

**Special Shetland Islands Council  
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick  
Tuesday 30 August 2005 at 10 a.m.**

**Present:**

A J Cluness	F B Grains
L Angus	B Cheyne
C B Eunson	R G Feather
B P Gregson	L G Groat
I J Hawkins	J H Henry
J C Irvine	W H Manson
J P Nicolson	F A Robertson
J G Simpson	W Tait

**Apologies**

E J Knight	G G Mitchell
W A Ratter	W N Stove
T W Stove	

**In attendance (Officers):**

G Spall, Executive Director – Infrastructure Services  
J Smith, Head of Organisational Development  
D Bell, Personnel Manager  
A Cogle, Service Manager – Administration

**Also:**

H Sutherland, General Manager – Shetland Charitable Trust

**Chairperson**

Mr A J Cluness, Convener of the Council, presided.

**Circular**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

**123/05      Progress Report: Shetland Public Sector Co-operation Project**

The Council considered a report by the Head of Organisational Development (Appendix 1).

The Convener said that with 40% of the adult population in Shetland working in the public sector, the aim of the project was to see if there were ways in which public sector working in Shetland could be done more efficiently. He said the Project had been awarded £100,000 which would enable the Project to look in detail at co-ordination of some support services, management and administration of the public sector in Shetland.

Mr L G Groat urged Members to be cautious about a 'take over'. He said that whilst there should be as much co-operation between the SIC and the NHS as possible, he said that the Council had to be very careful.

*[Mr J P Nicolson attended the meeting.]*

Mrs I J Hawkins agreed with the concerns raised by Mr Groat. She said that if the Council and NHS services were to amalgamate, there would be fewer jobs and more people would start to leave Shetland. Mrs Hawkins said it was important to also remember that the Council was an elected body, and the NHS were selected by Ministers, and that she was of the view that any partnership body should be an elected one.

Mr Cluness said that this was an opportunity for Shetland and that this report set out the start of the process. He said there would be considerable consultation and reports back to the Council on a number of occasions, and ultimately to the Council for a final decision.

Mrs Grains said it was important to remember that the Council had already agreed to look at this. She referred to the timetable for the project, and suggested that a progress report be brought to the Council after each stage. Members agreed.

Mr J P Nicolson referred to the costs involved, and said he would have liked more information about how the £200k was to be spent. Mr A J Cluness advised that £100k had been received from the Scottish Executive, and the remaining £100k would be on staff time. He agreed that full details would be provided to Members directly by the General Manager.

*(Mr W H Manson attended the meeting.)*

Mrs B Cheyne said she agreed with comments that had been made, but was also of the view that there was some scope for sharing management in areas such as buildings and property. She said that this was not really a controversial issue, and could open the door for further management co-operation.

Mr L Angus said that he shared the views made so far, and had a deep distrust of the whole process. Mr Angus said it was necessary for the Council to take a more radical approach to this, and suggested that the Council take over full responsibility for providing the care services for the elderly, and that the NHS provide the resources.

Mr A J Cluness said that whilst Members were somewhat pessimistic at this stage, it was clear that the Council had to plan ahead, and not just on joint administration or management, but in relation to governance itself. He said that Shetland could either sit back and wait for something to be imposed, or it could put something together that is considered the best way forward for Shetland, based upon collective knowledge.

Mr L Groat said it was important that the Group were provided with the comments made by Members today, with emphasis being placed on the fact that the concerns being expressed by Members were sincere and worrying.

Mrs F B Grains concluded by saying that it was important for the Council to influence the thinking of this Group, and this could be helped by regular reports being fed back to the Council for comments. She said that today was not the day for debating new ideas, but to feed back to the Council at regular intervals.

The Council noted the terms of the report.

124/05 **Selection Arrangements for Head of Education**

The Council considered a report by the Head of Organisational Development (Appendix 2).

The Council approved the recommendations contained in the report, on the motion of Mr A J Cluness, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, and appointed the following Members to the selection panel for the Head of Education:

L Angus  
A J Cluness  
J Henry  
J P Nicolson

A J Cluness  
CONVENER