

MINUTE 'B'

'A' &

**Services Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Thursday 19 June 2003 at 10.30 a.m.**

Present:

F B Grains	L Angus
B J Cheyne	C B Eunson
R G Feather	B P Gregson
L G Groat	I J Hawkins
J A Inkster	J C Irvine
E J Knight	W H Manson
G G Mitchell	J P Nicolson
W A Ratter	F A Robertson
J G Simpson	W N Stove
T W Stove	W Tait

Apologies:

A J Cluness	J H Henry
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In Attendance (Officers):

J Watt, Executive Director, Community Services
A Jamieson, Head of Service, Education
G Johnston, Head of Service, Finance
G Smith, Head of Service, Community Development
N Watt, Sport & Leisure Services Manager
M Duncan, Grants Officer
A Jamieson, Services Manager, Housing Business Support
J Pottinger, Committee Officer

Chairman:

Mrs F B Grains, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2003, having been circulated, were confirmed.

Attendance at External Meetings:-

Mr J C Irvine advised members of the last meeting of ROSPA and of an item on the agenda which discussed British Summer Time. He said that a report had been written but it appeared that this issue had been put on the "back burner".

(Mr W H Manson attended the meeting)

51/03 **Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme – Outturn 2002/2003 and Review of Programme 2003/2007**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing (Appendix 1).

Capt G G Mitchell moved that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr J P Nicolson seconded.

A Member made the point that most of the Council's housing policies created a situation where most houses were being built in central Shetland.

The following is a summary of the discussion which took place on the housing schemes referred to in the report:-

Midlea Demolitions

A Member was of the view that it was immoral to demolish these properties and at the same time seek to purchase flats in Scalloway. She was of the view that a decision on demolition should be deferred for one cycle so that a report could be brought forward to discuss a corporate and partnership approach to Shetland's housing needs, particularly in regard to homelessness, as well as examine the large number of void properties. The Executive Director, Community Services said that she would be happy to take a report forward on the above issue.

The view expressed by other Members, including the Member for the Area, was that the Midlea houses were in a very bad state and demolition was the only option. The view was also expressed that there was no point building brand new houses in an area away from the central facilities and where people did not want to live. The point was also made that money was going to be available from Central Government as part of their homelessness policy and that it was an ideal opportunity to provide suitable housing for young people. It was also said that the homeless were generally ordinary decent people who needed houses urgently for a variety of reasons.

Cruden House Pilot Scheme

In response to a question from a Member, the Services Manager, Housing Business Support advised that the Cruden Houses were last refurbished 18 years ago. A Member made the point that the biggest problem with this refurbishment would be that many of the houses were now in private ownership.

52/03 **Shetland Island Games 2005 – Development of Golf Facilities**

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 2).

Mr L G Groat said that as a new Member on the Council he felt that he needed more information about the funding of the Islands Games before he could commit himself to approving these grants recommended in this report. He accordingly moved that these grants be withheld until a public seminar was held. Mr B P Gregson seconded.

Mr J G Simpson moved as an amendment that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr W Tait seconded.

(Mr W N Stove declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Council representative on the Board of the Shetland Islands Games)

During the lengthy discussion which followed some Members did express the view that going on conversations they had had with constituents there was a lot of public concern about the amount of money being spent on the Games. However, the view was also expressed by Members that the project was now well underway and to stop work at this stage would not be practical. It was also pointed out by a Member that this would be a breach of contract.

(Mr W H Manson gave notice of a further amendment)

As the discussion continued some Members said that although they were very supportive of the Games they were in agreement with holding a seminar if this could inform the new Members and also allay public concern. There was concern expressed, however, that if construction work was held up at this time of year it would be difficult to finish the projects.

Mr J G Simpson, with the consent of his seconder, agreed to incorporate into his amendment that a seminar on the Games be held as soon as practicably possible.

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

Amendment (J G Simpson)	-	15
Motion (L G Groat)	-	4
Abstention	-	1

Mr J C Irvine requested that his abstention be recorded.

(Mr W H Manson withdrew his notice of further amendment)

53/03

Review of the Ongoing Management and Maintenance of Play Area Provision

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 3).

Mr W A Ratter moved that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr E J Knight seconded.

During the discussion which followed Members referred to play areas which needed maintenance in their various wards. The view was expressed by a Member that all play areas should be managed and monitored by the local authority and that funding should be coming from the Council and not the Charitable Trust. A Member referred to paragraph 3.4 and asked if it would be possible to extend the contract of the graduate trainee. The Executive Director, Community Services said that the review report would take Best Value into the equation and would also address any staffing implications.

A Member expressed concern that there would be a moratorium on new play areas until the report had come forward and was also of the view that the management and maintenance of play areas was under-resourced and suggested additional resources be found for the interim period. The Head of Service, Community Development said that he would take this on board but advised that the moratorium would not have a material effect as there was only a proposal for one play area and it was not anticipated that construction would take place in the next financial year.

There was no amendment and the motion was declared the finding of the meeting.

54/03

Dialogue Youth Update

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Community Services (Appendix 4), and on the motion of Mrs I J Hawkins, seconded by Mr B Gregson, approved the recommendations contained in the report, and with reference to 6.2 nominated Mr W H Manson, Spokesperson for Children, Education and Young People, to be available to support this initiative, chairing meetings if necessary.

55/03

Request for Additional Funding – Skeld Waterfront Trust – Lunnasting Public Hall

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer, Community Services (Appendix 5).

After a brief discussion, the Committee, on the motion of Mr L G Groat, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained in the report with the addition that representations be made to Mr Tavish Scott and Mr Alastair Carmichael in regard to the VAT issue. It was further moved that recommendation 8.3 be amended to say that no further requests for grant assistance be considered for the following 2 years.

56/03

Aith Rowing and Cultural Event 2003

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager (Appendix 6), and on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr F A Robertson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

(Mr J P Nicolson and Mr F A Robertson left the meeting)

57/03 **Shetland's Joint Future: Local Partnership Agreement April 2003**

The Committee considered a report by the Community Care Manager (Appendix 7), and on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mrs B J Cheyne, approved the recommendations contained therein.

58/03 **Devolved School Management – Staff Development Budget allocated to Schools**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 8), and on the motion of Mr L G Groat, seconded by Mrs B J Cheyne, approved the recommendations contained therein.

59/03 **Bell's Brae Nursery Pilot**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 9).

Mr L Angus moved that the recommendations in the report be approved, with the caveat that consideration be given to establishing this nursery on a permanent basis. Mr L G Groat seconded.

60/03 **Charging for Premises**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Community Services (Appendix 10).

Mr C B Eunson moved the recommendation in paragraph 7.1 of the report. Mr J C Irvine seconded.

Mr W A Ratter moved the recommendation in paragraph 7.2 of the report. Capt G G Mitchell seconded.

The Executive Director, Community Services, advised that if Members wished to change the policy on letting and charging of council premises (except schools), a review would have to be undertaken.

Subsequently, Mr C B Eunson, with the consent of his seconder, withdrew his motion and the amendment was declared the finding of the meeting.

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(Mrs F B Grains vacated the chair and the Vice-Chairperson, Mr W N Stove took the chair)

(Mrs F B Grains, Capt G G Mitchell and Mr J C Irvine left the meeting)

61/03 **HMI Action Plan: Update on Progress**

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

(Mr L G Groat and Mr J P Nicolson left the meeting)

62/03 **New Management Structures in Schools**

The Committee noted a report by the Senior Education Officer (Appendix 12).

Some discussion followed during which the Head of Education Service clarified points made by Members regarding the new structure.

Some Members said that head teachers in some areas had expressed concern about the new structure. The Head of Education advised that there had been an agreement with all head teachers and that the changes which had been made were absolutely within the McCrone Agreement.

The Chairperson congratulated the Head of Education for the speed and efficiency in the implementation of these proposals. Members concurred.