



MINUTES

AB - Public

Education and Families Committee
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Monday 23 May 2016 at 10.00am

Present:

Councillors:

P Campbell	G Cleaver
B Fox	A Manson
F Robertson	G Robinson
D Sandison	G Smith
M Stout	V Wishart

Religious Representatives:

M Tregonning

Apologies:

R McKay

In Attendance:

H Budge, Director – Children's Services
N Grant, Director – Development Services
J Belford, Executive Manager – Finance
C McIntyre, Executive Manager – Audit, Risk & Improvement
S Brunton, Team Leader - Legal
T Coutts, Business Development & Training Manager
L Geddes, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Ms Wishart, Chair of the Committee, presided.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

None

12/16

Development Services Directorate Performance Report: 12 Month/4th Quarter 2015/16

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-29-16-F) which summarised the activity and performance of the Development Services Directorate for the reporting period.

The Director of Development Services summarised the main terms of the report, highlighting the areas of activity and performance which came under the remit of the Committee. He outlined the next steps in relation to the STERT review, advising that it was hoped that the appointment of an interim Joint Principal would

be finalised shortly, and that there would be further reports presented to the next cycle of meetings regarding governance arrangements. He went on to speak about Modern Apprentices numbers, which were around 50% higher in Shetland than in Orkney and the Western Isles. However sometimes there were not enough young people to take up all the positions that were on offer, and there was more work to be done through the Shetland Learning Partnership to address gender imbalances. With regard to Shetland College, enrolment numbers remained relatively stable, but there was a need to focus on increasing the number of full-time FE students. The College was currently in a position of overachieving by 10%, and this was largely as a result of NAFC Marine Centre activity now being recorded.

The Director of Development Services and the Business Development & Training Manager then responded to questions, and the Committee noted the following:

- Delivery of Modern Apprenticeships in specific trades depends on there being an appropriate framework for delivery. There remains demand in some specific trades, such as engineering. Many sectors had their own apprenticeship programmes, but the College would look to deliver in areas in which there was a demand.
- Gender imbalances in Modern Apprenticeships related to occupational segregation. For example, the engineering sector was predominantly male, while the care sector predominantly attracts female apprentices. This was something that was not specific to Shetland, and work was ongoing to address this.
- The number of courses provided to meet industry demand (GC 03) in 2014/15 was 186, as described in the narrative. There had been an increase in activity in the current year as a result of a higher volume of courses being delivered, and collaboration with the NAFC Marine Centre on some courses.
- Further information would be supplied in respect of Total Credits (GC 05) for Quarter 2, as this had been omitted from the report.
- If activity relating to the NAFC Marine Centre had been recorded in the past, Shetland College would have been closer to meeting its targets over the last few years, when it had been recorded as underperforming.
- NAFC Marine Centre cadets were classed as part-time in terms of classification, as they spent periods of time at sea. Some apprentices were also classed as part-time because of the amount of time they spent at the College. The classification had an effect on the monetary value of each place.
- There was no guarantee that Shetland College would be reimbursed for the extra activity that was now being recorded. However there would now be a good case to present for achieving an increase in funding. Applications could be made for European structural investment funding for new activity.
- The first steps towards integrated governance would be to put in place an integrated liaison group from the two boards to provide some direction for the management team, and a report would be presented in June to consider its terms of reference.

- The attitude that there was more value attached to academic courses was something that seemed to be changing, and a lot of work was being done to promote vocational routes of training as a high-value alternative.

Decision:

The Education and Families Committee discussed the contents of the report as appropriate to their remit and made relevant comments on progress against priorities to inform further activity within the remainder of this year, and the planning process for next and future years.

13/16

Children's Services Performance Report: 12 Month/4th Quarter 2015/16

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services (CS-10-16-F) which summarised the activity and performance of the Children's Services for Quarter 4 of 2015/16.

The Director of Children's Services summarised the main terms of the report, highlighting the actions that had yet to be completed. She advised that the consultation reports in respect of Whalsay School and Mid Yell Junior High School had been published and would be presented to the Committee and Council on 9 June. Activity in relation to the Shetland Learning Partnership would be continued, but would be mainstreamed and included in other areas of work in future. The new Anderson High School (AHS) project was never scheduled to be completed in the current financial year, and the handover date was anticipated to be 8 September 2017. She went on to speak about the work currently being carried out in respect of the project, and said that it was on budget and on time. The project had recently received recognition from the construction industry, receiving a silver award for best educational project. A report in respect of early learning and childcare would be presented in June, now that the election period was over, and this would detail the effect on the school estate and partnership providers of the new requirements. There had been an increase in staff numbers, and this was to meet the increase in ASN pupils coming into pre-school and school settings. These staff were on temporary contracts.

The Director of Children's Services then responded to questions, and the Committee noted the following:

- Consideration would be given as to the best way of presenting information previously relating to the Shetland Learning Partnership in future, in order that the Committee could continue to have some sort of overview of the activity.
- It was proposed to go back to a structure of three Team Leaders in Children's Resources, and this would assist with the implementation of the Children's Residential Review. This proposal was included in the budget.
- The Service was very aware of the imbalances regarding what was on offer in terms of the money available to support additional hours in respect of the increase in entitlement in Early Years Learning and Childcare. There were other aspects that also had to be taken into consideration, such as the requirement to provide lunch for longer sessions, and the provision of rest areas for younger children. The Scottish Futures Trust had asked for more information to be provided regarding the capacity of the current schools estate and that of partner providers. The Council had been informed that money would be available mainly for capital projects required as a result of the new legislation. The report being

presented to the Committee in June would explain this in more detail, as there would be enormous changes required in provision.

- Further information could be provided regarding the uptake of schools meals following the introduction of the new payments system. Two pilot projects had been carried out locally, and these had provided a lot of useful information.
- It was difficult to measure whether the number of pupils entitled to access school meals were actually receiving them. Measures of child poverty had been collected nationally, and Shetland did not feature highly enough in these figures to access additional funding. However work done locally had illustrated that there were areas of poverty within communities, and a report was about to be published by the Shetland Partnership. However this level of detail did not identify individual households. The Northern Alliance – a grouping of local authorities that worked together – were very aware of this issue and were looking at how to collect data to provide a better measure.
- A more detailed analysis could be provided in respect of Activity Agreements (SC06), and number of Respite Nights (ASN) (CR02).

Decision:

The Education and Families Committee discussed the contents of the report as appropriate to their remit and made relevant comments on progress against priorities to inform further activity within the remainder of this year, and the planning process for next and future years.

14/16

Management Accounts for Education and Families Committee: 2015/16 - Draft Outturn at Quarter 4

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-033-F) which presented the financial performance of services within the Committee's remit.

The Executive Manager – Finance summarised the main terms of the report, outlining the draft outturn position and highlighting that revisions had been made to the budget to take account of the carry forward scheme, and that an allocation from contingencies had also been made to cover the cost of off-island placements. The capital budget had been modified to take account of the financial close of the new AHS project, and there was a requirement for carry forward to reflect the construction programme. It was proposed that £218,000 was carried forward under the carry forward scheme, subject to approval by the Policy and Resources Committee. The draft accounts would be presented to the Council in June, but it was not expected that there would be any material changes that would take place.

The Executive Manager – Finance and Director of Children's Services then responded to questions, and the Committee noted the following:

- The overspends identified in relation to Quality Improvement/Schools were costs incurred by the Service itself, and were not contingency costs.
- £290,000 had been received from the Scottish Government in respect of the increased entitlement to school meals. Provision had been made within contingencies, but this had not been required and the full amount had not been utilised. More explanation could be provided in respect of this in future reports. There would be a cost to the Council for the provision of meals in respect of the

increased entitlements in Early Years and Childcare, and information was currently being collected by the Scottish Futures Trust, which would be vital in understanding the funding requirements of local authorities.

- The £218,000 requested under the carry forward scheme had been requested for specific projects that the Directorate wished to pursue.
- Sickness levels were on target, but money to cover the costs still had to be paid out so it was showing as an overspend. Supply budgets were not contained within the Directorate, and were showing as an overspend as the costs had to be applied for. Clarification would be provided in future reports to illustrate that these were not overspends as the money was not within the budgets in the first place. Consideration was currently being given to changing the way some of this information was recorded, so that it could be better described in future.
- Further information could be provided regarding the removal of the clothing allowance element of kinship allowances, when the decision had been taken to do so, and whether the reduction in payments/allowances had had any negative impacts.
- Some Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancies had been granted this year which meant that there was an overspend. However as these posts were not being replaced, there would not be an overspend in future and there would be a saving to the Directorate.

It was noted that COSLA had taken the view that any costs in relation to the increased entitlements in Early Years and Childcare should be fully funded by the Scottish Government. It was vital that the information compiled was accurate, as it was likely that any underestimates would not be reimbursed.

It was noted that it was commendable that in these difficult financial times, the Directorate had managed to achieve almost £0.5million of recurring savings, and it was requested that the Committee's thanks to staff be recorded.

Decision:

The Education and Families Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the Management Accounts showing the draft outturn position
- Note the proposed budget carry forwards which will be included in the overall Draft Outturn Report to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 24 May 2016.

15/16

Education and Families Committee Business Programme 2016-17

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader – Administration (GL-18-16-F) which informed of the planned business to be presented to Committee for the remaining quarters of the financial year.

It was noted that a report relating to the naming of the new Halls of Residence would be presented to the October meeting. It was likely that a report relating to Fee Paid Foster Carers would also be presented at that meeting.

Decision:

The Education and Families Committee considered its planned business for the remaining quarters of the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 and **RESOLVED** to approve any changes or additions to the Business Programme.

The meeting concluded at 11.10am.