

Minutes:

The minute of the meeting held on 28 August 2003, having been circulated, was confirmed.

Attendance at External Meetings:

Mr L Angus - TIGHRA – August - Nairn

74/03 **Increased Administration Support to Schools**

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

After hearing the Head of Education summarise the terms of the report, Members questioned the affect that shared Headship pilots would have on the distribution of funds, and the likelihood that those schools would not require additional administrative support. The Head of Education advised that no exceptions had been made for the pilot schools, but these would be looked at. He added that the decisions would be made by the schools themselves, through devolved management, and could include playground supervisors and classroom assistants.

Reference was made to the diminishing amounts that would be received by the Council over the next few years, and Members expressed caution that the decision should not be taken lightly, as the Council would have to take account of the affect on future Council budgets.

After further discussion, and on the motion of Mr W H Manson, seconded by Mr F A Robertson, the Committee approved the recommendations contained in the report.

75/03 **Anderson High School Feasibility Study – Progress Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Projects Unit Manager (Appendix 2).

Mr L Angus said the last time a feasibility study was carried out on this site, the conclusion had been that was not enough room on the existing site to meet the requirements, therefore the Clickimin site was the only option. However, Mr Angus went on to say that the study had now been re-written and it was now believed possible that the existing site was suitable. Mr Angus said that the reason for this was that the criteria for the required classroom area had been reduced. In this regard, other areas that had built new schools using these criteria, by Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), real operational problems were being experienced with the smaller classrooms. Mr Angus asked that further information on these matters be brought to a future meeting.

Mr C B Eunson said he believed the existing site had ample room for a new building. Mr Eunson went on to refer to the advice given

at an earlier meeting that to update the design brief would involve more cost. He also referred to the view of the Taskforce that the AHS site would be able to accommodate a new build with minimal impact on the provision of Education. In this regard, Mr Eunson moved that the Clickimin site should be forgotten about.

Mr W H Manson said that his reason for supporting a study into the Clickimin site had been the potential disruption to pupils by a new build on the AHS site. However, he said he no longer believed that would be case, and that the AHS site could accommodate a new build of ample proportions due to the significant amount of empty ground surrounding the present school. Mr Manson went on to say that disruption could be minimised by phasing work.

Mr Manson seconded the motion by Mr Eunson, adding that there were three main reasons for this: (1) the Council owned the existing site; (2) excavation costs would be less than that required at Clickimin; and (3) careful consideration would be given to the classroom sizes, based upon the specifications received.

Mr J P Nicolson said that his main worry was that there appeared to be a determination to proceed with the AHS option only, without all the relevant information.

Mr L G Groat said he retained an open mind on this matter, but asked that a report be brought forward within one cycle on the classroom sizes and the differences between the two feasibility studies. However, the Chairperson advised that it was unlikely that the information could be provided within that timescale.

Mr A J Cluness said that the final decision would be one for the Council, but suggested that one course of action would be to take forward the proposals for the AHS site, and only if there were problems should consideration then move to the Clickimin site. He said this was the view of the Taskforce, and that following a detailed plan for the AHS, the Clickimin site could be looked at if necessary.

Members noted that the Clickimin site was in private ownership, and therefore there would be no land acquisition costs for developing the AHS site. In addition, it was noted that any decision would be taken forward in parallel with the Best Value Service Review of Education.

Mr C B Eunson, with the consent of his seconder, agreed to alter his motion to recommend to the Council that the Taskforce concentrate solely on the AHS site at this stage, and only in the event of difficulties should the Clickimin site be considered as the second option. The Committee agreed.

76/03 **Education Capital Projects – Prioritisation Matrix**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 3).

Mr W H Manson moved that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr L G Groat seconded and the Committee agreed.

It was suggested that it would be useful for the Prioritisation Panel to visit schools prior to the allocation of resources and their placement in the programme.

Mrs B Cheyne declared a non-financial interest in the following item.

77/03 **Capital Grant to Voluntary Organisations – Voe Pier Trust**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Officer (Appendix 4).

Mr W A Ratter moved that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr W H Manson seconded and the Committee agreed.

Mr J Henry and Mr W N Stove declared an interest in the following item.

78/03 **Design Grant for Community Projects – Sound Community Association – Sound Public Hall Refurbishment**

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

The Committee, on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained in the report.

79/03 **Request to Reprofile Shetland Island Games 2005 Revenue Budgets**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Development (Appendix 6).

On the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Mr E Knight the Committee approved the recommendations contained therein.

80/03 **Room Hire Charges**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director – Community Services (Appendix 7).

Mr W Tait moved the recommendations in the report. Mr W A Ratter seconded and the Committee agreed.

Some Members were of the view that officers should be given a degree of discretion or flexibility when charging, in particular for the community use of schools. However, it was noted that the use of school facilities were matters delegated to School Boards.

81/03

HMI Action Plan: Update on Progress

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Education (Appendix 8).

The Committee agreed to recommend that minutes of the Best Value Service Review of Education Member/Officer Working Group, be circulated to all Members for information.

In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mrs F B Grains moved, and Mr W A Ratter seconded, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of agenda items 9 & 10.

Mr L Angus moved as an amendment that agenda item no. 9 (Care Services at Home) is held in public. Mr L G Groat seconded.

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

Amendment (L Angus)	12
Motion (F B Grains)	4

82/03

Care Services at Home

The Committee considered a report by the Community Care Manager (Appendix 9).

The Community Care Manager introduced the report, and during her summary of the main points, advised that the Employees' Joint Consultative Committee had recommended that the words "It is anticipated that" be removed from the second sentence of paragraph 3.6.

During discussion, Members were generally of the view that whilst the report was long, it covered a very complicated subject, and was well written.

In response to questions regarding funding from the National Health Service, the Community Care Manager advised that whilst NHS Shetland was identifying no direct money, they provided a direct input to individual care plans through the Community Nursing provision. She advised that whilst this had not been quantified, the information would be sought and provided to Members for information, if possible before the Council meeting.

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the General Manager of Shetland Welfare Trust explained the background and involvement by the Shetland Welfare Trust, concluding that the Trust viewed this as a positive opportunity.

Mr C B Eunson was critical of the length of the report, the charging being proposed and the number of new posts to be created. He moved that the report be referred back to the author for rewriting. This, however, received no seconder.

Mr W A Ratter moved that the recommendations in the report be approved. Mr W Tait seconded.

Mr L Angus referred to paragraph 3.3 of the report, and said he was not convinced about the level of supervision and management being proposed, and moved as an amendment that the recommendations be accepted in principle, but that section 3.3 of the report be referred back for further consideration. Mrs I J Hawkins seconded, subject to the amendment including that alternative funding be sought in order to avoid charging. Mr L Angus agreed to accept this into his amendment.

In response to a question from Mr R G Feather, the Community Care Manager advised that the calculation for individual charges would be based on means testing. Members questioned whether the proposals could proceed without a decision on the terms of paragraph 3.3. The Chairperson advised that this advice would be provided at the Council meeting.

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

Amendment (L Angus)	10
Motion (W A Ratter)	8

Accordingly the amendment by Mr L Angus was declared the finding of the meeting.

(Representatives of the public and press left the meeting.)

83/03

Teachers Early Retirements – August/October 2003

The Committee noted a report by the Executive Director – Community Services.