

MINUTE

‘A’

Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 31 March 2003 at 10.30am

Present:

J M Ritch	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
Captain G G Mitchell	J P Nicolson
W A Ratter	F A Robertson
J G Simpson	T W Stove
W N Stove	W Tait

Apologies:

P Malcolmson	Dr CM Begg
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In Attendance (Officers):

M Goodlad, Chief Executive
C Ferguson, Community Care Manager
S Ward, Administration Officer
G Smith, Head of Community Development Service
N Watt, Sport and Leisure Services Manager
C Medley, Head of Housing Service
E Balfour, Senior Housing Officer
R Keay, Supporting People Officer
V Simpson, Senior Housing Officer
H Budge, Senior Education Officer
H Tait, Management Accountant
L Bisset, Projects Co-ordinator
J Kay, Personnel Officer
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Also:

J Johnston, 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 12 February 2003, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Attendance at External Meetings:

Mr W N Stove gave a brief synopsis of a CoSLA Convention he had attended in St Andrews where Cathy Jamieson, Minister for Education and Young People, had announced that there was to be £80 million additional funding for the implementation of the McCrone agreement. This would be delivered in two tranches to the authorities who claimed that they were short of funding, and £10 million would also be available for the continuing training and development of teachers. Mr Stove went on to thank Mr P Malcolmson and Mr D Green of Highland Council for the work they had carried out in fighting for additional funding. He advised that he would e-mail further information to Members.

32/03 **Proposed Revenue Responsive and Planned Maintenance Programme – 2003-2004**

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Housing Officer – Asset Management (Appendix 1), and on the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendation contained therein.

In response to a query, the Head of Housing Services confirmed that the actual figure for responsive maintenance had not been cut, and that it was hoped to shift emphasis from the responsive repairs budget to the planned repairs budget. Whilst he accepted that the responsive repairs budget could be cut, it was not felt appropriate to do this at the moment. The plans set out would allow the Housing Service to keep rents to inflation-only levels in the future.

The Executive Director, in response to a request from a Member, confirmed that she would send details of the previous five years figures out by e-mail.

33/03 **Supporting People – Funding Independent Living Project at Annsbrae**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services (Appendix 2), and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, approved the recommendation contained therein.

34/03 **Housing Strategies**

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Housing Officer – Strategy & Policy (Appendix 3), and on the motion of Captain G G Mitchell, seconded by Mr W Tait, approved the recommendation contained therein.

The Head of Housing Service advised that approximately £0.5million extra funding, to be spent locally, had been made available for these strategies.

Members expressed their general concern at the quantity and volume of strategies that the Council were being asked to produce by the Scottish Executive, however they accepted that it was often necessary for these strategies to be produced in order to attract external funding.

In response to a query regarding the inclusion of a statement of page 26 of the appendix, namely that the assessment of underlying housing trends and issues in Lerwick was “currently difficult due to the breakdown of Council wards within the town area”, the Head of Housing Services advised that he would respond later to the Member concerned.

Some discussion took place regarding the issue of homelessness of young people, and Members felt that the current points allocation system contributed to the problem, as parents had to make their children homeless in order for them to receive additional points.

The Head of Housing Service acknowledged that this was sometimes the case, although there were often overcrowding issues to be taken into account.

35/03 **Supporting People – Charging Policy**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Service (Appendix 4), and on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr C B Eunson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

36/03 **Capital Rolling Programmes – Prioritisation of Schemes and Purchases**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director – Community Services (Appendix 5), and on the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Mr W Tait, approved the recommendation contained therein.

In response to queries, the Head of Community Development Service advised that a report on the Knab dykes would be ready for the next cycle. He also confirmed that the Nesting multicourt was progressing through the Community Development Rolling Programme, and that feasibility work was ongoing for a multicourt at Tingwall.

37/03 **Grants to Community Projects – Stage 2 – Design Grant – Vidlin Play Area Development**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer (Appendix 6) and on the motion of Mrs M U Colligan, seconded by Mr J C Irvine, approved the recommendations contained therein.

The Head of Community Development Service confirmed that grants to community projects were still a three-stage process – feasibility, design then capital works.

38/03 **Feasibility Grant for Community Projects – Sound Community Association – Sound Public Hall Refurbishment**

The Committee considered a report by the Community Learning and Development Officer (Appendix 7) and on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr W N Stove, approved the recommendations contained therein.

Mrs F B Grains advised that she would pass on a Member's comments that there was no disabled access to upper levels of the new police station building at the next Visiting Committee meeting.

39/03 **Shetland Sports and Recreation Strategy**

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

On the motion of Mr W N Stove, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, the Committee approved the recommendation contained in the report.

Members again expressed concern at the number of strategies the Council were required to produce. The Executive Director advised that there was an ongoing review regarding strategies, which may help to streamline the production of strategies.

In response to a query, the Head of Community Development advised that, in order to take this forward, the strategy would be followed up by an action plan which would clearly state the responsibility of officers and partner organisations. He added that there were not considered to be any financial implications unless additional resources were identified and required.

40/03 **Feasibility Grant for Community Projects – Shetland Skatepark Association – Development of Skatepark**

The Committee considered a report by the Community Learning and Development Officer (Appendix 9), and on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr R J Anderson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

A Member commented on the voluntary contribution involved in the temporary skatepark, and said that voluntary contributions should be encouraged.

41/03 **Implementation of 'A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century (Agreement Reached Following the Recommendations of the McCrone Committee on Teachers Pay and Conditions)**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 10).

Mr W A Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report, and Mr W H Manson seconded.

Mrs M U Colligan suggested that paragraph 6.2 should include the addition "in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Services Committee, and the Spokesperson for Education; and that a further report should be brought back to the Council".

With the consent of his seconder, Mr W A Ratter agreed to incorporate this into his motion.

42/03

Additional Support Needs Base in Anderson High School

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 11).

Mr C B Eunson moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report.

In seconding Mr Eunson, Mr L Angus said that he hoped that Mr Eunson would accept an addition to the recommendations that this was a "stop gap" solution to deal with the immediate needs of older children currently in Bells Brae. In the longer term, their needs should be addressed within Anderson High School proposals.

Mr Eunson agreed to incorporate this into his motion.

43/03

Anderson High School Taskforce

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 12).

Some discussion took place as to the preferred location of a new Anderson High School (AHS).

Some Members were of the view that any replacement or refurbishment should take place at Clickimin as the site offered existing facilities, a central location, provided an opportunity to design a building which was flexible to the future needs of education and would mean that there was no disruption to pupils' education during building works. It was commented that there was a need for a re-examination of costs at Clickimin so that both options could be compared.

However other Members commented that the brief given to the architects for the Clickimin site had resulted in a prestige but inflexible building. It was noted that the Taskforce may come to the conclusion that the AHS site was not the most appropriate, and that they would have to take into account the impact on the neighbourhood. It was also noted that proposal to examine the

existing site was consistent with the outcome of the Best Value Service Review.

In response to queries, the Chief Executive advised that the proposal to locate a new AHS at the Clickimin site was included in the Capital Programme, and that it would be possible to update figures if Members required. However to update the design brief would involve more costs. Any update to the Clickimin proposal would cause considerable delay to the process in terms of the instruction from Members to look at the outcome of the Best Value Service Review.

Mr L Angus moved, and Mr W A Ratter seconded, that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report.

Mr R J Anderson moved that the option of rebuilding at the AHS Site should be set against the figure of rebuilding the same facilities at Clickimin.

Mr J P Nicolson seconded.

Mrs F B Grains gave notice of further amendment.

After summing up, voting took place by show of hands and the result was as follows: -

Amendment (Mr R J Anderson)	2
Motion (Mr L Angus)	13

Mrs F B Grains moved, as an amendment, that in addition the Task Force should include the Services Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Education Spokesperson, the local Member and at least one other Lerwick Member.

Mr W Tait seconded.

Voting took place by show of hands, and the result was as follows: -

Amendment (Mrs F B Grains)	9
Motion (Mr L Angus)	8

44/03

Learning Disability Services: Local Area Co-ordination

The Committee considered a report by the Community Care Manager (Appendix 13), and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendation contained therein.

45/03

Proposed Plan for the Implementation of the Long-Term Strategy for Education in Shetland

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

Members expressed concern that the report appeared to be seeking to implement decisions that had not yet been made by the Council, and also highlighted examples where it had been agreed that consultation and socio-economic studies should be undertaken in the first instance.

Mr J P Nicolson moved that the report be deferred and that the length of the deferral should be judged by those responsible for reauthorisation of the report. In the meantime, Members should contact senior officers responsible with their concerns so that they can be responded to when the report is reissued.

Mr C B Eunson seconded.

A Member commented that it would be useful to have an exchange of information between the Education Service and Members after the election on 1 May.

46/03 **Best Value Service Review – Education Service – Financial Information**

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

The Executive Director answered questions from Members regarding some of the costs specified in the report.

Concern was expressed by a Member regarding the levels of overspend on the Scottish Executive allocation for education in Shetland, compared to other areas.

In response to a query, the Management Accountant explained the process of calculating capital charges, and it was agreed that information regarding the £2million decrease would be forwarded to the Member concerned.

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mr J M Ritch moved and Mr W N Stove to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of agenda items 28 to 30.

Mr C B Eunson moved, and Mr W A Ratter seconded, that agenda item 16 should be held in public.

Voting took place by show of hands, and the result was as follows: -

Amendment (Mr C B Eunson)	5
Motion (Mr J M Ritch)	8

(Representatives of the media left the meeting)

- 47/03 **Tendering Exercise – Squash Court Provision at Clickimin**
The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development and on the motion of Mr R J Anderson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

- 48/03 **Care Services at Home**
The Committee considered a report by the Community Care Manager (Appendix 17), who summarised the main terms of the report and answered queries from Members.

After some discussion, Mr W A Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report.

Mrs I J Hawkins seconded.

Mr R I Black moved, as an amendment, that the recommendations in the report should not be implemented until they are re-examined.

Mr W Tait seconded.

After summing up, voting took place by show of hands and the result was as follows: -

Amendment (Mr R I Black)	4
Motion (Mr W A Ratter)	11

In response to a suggestion from a Member, Mr W A Ratter agreed, with the consent of his seconder, to incorporate into his motion that a review should be carried out after one year.

- 49/03 **Mental Health Community Support Service**
The Committee considered a report by the Community Care Manager (Appendix 30) and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr W A Ratter, approved the recommendations contained therein.