

# MINUTES

# A&B - Public

**Education and Families Committee  
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick  
Monday 4 February 2019 at 10.00am**

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

P Campbell	S Coutts
C Hughson	E Macdonald
G Smith	T Smith
R Thomson	B Wishart

**Religious Representatives:**

T Macintyre	M Tregonning
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**Apologies:**

J Fraser  
R McGregor  
D Sandison

**In Attendance:**

H Budge, Director – Children’s Services  
W Lowrie, Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families  
R Sinclair, Executive Manager – Capital Programme  
S Thomson, Executive Manager – Schools  
N Watt, Executive Manager – Sport and Leisure  
S Flaws, Quality Improvement Officer - Early Learning and Childcare  
H Sutherland, Head of Planning and Modernisation, NHS  
K Johnston, Solicitor  
L Johnson, Active Schools Manager  
M Thomson, Management Accountant  
L Adamson, Committee Officer

**Chairperson**

Mr G Smith, Chair of the Committee, presided.

**Circular**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

The Chair advised on the importance of today’s agenda, with a strong theme of prevention running through all the reports. He said that while some of the reports have resources issues to maintain service levels, the focus for the Committee should be on prevention, to improve the life chances of the more vulnerable children and young people. He also referred to the aim in the Shetland Partnership Plan, for Shetland to be a safe and happy place for all children.

## **Declarations of Interest**

Ms Wishart declared an interest in Item 6, "Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-23", as a board member of Shetland Women's Aid. Ms Wishart advised that she would leave the Chamber during that discussion.

## **Minutes**

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2018, on the motion of Mr T Smith, seconded by Ms Wishart.

### **1/19      External Audit Report - Care Inspectorate Report on Lunnasting Primary School Nursery**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services (CS-01-19-F) providing information on the Care Inspectorate Report following the recent inspection of the Lunnasting Primary School Nursery.

The Director of Children's Services introduced the report, highlighting the Inspection Grades and areas of strength identified within the nursery. She reported that while no recommendations were made, the Care Inspectorate found four points to be taken forward by the nursery, as set out in Section 4.2.

In responding to questions, the Director of Children's Services advised that the four points highlighted by the Care Inspectorate would be taken forward as part of the nursery's improvement plan for next year. In terms of the two areas listed as 'not assessed' at Section 2.6, she explained that some inspection reports are proportionate, whereby should a suitable standard be reached in a previous inspection, that may not be an area of focus in a subsequent inspection.

During debate, the Chair referred to the strengths in the nursery as reported at Section 4.1, noting in particular the positive comments on involving parents and from the children who use the nursery. He added that the Service and users of the nursery can be proud of the outcome of the inspection.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee NOTED the content of the report.

### **2/19      External Audit Report – Care Inspectorate Report on Mossbank Primary School Nursery**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services (CS-04-19-F) providing information on the Care Inspectorate Report on Mossbank Wraparound Care.

In introducing the report, the Director of Children's Services highlighted the four 'good' inspection grades received on Mossbank Wraparound Care and the main areas of strength as set out in Section 4.1. She advised on the positive report, and said that while there were no concerns or recommendations there were a number of the points to be taken forward.

In responding to questions relating to the point raised by the Care Inspectorate for staff at the nursery to undertake training, the Director of Children's Services advised

that the majority of training would be undertaken during in-service days and would be completed during the year and prior to the next inspection.

During the discussion, reference was made to the point raised by the Care Inspectorate at Section 4.2 that children would benefit from a more flexible routine. In that regard, the Chair referred to the change on how curriculum is expected to be delivered, increasing the involvement of children in their choices on learning. The Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare advised on the objective to get the best out of each young child through facilitating opportunities for children to be more creative, which she advised is an area being worked on at this time.

During debate, comment was made on the two positive Care Inspectorate reports presented to Committee, which evidence that children are being very well looked after in their nursery setting.

**Decision:**

The Committee NOTED the content of the report.

3/19

**Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare - Phasing and Capital Programme Plan - Update 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report by the Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare (CS-05-19-F) which provided an update on the Phasing and the Capital Programme Plan for the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

In introducing the report, the Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare advised on the change in funding from the Scottish Government as set out at Section 4.2. She provided an update on the Funded Providers Working Group and on the additional staffing to support the expansion of early learning and childcare in Shetland. She also referred Members to the Project Construction Programmes, which set out the timelines for the works, at Appendix A.

Reference was made to the change in funding arrangements from the Scottish Government for the expansion of early learning and childcare, which the Scottish Government had previously confirmed would be fully funded. In that regard, it was reported that as part of the 2019/20 settlement, £91k has been taken out of the ring-fenced funding and is now part of the general revenue grant to the Council. It was confirmed that the £91k would be allocated to Children's Services to support early learning and childcare, however this will now impact on the Council's General Revenue budget.

In referring to the timelines for completion of the work at the four ELC settings, as presented at Appendix A, clarity was sought on the reason for the occupation dates at three of the nurseries being set for the week following the start of the school year. The Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare advised that the additional week is to ensure all internal works were complete prior to occupation. She added however, that she did not anticipate any delays and would work with the team in the Capital Programme Service to meet the deadlines set.

Responding to comments from the Chair on the tight timetables set, the Executive Manager – Capital Programme confirmed that this was a priority project for the Technical team within the Capital Programme Service. He advised that only

minimal changes have been made to the timescales since reporting to Committee in December 2018. The Executive Manager – Capital Programme provided an updated on each of the projects, confirming that expressions of interest for works to Cunningsburgh and Baltasound would be advertised this week, and that the works at Sound School and Bells Brae were both on schedule. He confirmed that the projects would be closely monitored and any issues would be reported to Members. In that regard, the Chair referred to the time critical nature of the projects, and stressed the importance for the Committee to be informed on any issues in early course. He also referred to the funding that can be deployed should additional resources be required to deliver the new service model.

In responding to concerns regarding the potential for slippage on the projects during the busier construction phase within the summer holiday period, the Executive Manager – Capital Programme advised that the team were focused to follow the programme and deliver the projects as planned. He added that the projects being located at different areas of Shetland should spread the works around the whole contractor community, which he said should mitigate the risk of delay to some extent.

In responding to a question, the Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare provided an overview of the calculation on capacity following delivery of the expansion programme, advising on the likelihood that there would be over capacity across Shetland. She referred however on the uncertainty due to the flexibility for parents to choose the number of hours their child would be at nursery, however there should be a better indication on capacity calculations following the Early Years Registration week, which she advised was currently underway. In responding to a further question, she advised on the Allocations Policy that would be followed should circumstances arise whereby there is excess demand for a particular nursery setting.

In response to a question, the Quality Improvement Officer – Early Learning and Childcare advised on proposals for works to be carried out to ensure sufficient capacity at Little Tykes nursery in Tingwall, during August 2020.

During the discussion, clarity was sought on procedures in place should tenders come in above budget. The Executive Manager – Capital Programme advised that, in line with Council's Contract Standing Orders, the issue would first be referred to CMT where it could be agreed that the decision be taken at officer level, or depending on the scale of the increased cost, presented to Members for decision. The Chair confirmed that a special meeting would be arranged should it be necessary to expedite a decision from Committee.

During debate, the Chair commented on the importance of prevention and for children and young people to get as good an early start as possible, being a key priority for the Council. He made reference to the recent positive reporting in the media on the expansion of early learning and childcare, which he said informed on some of the challenges, but also highlighted the good working within the Service and the schools to take forward the project. He also referred to the assurance that any potential delays to the programme would be brought to the attention of the Committee. The Leader commented on the positive progress being made, particularly with the Council being a small local authority. He advised however on his concerns on the financial aspects of the project, where the cuts in ring-fenced funding will have impacts elsewhere in the Council.

## **Decision:**

The Committee NOTED the updated position in relation to the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.

4/19

### **Asset Investment Plan - Business Case: Residential Childcare**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Capital Programme (CPS-01-19-F) presenting the Full Business Case for Residential Childcare for Looked After Children.

In introducing the report, the Executive Manager – Capital Programme advised that the Full Business Case had included comparisons on available sites, timescales and costs between the Council building the residential facility or to commission Hjaltland Housing Association (HHA). He confirmed that following that further assessment the preferred option was still to procure the facility in partnership with HHA.

In responding to questions, clarity was provided on the range of accommodation facilities considered in the shortlisted options. The Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families confirmed that Option 3 was the preferred option, providing 4-5 additional beds, where children can have short or long-term placements. This arrangement would support young people moving forward with independent living skills, in line with Continuing Care legislation. Option 3 would also reduce the need for off-island placements, however some off-island placements would still be required for specific educational or medical needs.

Responding to a question, the Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families advised on the duty of care, in terms of providing support to young adults to plan to move on in their lives, and she confirmed the duty of care to continue to support young adults up to the age of 25 years.

In responding to a further question, the Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families advised on the shift nationally on the qualification requirement for residential care staff. In term of training of residential care staff, a plea was made to use local training facilities in the first instance.

In response to a comment, the Executive Manager – Capital Programme clarified that in taking forward Option 3, the Council would have clear title and ownership of the residential care facility.

During debate, Ms Macdonald commented on the excellent report, which she said presented a very clear case for Option 3. Ms Macdonald moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report. Mr Campbell seconded.

## **Decision:**

The Committee considered the terms of the report in relation to the impact on services and functions, and RECOMMENDED that the Policy and Resources Committee approve preferred Option 3, as set out in Appendix A, for recommendation to Council.

5/19

### **Shetland Islands Integrated Children's Plan: Annual Report 2017-18**

The Committee considered the report by the Director of Children's Services, Shetland Islands Council and the Director of Nursing and Acute Services, NHS Shetland (CS-03-19-F) that presented the first Integrated Children's Plan, Annual Report.

The Director of Children's Services introduced the report, advising on the four key themes of the Plan as set out in Section 2.3. She thanked the Head of Planning and Modernisation, NHS, and the officers from all the organisations who provide services to young people in Shetland who have been involved in developing the Plan.

The Chair commented on the detailed report, which he said gave assurance on the multi-agency approach to tackle issues and address inequality and poor experiences, and to make sure all young people and children can feel that Shetland is a safe and happy place to live.

In responding to a question, the Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families provided an overview of the regular dialogue and joint working with midwives in terms of early intervention and prevention.

Reference was made to the table on Page 21 of the Plan, which set out the Child Protection Committee activity for the year 2017/18, where clarity was sought on the report that there was only one child on the Child Protection Register at 31 March 2018. The Interim Depute Executive Manager – Children and Families confirmed that at that particular date, only old child had been on the Register. She went on to advise that there were a number of reasons for children to come off the Register, but that generally there would be 5-6 children on the Register at any one time.

In responding to a question relating to the tackling inequalities agenda, at Page 37 of the Plan, the Committee was advised on proposals for a pilot scheme to provide free schools meals during the October school break in Lerwick and the North Isles. It was advised that details of the scheme are being progressed and that a report would be presented to Committee in due course to advise on uptake and feedback from the pilot.

In referring to the graph on Page 60 of the Plan, reference was made to the noted decrease in the percentage of pupils who have entered positive destinations after leaving school. The Director of Children's Services advised on her concern that Shetland was now below the Scottish average on this Indicator. She advised however that while the numbers were low in Shetland, it was important that there was an improvement in this area. In that regard, she advised that work would be undertaken with the school leavers to endeavour to find meaningful destinations, and that progress would be monitored. In response to a suggestion, it was agreed that updates on this indicator would be provided to Committee within the Performance Monitoring reports.

During debate, comment was made on the welcomed report, which informed on the early intervention and prevention approach, and for partnership working to improve the outcomes for families in Shetland. On the motion of Mr G Smith, seconded by Mrs Hughson, the Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

**Decision:**

The Committee APPROVED the Shetland Islands Integrated Children's Service Plan: Annual Report 2017-18, for publication.

*(Ms Wishart left the meeting).*

6/19

**Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-23**

The Committee considered a report by the Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS Shetland (CC-08-19-F) that sought approval for a revised Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy, on behalf of the Shetland Domestic Abuse Partnership.

The Head of Planning and Modernisation, NHS, introduced the report, and provided an overview of the Strategy, attached as Appendix 1.

The Chair commented on the importance to present the Strategy to Committee, as both children and adults can be affected and impacted by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

In responding to a question from Ms Macdonald, relating to one of the medium term actions on Page 16 of the Strategy, the Head of Planning and Modernisation advised on the proposed multi-agency approach to develop and implement a comprehensive programme for preventative work in both primary and secondary schools, covering domestic abuse and sexual violence primarily. She advised however that she could provide Ms Macdonald with further detail on the programme.

In responding to a question, it was clarified that the timeframes for the priority, short, medium and longer-term actions were set out in Section 5 of the Strategy.

During debate, concern was expressed on the reduction in funding and the impact on service delivery into the future. While acknowledging the recurring theme in terms of adequate resources, the Chair advised on the need for the Committee to focus on the impact of the Strategy and Plan to ensure young people are kept safe.

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

**Decision:**

The Committee:

- COMMENTED and REVIEWED issues seen as significant to meeting the objectives of the Shetland Islands Health and Social Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Plan 2017-2020 with regard to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence; and
- APPROVED the Shetland Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023.

*(Ms Wishart returned to the meeting).*

7/19

**Commonwealth Games 2014 – A Legacy for Shetland 2017/18 Update**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Sport and Leisure (CS-02-19-F), which provided information on areas of work undertaken by the Sport and Leisure Service during the academic year 2017/18 to monitor the legacy outcomes for Shetland from the Commonwealth Games 2014. The report also included information on the national key performance indicators.

The Executive Manager – Sport and Leisure summarised the main terms of the report. He confirmed the steady improvement in the performance indicators over the last few years, other than in “School to Club links” as reported in Section 4.8.

In response to a question, the Active Schools Manager reported that the decrease in the number of School to Club links could be a consequence of long-term sickness and a vacancy within the service, and also that a number of clubs do not have capacity in terms of volunteers. In that regard, the Chair acknowledged that while individuals may be interested to deliver sports, the increasing requirements and bureaucratic processes could discourage people from volunteering.

In responding to questions, the Executive Manager – Sports and Leisure advised that a detailed economic assessment had not been undertaken from when Shetland hosted the Island Games in 2005, however there had been significant benefits in terms of facilities, and from training officials and umpires and in coach development. He advised on the proposal for Shetland to bid to host the Islands Games in 2027, or any future Games, and confirmed that a full legacy outcomes assessment would be undertaken as part of that project. Mr Campbell advised also on the proposal for Shetland to bid for the Tall Ships in 2023, adding that Sail Training International look for a legacy element as part of the bids.

During debate, the Leader commented that the community should be proud of the achievements as presented in the Annual Report, which he said was a credit to the staff and volunteers involved. In that regard, he made reference to the ‘Deliverers’ indicator informing that in 2017/18 93% of the people coaching or assisting with sports activities were volunteers, which he said was to be commended.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee NOTED the contents of the report and its appendix and made relevant comments on the Sport and Leisure Service’s progress on the national key performance indicators highlighted in the report.

The meeting concluded at 11.30am.

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Chair