regarding the situation when the transfer to the Amenity Trust took place, the Museum Curator confirmed that the policy would remain and that, whilst artefacts would be cared for by the Amenity Trust, they would remain the property of the Council.

Another Member enquired if the rural museums would get the opportunity to display any of the collections that were relevant to their district.

The Museum Curator confirmed that there was quite close co-operation with the rural museums and that there was an open policy regarding the loan of items to any local museum with registered status. In response to a query, he advised that most local museums had registered status and others were working towards it.

Mrs F B Grains moved, and Mr L Angus seconded, and the Committee approved the recommendation contained in the report.

156/01 **Shetland Arts Trust – Four Year Plan**

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

A Member questioned why the Arts Trust produced a four-year plan when other charitable organisations could not currently get a three-year plan. Another Member added that there was a lot of confusion in the voluntary sector regarding the status of plans and funding. He was under the impression that, following a Council decision, the voluntary sector would move towards three-year

funding from the Charitable Trust, but that this would not be happening in this financial year.

The Chairman confirmed that the plan was not a funding commitment.

The Executive Director confirmed that there was a group looking at this issue at the moment, and there would be a report presented in the next cycle which was likely to propose that these voluntary groups would have three-year plans.

Mr A Watt, Shetland Arts Trust, confirmed that the four-year plan for the Arts Trust tied into the requirement of the Scottish Arts Council, and he stressed that it was a statement of intent and an aspirational plan, and that there was no commitment on funding bodies.

The Committee approved the recommendation contained in the report on the motion of Mr J C Irvine, seconded by Mrs F B Grains.

157/01 **Projects Pending as a Result of Financial Situation**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Community Services (Appendix 5).

The Chairman advised that this had been raised previously by a Member who had been concerned that some of the projects she had been involved with did not have any status. He was fairly confident that these projects would be able to be taken forward at some point in the future.

A Member referred to the "Conversion of Leask's Garage for Voluntary Organisations" in Table 1, and pointed out that the Shetland Council of Social Services had accepted funding, on behalf of the local authority, to employ a project worker for this project. He added that this was an opportunity to achieve a lot of synergy but that there was no point in undertaking this project if there was no Council commitment.

Another Member concurred and highlighted the work that had already gone into this project by a number of people and groups, including MSPs, and that there was strong funding support from the Scottish Executive and the Lottery. He continued that the voluntary sector desperately needed confidence at this stage, and he referred to the amount of money that was being spent on rents and the dreadful accommodation that some of these groups worked out of. He concluded by saying that he felt it was a "best value" option to move these organisations into these new premises.

The Chairman said that the aim of the report was to point out where the Council were regarding a number of projects, and said that his understanding of “uncommitted” was that it was budgeted for but not yet contractually committed.

On the motion of Mr P Malcolmson, seconded by Mr L Angus, the Committee approved that recommendation 7.1 be amended to read “the Services Committee recommends to the Council to recommend to Trustees of Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust *that no change* should be made to the status of any of the projects contained in this report”, and that recommendation 7.2 be approved.

The Chairman went on to say that he felt there was a need to look at some form of capital programme for the Charitable Trust in order to get things into context.

Mr R I Black pointed out that a review of Charitable Trust funding was currently ongoing.

A Member commented that, whilst he understood the amendment that had been made to the recommendation, he did not feel that it would make any difference. He felt that it was important that the Council looked at its priorities, and that projects should not be “heaved” upon the Charitable Trust, particularly as there had been a significant reduction in Charitable Trust funds lately.

A Member pointed out that the Council had expressed a wish for the Cinema and Music Venue project to go ahead, and that meetings would be taking place this week regarding securing external funding for this project. However it was difficult to secure this if the project was not included in the capital programme. He added that a number of projects in the same situation were not new projects, but had been ongoing for a number of years, and the problem seemed to be the desire for these projects to happen in the next five years. He was of the opinion that the Council should agree that these projects would go ahead, subject to funding, but try to fit them into a timetable, even if it meant that it would not be in the near future. This would assist in securing external funding.

The Chairman pointed out that the Cinema and Music Venue project was to be reviewed when the position regarding external funding was clearer.

A Member commented on the need to prioritise, and said that he would be raising a number of points relating to smaller Charitable Trust funded projects during consideration of agenda item 8.

The Committee considered a report by the Heads of Social Care and Education Services (Appendix 6) and on the motion of Mrs M U Colligan, seconded by Mr R I Black, approved the recommendation contained therein.

159/01 **Conversion of Social Worker Post to Trainee Social Worker Post**

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

A Member commented that he was sorry that the trainee post had been removed from the structure, and felt that part of the Corporate Plan not addressed seriously was the “growth” of the Council’s own staff. He referred to the comprehensive training programme in place at Marine Operations, and said that he felt that it was time that the Council started thinking about strategically planning for training.

In response to a query, the Head of Social Care Services confirmed that this was not an additional post, but that the original post had been created as part of the restructuring exercise. This report recommended converting one of the current social worker post vacancies into a trainee post. It was also recommending that authority be delegated to the Head of Service to convert a further post into a trainee post, if this became necessary and was in the best interests of the Service.

The Executive Director pointed out that the response to the trainee social worker vacancy in the past had been huge.

In response to a query, the Head of Social Care Services confirmed that Social Care Services received a specific grant from the Scottish Executive, with which there were expectations of a comprehensive staff training plan. This was targeted at supporting residential care staff in achieving their Diploma in Social Work, and the full grant was divided up into a number of elements. The Executive Director said that Community Services were looking at a staff development plan, specifically in relation to social workers and teachers, and she was hoping to come forward with a draft plan in the spring, although a budget for it would be required.

On the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr P Malcolmson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

160/01 **Funding of Community Care Services**

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

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On the motion of Mrs I J Hawkins, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

Mr L Angus suggested that recommendation 7.1.2 be amended to read “note that the Executive Management Team will take cognisance of these virements *in a corporate fashion* (and the linked underspending areas where the resources have been found) in preparing its budget proposals for 02/02”.

With the consent of her seconder, Mrs I J Hawkins agreed to incorporate this into her motion.

A Member said that he wished to raise the issue regarding people who required adaptations to their homes to enable them to lead a decent life in their own homes. However it was currently not possible for these works to be carried out as the budget had been exhausted. He expressed the view that the Charitable Trust should be “opened up” to allow this sort of funding.

The Chairman highlighted the financial commitment that had been made for the rest of the financial year, and said that comments would be noted but should come up for debate at the Charitable Trust.

A Member pointed out that there were a number of these Charitable Trust schemes ready to go ahead, but that they were not being put out to tender because of the budget being exhausted. He felt that these schemes were a form of social support and enabled people to remain in their own homes, rather than going into care, which was more expensive. He requested that a brief report be brought to the Charitable Trust meeting to indicate funding that would be required to keep the Independence at Home Scheme going until the end of the financial year. He added that this should not wait until April, as persons requiring adaptations may end up having to go into care.

The Head of Social Care Services clarified that the Trust had been asked to consider a number of options at its last meeting. A decision had been taken to manage within existing budgets until the criteria was re-examined, with a further report to be brought back to the Trust.

A Member commented that this would effectively mean that no work would take place this financial year.

Mr R I Black pointed out, if cases could not wait, there was a possibility to bring forward specific cases that can be approved, so it would not be necessary to wait for the next meeting of the Trust for one or two specific case requirements.

A Member commented that it was important to start looking at this more globally, but that there should be some assurances that these cases would be dealt with or go through the Trust. He added that he found the situation difficult as constituents referred to money being spent on other projects, whilst pointing out that no assurance could be received regarding these projects for the disabled.

The Head of Social Care Services said that she could come forward with individual requirements, but that it had been a Trust decision to stay within existing budgets. This was consistent with the advice that had been received from the Chief Financial Adviser. Until this was ratified by a formal report, it would apply to all budgets under pressure.

(Mr J M Ritch left the meeting)

Mr R I Black said that the amount of money required to solve these problems was probably relatively small, so problems relating to the Independence at Home Scheme budget for this financial year could be resolved by bringing forward cases of specific need for consideration by the Trust.

(Mr J M Ritch returned to the meeting)

A Member referred to the backlog that had built up with the Independence at Home Scheme some years ago, when extra money had been released to resolve the problem. He reiterated his request for a brief report indicating how much money was required to carry on with the Scheme this year.

The Head of Social Care Services said that this was an option, but there was a further option that she could bring individual cases to the Trust Chairman, outwith the Scheme, and then bring a report to the following Trust meeting. This would be outwith the formal process.

The Committee agreed.

161/01

Developing Services for Older People – Local Outcome Agreements

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 9).

The Head of Social Care Services summarised the main terms of her report and, in response to a query, she said that there would be opportunities to discuss flexibility relating to services delivered locally with the Scottish Office. Whilst the principles tended to be

quite prescriptive, there was flexibility in terms of how these were applied locally.

A Member referred to the problem of underfunding nationally, and the reliance on the Charitable Trust locally. He questioned whether this would be an appropriate time to invite the appropriate ministers to Shetland to discuss care for older people in order to gain some real appreciation of the problem. He anticipated that shortly there would be debate around combining health and social care services to achieve synergies and savings and that, in anticipation of this, this would be a good time to invite the planners to Shetland.

The Head of Social Care Services said that the Chief Executive of the NHS in Dumfries and Galloway, and the Director of Social Services from Dumfries and Galloway had been invited to Shetland in January to make a presentation to the Community Planning Board regarding their considerable progress and experience in developing jointly managed and funded community care services. It was intended to hold an informal joint meeting of the Community Care Forum and NHS Shetland board members, and also to hold a meeting with the Employee's JCC and the NHS Partnership Forum. She went on to speak about the future possibility of joint locally managed services and pointed out that, from 1 April 2002, the Health and Community Care Act would make it possible for staff from either the health service or social care services to be employed by either service. However, she was not unduly worried that there was a hidden agenda regarding jointly managed services.

A Member referred to the notes on Appendix 1 of the report, and said that he would like to be assured that the procurement exercise for new computerised client and management information systems would assist clients with care rather than assist with form filling. He was also of the opinion that there was a need to look holistically at developing services for older people. He went on to speak about wider projects and services directed at young people and spoke of the need to keep a balanced programme in relation to this.

Another Member referred to paragraph 6.2 in the Appendix, and expressed concern that acceptance of this would mean acceptance of introduction of charging by the back door. The Chairman added that, if this became a legal requirement, the Council would be forced to look at it.

The Committee approved the recommendation contained in the report, on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr J M Ritch.

(Captain G G Mitchell left the meeting)

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Social Care Services (Appendix 10). The Summary and Guide to the Consultation Draft was tabled (attached as Appendix 10a).

The Head of Social Care Services summarised the main terms of her report, pointing out that the key difference between this and the previous plan was the move towards more universal planning in services for children. This was aimed at assisting children in vulnerable groups to access services.

(Captain G G Mitchell returned to the meeting)

A Member pointed out that the Children and Young People's Forum had suggested that School Boards should also be consulted. The Head of Social Care Services said that this could be taken on board.

A Member referred to the costs on page 55 of the Appendix, and said that these figures suggested that the Council was spending quite handsomely on services relating to children.

The Head of Social Care Services confirmed that spending on children was in excess of grant-aided expenditure, and that spending on older people's services was significantly in excess of this. However, in relation to other local authorities, the proportion spent on children's services, as opposed to that spent on community care services, was higher.

In response to a query regarding the "wish list" and aspirations for more staff in all disciplines, the Head of Social Care Services advised that this was not a realistic option. However it had been included as it was the view that had been expressed for the "wish list" by the person.

On the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr J C Irvine, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

163/01 **Budget 2001 – Additional Financial Resources for Schools**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 11) and on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr R I Black, approved the recommendation contained therein.

164/01 **Best Value Service Review – Islesburgh Trust**

The Committee noted a report by the Policy and Development Co-ordinator (Appendix 12).

Mr W N Stove declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Islesburgh Trust.

The Policy and Development Co-ordinator summarised the main terms of her report, advising that it had been her task to gather information on a range of different tasks and work undertaken, and to draw them into a best value service review report.

A Member enquired as to whether any thought had been given to merging the Islesburgh Trust with the Recreational Trust, and pointed out that there would be synergy savings.

Another Member pointed out that this had been discussed in the past, but the Recreational Trust had felt that the ethos of both was not compatible.

Some Members were of the view that there was no reason that the synergies between the Islesburgh Trust, Shetland Arts Trust, Shetland Recreational Trust and others should not be explored further. A Member pointed out that these were funded by the Council and it was necessary to look at value for money. He was of the opinion that this report did not address these issues.

In referring to paragraph 3.3(b), a Member said that he felt it was very important that the need to ensure close liaison and working relations with other service providers and promoters was brought through in order to ensure that duplication of services did not occur. He questioned whether it would be an idea to have some sort of forum consisting of different service providers to help bring things together so that the Council could be assured that there was no duplication of services. Another Member suggested that it would be useful to have a report presented to the Charitable Trust detailing how many organisations were being funded, and where there was overlap.

The Policy and Development Co-ordinator pointed out that the minutes requesting this report had been referred to, and that there had been no clear objective set out so a broader approach had been taken. However, if Members so wished, the relationship between the Islesburgh Trust and other organisations could be explored. This had been done in the past and could be reworked for the current situation. The Executive Director added that management arrangements had not been looked at, but that this could also be done if Members required.

A Member referred to previous discussions where the possibility of linking the management and administration arrangements of the Trusts to centralise administration in one building had been suggested, but this had not been taken onboard. Another Member suggested that the administration of all the Trusts, not just Islesburgh, should be reviewed to see if there was scope for savings. Members added that no criticism of the Islesburgh Trust was intended, but that they believed that there had to be synergies

involved in merging administration elements, or otherwise, of the Trusts.

The Executive Director clarified that Members wished a wider look to be taken at all the Trusts' administration and management, in the context of best value, and that this was to be brought back to the Committee and the Charitable Trust.

The Committee agreed.

165/01 **Target Setting in Schools**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 13).

The Divisional Education Officer summarised the main terms of the report and clarified figures contained in the Appendices for Members. She pointed out that a decision had been taken to make particular arrangements for setting targets for smaller primary schools and departments in order to avoid the possible identification of individual pupils. She added that the report on Quality Assurance indicated how it was intended to monitor these targets.

(Mr J C Irvine left the meeting)

166/01 **Performance Measures and Quality Indicators for the National Priorities**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 14).

The Divisional Education Officer summarised the main terms of the report, pointing out that the Improvement Plan would be presented to the Committee at a later date.

In response to a query, she confirmed that there was no expectation for Shetland to meet the requirements in relation to Gaelic. She also clarified that Levels A-D were not a grading system but that Level A was the first progression on the scale.

A Member said that he felt that targets based on teachers' opinion may be rather subjective, and he enquired if there were any other means of target setting.

The Divisional Education Officer confirmed that there were national guidelines which applied and that continuous improvement of these targets was sought.

A Member was of the opinion that this was an illustration of the increased work thrust upon teachers, and the subsequent amount of time that had to be spent on administrative procedures. He

added that it was important that teachers received adequate back-up support.

The Chairman pointed out that these issues would be addressed as the McCrone Report was implemented.

A Member referred to the national problem of young people leaving school that had difficulty with basic literacy and numeracy skills, and spoke about this in relation to resource problems in schools. He added that he hoped this issue was being addressed.

The Executive Director explained that it would be possible to pass on a copy of the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan to the Member, as there were resources available to deal with this. However it was difficult to tell exactly how many people were affected.

(Mr R I Black left the meeting)

167/01 **Draft Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy**

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education Services (Appendix 15).

The Divisional Education Officer pointed out that this policy was still a draft policy and that consultation would be carried out, with the final document being brought back to Committee before implementation as a service document.

(Mr W A Ratter left the meeting)

A Member commented that she was delighted to see this document, and referred particularly to the Education Service's efforts to achieve Charter Mark status for the whole Service.

(Mr W A Ratter returned to the meeting)

168/01 **Note of Community Care Forum – 12 November 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 16).

169/01 **Note of Housing Forum – 14 November 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 17).

170/01 **Note of Special Culture and Recreation Forum – 22 November 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 18).

171/01 **Note of Special Children and Young People's Forum – 23 November 2001**

The Committee noted the above (Appendix 19).

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

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

172/01 **Proposed Extension of Meals on Wheels and School Meals Provision Contracts**

The Committee considered a report by the Heads of Social Care and Education Services.

On the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.