

MINUTES

B - PUBLIC

Policy and Resources Committee

Auditorium, Shetland Museum and Archives, Hay's Dock, Lerwick

Monday 19 June 2017 at 10am

Present:

C Smith	M Burgess
A Cooper	S Coutts
A Duncan	S Leask
R McGregor	G Smith
T Smith	R Thomson

Apologies:

None

In Attendance:

C Ferguson, Director of Corporate Services
D Bell, Executive Manager – Human Resources
J Belford, Executive Manager – Finance
C McIntyre, Executive Manager – Audit, Risk and Improvement
J Riise, Executive Manager – Governance and Law
M Nicolson, Chief Social Work Officer
J Watt, Team Leader – Workforce Development
S Duncan, Management Accountant
J Thomason, Management Accountant
J Jamieson, Senior Risk Management Officer
J Macleod, Performance and Improvement Adviser
A Sutherland, Partnership Officer
A Tait, Solicitor
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
L Adamson, Committee Officer

Chairperson

Mr C Smith, Leader, as Chair of the Committee presided.

The Committee stood for a minute's silence, as a mark of respect for those affected by the recent tragic events in London.

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

Mr Burgess advised on a tentative declaration, as a supplier of services to the Shetland College.

Mr G Smith declared an interest in agenda item 11 "Island Games – Gotland 2017", as his sister-in-law is a competitor. Mr Smith confirmed that he would take no part in that discussion.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2017 were approved on the motion of Mr Coutts, seconded by Mr Cooper.

Corporate Services and Executive Services – Directorate Performance Report – 2016/17

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate Services (CRP-09-17-F) which summarised the activity and performance of the Corporate and Executive Services for the year 2016/17. Appendix A, an Infographic, which provided the Committee with a range of statistics on activities, outputs and achievements of the Directorate over the last year, was tabled at the meeting.

The Director of Corporate Services summarised the main terms of the report.

In response to questions relating to the achievement listed in Section 4.4, “Schools all have their designated number of computing devices, and have all pre-2010 devices replaced”, the Director of Corporate Services advised that in addition to ongoing dialogue, meetings take place with all Head Teachers at least annually to confirm ICT requirements for the school. In terms of whether the number of ICT devices in schools have increased or decreased over time, the Director of Corporate Services advised that she would source that information and circulate to Members. Regarding responses to requests for technical assistance, she reported that since the introduction of the new systems on the ICT Helpdesk, performance in that area has improved.

In referring to Section 4.10, clarity was sought on the additional technical and legal sources that have been required to safeguard the Council’s interests in terms of the North Ness decant. The Director of Corporate Services advised on the work involved to investigate the issues to achieve a resolution to move back into the building. In that regard, she said that following some further testing a timescale will be established for staff to return to the building.

In response to a question, the Director of Corporate Services advised on the further work that will be carried out to review all aspects of the governance of the IJB, which she said will be reported through various groups, the IJB for decision, and to Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

During debate, comment was made that while appropriate scrutiny and reporting on performance was critical, a suggestion was made for focus to be given to one or two work streams that contribute significantly to the Council’s objectives and priorities, and to report in detail on all aspects of the project, which would be more meaningful to Members.

Reference was made to the recent media coverage on the criticism of the local Councils’ response in the aftermath of the fatal tower fire in London, and on the need to ensure Shetland Islands Council would be ready to respond to any major incident and support the community. A suggestion was made for a report to Committee in that regard, and the Chair advised on the opportunity for discussion with the Emergency Planning Team.

On the motion of Mr C Smith, seconded by Mr G Smith, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

40/17

Management Accounts for Community Health and Social Care 2016/17 – Projected Outturn

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager –Finance (F-049-17-F), which enabled the Committee to note the financial performance of services within the Community Health and Social Care Directorate.

The Executive Manager – Finance summarised the main terms of the report.

During the discussion, comment was made that while the report informed the Committee on the budget allocation to the IJB, other than the three Members that have been appointed to the IJB there was no means of informing all other Members on the quality of care being provided. In responding, the Director of Corporate Services referred to the complex and unique governance structure in introducing IJBs in Scotland, and in that regard to the decision of the Council that with the allocation of funding, the detailed performance of services had been delegated to the IJB. However she said that while all Members would have access to the reports for meetings of the IJB, she appreciated that Members may wish to be more involved. She advised that discussion would take place with the Lead Officer and Chair of the IJB on how all Members can be better informed from IJB meetings.

Reference was made to the concern that Local Authorities are paying for community care staff hours that are not specifically delivering services to clients. While it was acknowledged that this was a complex subject with no straightforward solution, it was suggested that Members would benefit for further detail on this issue that needs to be addressed.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

41/17

Management Accounts for Policy & Resources Committee 2016/17 - Projected Outturn at Quarter 4

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager –Finance (F-045-17-F), which enabled the Committee to monitor the financial performance of services within its remit to ensure that Members are aware of the forecast income and expenditure and the impact that this will have with regard to delivering the approved budget.

The Executive Manager – Finance summarised the main terms of the report.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

42/17

Shetland Islands Council 2016/17 Outturn Draft

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-041-17-F), which presented the overall draft outturn position for the Council for 2016/17.

The Executive Manager – Finance summarised the main terms of the report, and commented on the good position from the perspective of delivering on the financial management arrangements and constraints.

During the discussion, comment was made on the extremely good outturn position for 2016/17. In response to questions, the Executive Manager – Finance reported

that the underspend on the Spend to Save budget was a consequence of the favourable financial situation during the year. The Executive Manager – Finance reminded the Committee that following a review of the Spend to Save Scheme, consideration can now be given to extending the payback period. He acknowledged however that there was a need to review the scheme further to make best use of the availability of funding, and with further promotion from a revenue perspective.

During debate, reference was made to the positive financial position achieved in the context of the Government cuts and challenging budgets, which was a credit to the staff involved. Comment was also made on the services that have had to be reduced to achieve the budget position.

On the motion of Mr C Smith, seconded by Mr Cooper, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

Decision:

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council resolve to:

- note the 2016/17 draft outturn position; and
- APPROVE the 2016/17 proposed revenue and capital carry forwards, as detailed in section 7 of Appendix 1 “2016/17 Financial Review”.

43/17

Revision of Risk Board Terms of Reference and Risk Management Policy, Strategy and associated documents

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Audit, Risk and Improvement (IA-09-17-F), which informed on revisions to the Risk Management Policy, Strategy, and Terms of Reference.

The Executive Manager – Audit, Risk and Improvement summarised the main terms of the report. In referring to Appendix 3, Section 2.10.1, he advised from a discussion with the Executive Manager – Governance and Law, that “Audit Committee” should read “Policy and Resources Committee”.

On the motion of Mr C Smith, seconded by Mr Thomson, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report, with the change to be made to Appendix 3, Section 2.10.1.

Decision:

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- approve the updated Risk Management Policy, Risk Management Strategy and associated documents; and
- agree that future updates to risk management documents outwith the three year periodic review should be made and reported to the Risk Board where these are required to give effect to changes in operational procedures, noting that any such changes will be notified in the document version control and, where considered necessary, by a briefing note to Councillors and/or officers.

Local Government Benchmarking Framework

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Audit, Risk and Improvement (IA-11-17-F), which presented the recently published set of public results from a national Local Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) exercise carried out across all Scottish Councils.

The Executive Manager – Audit, Risk and Improvement introduced the report.

During the discussion, comment was made on the number of performance indicators included in the appendices however it was questioned how useful the information was to Members. Particular reference was made to the updates provided in the “Future Improvement” sections, which are populated by the Service areas, in terms of its value. In that regard, a suggestion was made for more narrative to relate directly to the Corporate Plan and Directorate Plan, and which could lead to direct improvements. The Director of Corporate Services acknowledged that there was need for a balance in terms of reporting, as there is an expectation for the national benchmarking data to be reported to Committee. She suggested therefore, that information briefings could be compiled, linking performance indicators with expectations, and for the information to be used as an integral part of Service redesign and inform on contributions to the Council’s outcomes.

In response to a question, the Performance and Improvement Adviser advised on the issues in terms of financial comparisons across Local Authorities to ensure a more level playing field. In that regard, he reported that a Working Group had been set up to get more consistency between Councils.

In response to a question, the Performance and Improvement Adviser advised that he could provide statistics to Members on the Performance Indicator “What is the current gender balance in more senior posts”, excluding marine staff.

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

Personal Development Plan Policy

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Human Resources (HR-09-17-F), which presented the revised and renamed Personal Development Plan Policy (previously the Employee Review and Development Policy).

The Executive Manager – Human Resources summarised the main terms of the report. She advised on a proposal made at Employees JCC, for the Policy to clarify the inclusion of College Lecturers, at Section 2.1.

In response to questions, the Executive Manager – Human Resources informed on the issues with the current Employee Review and Development Policy, where it was found to be cumbersome and inflexible, and did not encourage conversation or engagement between managers and staff. She advised on the challenge to balance the aspirations of employees and the needs of the Council with budget constraints, however on-line learning can be accessed by all staff across the Council to develop their future skills requirements.

The Executive Manager – Human Resources advised that Personal Development Plan (PDP) appraisals will take place at all levels of the Council, and will be

recorded on the Council's CHRIS System. In response to questions on the review of the Policy, the Executive Manager advised from discussion at Employees JCC in terms of an informal review after 2 years, with the main review after 3 years, and she undertook to seek feedback from staff on the PDP process at the end of the year.

On the motion of C Smith, seconded by Mr Thomson, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report, with the amendment to Section 2.1 of the Policy.

Decision

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Personal Development Plan Policy for all staff except Teachers.

46/17

Workforce Development Policy

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Human Resources (HR-10-17-F), which presented the revised and renamed Workforce Development Policy (previously the Staff Development Policy).

The Executive Manager – Human Resources summarised the main terms of the report. She advised on the proposed change to the Policy at 2.1, to clarify the inclusion of College Lecturers.

In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Human Resources confirmed that the repayment of training costs, as outlined in Section 4.7 of the report, would apply to marine staff. In that regard, she went on to advise that there have not been many instances of employees leaving the Council within one year of achieving a qualification funded by the Council.

In response to questions, the Executive Manager – Human Resources advised on the objective to use e-learning where the Service and Workforce Development agree it would be the best means to deliver training. The Executive Manager – Human Resources advised that the Workforce Development Team includes officers from the Human Resources Service, however wider discussion includes representation from Shetland College, Train Shetland and the NAFC Marine Centre. In referring to the importance of the development of e-learning, Mr G Smith sought assurance that the Workforce Development Team would include expertise from Shetland College and Train Shetland as a matter of course in the development of e-learning. In that regard, Mr G Smith moved the recommendations in the report. Mr Leask seconded.

Decision

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve:

- the change to the repayment of qualification fees threshold from £1,000 to £650.
- the revised Workforce Development Policy for all staff, except Teachers; and for the Workforce Development Team to include representation from Shetland College and Train Shetland in the development of e-learning.

(The meeting adjourned at 11.30am, and reconvened at 11.40am).

47/17

Support and Supervision Policy for Health and Social Care Staff in Community Health and Social Care Services and Children's Services

The Committee considered a joint report by the Practice Education Lead, NHS and Chief Social Work Officer (CS-10-17-F), which presented the Support and Supervision Policy for Health and Social Care Staff in Community Health and Social Care Services and Children's Services.

The Chief Social Work Officer summarised the main terms of the report.

In response to questions, the Chief Social Worker advised that there will be a range of options for supervision, and that it may take some time to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for all the groups involved. She confirmed that the supervision process will be monitored, and advised that the toolkit for supervision includes an audit tool to get feedback from staff on how supervision has been working.

During debate, comment was made on the level of detail in the report, and officers were congratulated on the development of the Policy.

On the motion of Mr C Smith, seconded by Mr McGregor, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

Decision

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Support and Supervision Policy for Health and Social Care Staff in Community Health and Social Care Services and Children's Services.

48/17

Equality Outcomes 2017-2021

A report by the Director of Development Services (DV-37-17-F) presented the Equality Outcomes, which set out the work the Council and its community planning partners plan to focus on over the next four years to ensure the Council is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The Partnership Officer summarised the main terms of the report.

During the discussion, comment was made in terms of the important issues highlighted in the report. In that regard, reference was made to the employee information, on page 58, from training carried out in 2015/16. It was suggested that this information could be expanded to link to Personal Development Plans and access to training and development by staff, to better inform on how training is being delivered.

On the motion of Mr C Smith, seconded Mr Cooper, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

Decision

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Equality Outcomes 2017-2021.

(Mr G Smith left the meeting).

49/17

Island Games – Gotland 2017

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance (F-057-17-F), which sought consideration of a speculative approach made by the Shetland Islands Games Association (SIGA) for financial support in taking a team from Shetland to the Islands Games in Gotland, Sweden at the end of June 2017.

The Executive Manager – Finance summarised the main terms of the report.

A request was made for clarity on the final sentence in Section 6.9 of the report. The Executive Manager – Finance advised that although there is no specific budget this financial year for grants to voluntary organisations, should the Committee so decide, funding could be sourced from the underspend in 2016/17.

In response to questions, the Executive Manager – Finance advised on the commitment made by SIGA for the team to attend the Games in Gotland, and on the late submission of the request for financial support for participation at the event. The Executive Manager – Finance said that he was not aware of the specific funding from Community Councils for participants to attend the event, however it was further advised that Delting Community Council had received detailed applications, and had provided financial support to two participants.

During the discussion, Members advised on their concern that in providing support in this instance could encourage other voluntary organisations to seek grant funding from the Council, and on the reputational damage to the Council. In that regard, the Executive Manager – Finance advised in terms of the budget being set, and to the decision made by the Council for reductions to budgets and to live within its means. He suggested that the Council could look to approve a Scheme in the future rather than to respond to individual requests for financial support. In response to a suggestion, the Executive Manager – Finance stated that the Council's resources are allocated and decisions had been taken, and there are no spare resources to top up on any areas. The Executive Manager – Finance advised on having had sight of SIGA's accounts, and he advised that the organisation does not carry over any significant amount of funding from one Games to the next, and he said that any speculative support from the Council at this time would be an overall contribution rather than to any individual participants. In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Finance advised that detail of the Council's historic support to SIGA was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Comment was made on the Island Games being the biggest sporting event from Shetland and to the level of sporting achievements by the competitors. Whilst it was also noted that there was a high number of managers and officials attending with the Shetland team, compared to other island teams. Reference was also made to Section 4.3 of the report, where it was reported that 37 of the competitors from Shetland are in full-time education, however it was questioned how the Council funding could be directed at the participants most in need of support to attend the Games

During the discussion, Members suggested that the funding in this instance could be a one-off grant, rather than setting any precedent for other sporting organisations to apply and receive funding. There was also a suggestion made that the funding could be considered as a discretionary spend from the Council's civic budget, with the games being a civic event

During debate, comments were made the sum being considered to SIGA was not a significant amount, and there was a need to realise that the Island Games was a

prestigious event, where the competitors are ambassadors for Shetland. Concern was however expressed at the timing of the application to the Council with the Games being held next week, and that participation has therefore been fully funded. There was also be some question as to how to direct the support to the young people in full time education, where this distribution would have to be evidenced. A comment was also made that in the event that the Council agreed to provide funding, that grant aid conditions should have been included with this report.

The Director of Corporate Services suggested that, in the absence of a specific Council policy or scheme, Members may benefit from further information to help in their debate in terms of the extent to which the Council would normally subsidise young people to attend events outwith Shetland, and she suggested the option to defer making a decision, pending that additional information. In response to question, it was confirmed that the additional information could be presented to the Council meeting on 28 June.

During continued debate, concern was expressed at the late application by letter to the Council, when a decision had been made to cut support to sporting groups and there is no scheme to prioritise such funding. It was also noted the application did not specify any areas of specific need.

Mr T Smith said that, should the Committee decide, it would be possible to make the funding a one-off grant, and he referred to ongoing costs for competitors at the higher level to travel to attend events, and he said that some have possibly not been able to complete at the Islands Games. Mr T Smith moved that a sum, not exceeding £10,000 be awarded to SIGA, with funding from the underspend in the 2016/17 budget. Mr Duncan seconded.

During the discussion that followed, concern was expressed at the higher level of assistance proposed, particularly as no detail has been given on how the funding would be applied.

Mr Burgess said that he had taken on board the comments made during the discussion, and said that while the application does not apply to any specific Policy, there could be links with the Corporate Plan. Mr Burgess moved as an amendment, to defer a decision to the Full Council on 28 June 2017, for further information and for further civic or community consideration. Mr McGregor seconded.

(Mr Coutts gave notice of a further amendment).

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

Amendment (Mr Burgess)	5
Motion (Mr T Smith)	3

(Mr Coutts withdrew his notice of further amendment).

Decision

The Committee deferred a decision to the Full Council on 28 June 2017, for further information and for further civic or community consideration.

(Mr T Smith left the meeting).

Mr C Smith moved that in order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information contained in the appendix to the report, the Committee resolve to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of the following item of business. Mr Coutts seconded.

50/17 **Irrecoverable Debt 2016/17**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Finance which notified Council of the identified debts which are now deemed to be uncollectable and which, therefore, have been written off during 2016/17.

The Executive Manager – Finance introduced the report.

During the discussion, the Executive Manager – Finance reported that in some areas, instances of bad debt are increasing as a consequence of the changes in benefit entitlements. He advised however that in other areas, debt is at similar and reducing levels, for example, Council Tax.

In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Finance undertook to advise Members by email, on the overall position on rent arrears in the Council.

In response to questions, the Executive Manager – Governance and Law advised on the additional resources to deal with debt recovery, which has improved response times and will provide a baseline for future years. He also suggested that Members could be provided with additional information on recovery of debt on a quarterly basis. The Executive Manager – Finance advised on the Council's debt recovery process, which he undertook to share with Members.

Decision

The Committee **NOTED** the individual debtors and summary of debts written off during 2016/17.

The meeting concluded 12.45pm.

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Chair