

# **MINUTE**

## **‘B’**

**Services Committee**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**  
**Thursday 15 June 2006 at 10.30am**

**Present:**

F B Grains	L Angus
B J Cheyne	C B Eunson
R G Feather	B P Gregson
L G Groat	I J Hawkins
J A Inkster	E J Knight
W H Manson	Capt G G Mitchell
J P Nicolson	W A Ratter
J G Simpson	W N Stove
W Tait	

**Apologies:**

A J Cluness	J H Henry
J C Irvine	F A Robertson
T W Stove	

**In Attendance:**

M Goodlad, Chief Executive  
B Doughty, Executive Director, Education and Social Care  
N Galbraith, Interim Head of Education  
H Budge, Quality Improvement Manager  
J Reyner, Acting Quality Improvement Manager  
C Medley, Head of Housing  
J Smith, Head of Organisational Development  
G Johnston, Head of Finance  
J Thomason, Senior Assistant Accountant  
C Ferguson, Head of Community Care  
M Manzie, Community Health Partnership  
G Smith, Director, Shetland College and Train Shetland  
N Watt, Sport and Leisure Services Manager  
M Duncan, Grants Co-ordinator  
A Nicol, Youth Development Officer  
L Adamson, Committee Officer

**Chairperson**

Mrs F B Grains, Chairperson of the Committee, presided.

**Circular**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

**Minutes**

The minute of the meeting held on 4 May 2006, having been circulated, was confirmed.

**Members' Attendance at External Meetings**

Captain G G Mitchell      Community    Ownership    &    Stock    Transfer  
Conference, Edinburgh

Further information can be obtained from the Member concerned.

33/06      **Evaluation of the Council's Education Best Value Review**

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive (Appendix 1).

The Chief Executive introduced the report and said that the Review had been carried out as an alternative to conducting a planned Task Force review of the Education Service. Mr N Galbraith, as Interim Head of Education, and in terms of an external view by an external consultant on Best Value, undertook to examine all the issues facing the Education Service in Shetland. The Chief Executive said that the report entitled 'Examination of Shetland Islands Council's Best Value Education Service Review' sets out recommendations and proposals to be considered, with the individual issues being reported back through a process of enabling reports.

The Interim Head of Education emphasised that he had prepared the report as an external consultant from an independent view, and not through his role as the Head of Education. He then summarised the main terms of the report and said that the main issues for consideration throughout the review process must be the children and the education forum. In terms of the recommendations in the report, the Interim Head of Education said he had tried to keep the wording consistent throughout. He highlighted one omission in the recommendations of the words 'and staff' and confirmed that staff would be included in any decision to transfer to another school. He advised that the review took account of the school rolls as at February 2006, the consultation process should take 3-5 years and no school would be threatened with instant closure.

Mr W H Manson referred to the recommendations in the covering report and proposed that the timetable be prepared for the next cycle of meetings, following which each recommendation in the Review would be considered on its own merits, within the next 3 to 5 year period. It is important to ensure that the model fits the circumstances of today and the best that can be predicted for the next 10-20 years. He added that some of the recommendations

may not be implemented within that timescale, however the timetable would set the scene to plan for the future.

The Interim Head of Education emphasised that firstly the Review was an external report, and secondly a working document for the Education Service to work towards a consultation process then on to the recommendations. He said that the timetable would include a suggested strategy and programme, however every school would be considered on its own merits and a blanket policy could not be applied.

Mr W H Manson said that should the Council fail to bite this bullet, and agree to put off a decision on the future of schools in Shetland, we would be doing ourselves, and the future children of Shetland a disservice. Mr W H Manson moved that the Committee adopt the recommendations in the report, and that the timetable be prepared for Services Committee in August. Captain G G Mitchell seconded.

In response to a query from Mrs B J Cheyne, the Interim Head of Education advised that a school roll of 20-30 pupils would be categorised as constituting a borderline sustainability category. Mrs Cheyne advised that it was projected that there would be an increase in pupil numbers at the Olnefirth Primary School over the next two years and the roll could in effect rise considerably to move from the category of borderline sustainability.

Mr C B Eunson said that should the recommendations in the Review be agreed, a number of rural schools would close. This would not encourage young people to stay in the area, and could lead to depopulation in the rural areas.

Mr L Angus congratulated the Interim Head of Education on the Review, and said it was a model of logic and clarity. He welcomed the inclusion of the Lerwick schools in the Review process and also the reference to vocational training.

Mr B P Gregson referred to paragraph 85 in the Review, and said that he fully agreed with the suggestion that the Education Service be allowed to operate a three year rolling programme for budgeting, and suggested that the time period should even be extended to 10 years.

Mr Gregson then referred to the proposals in the Review relating to the schools at Baltasound and Uyeasound. He said that the suggestion to close Baltasound Secondary department had come as a bolt out of the blue to the community of Unst, and to ask the community to consider such a drastic change would be totally impractical and completely counter productive. Unst has undergone a huge blow following the closure of RAF Saxavord, however the island was now on the cusp of major regeneration and

redevelopment, and to consider tearing the heart out of the community, to close a model school, at such a critical stage would be verging on disaster. Baltasound Junior High has an excellent reputation as a school of excellence with very high standards, and was a key part of the local community.

Referring to the recommendation to close Skerries Secondary School, Mr J G Simpson said that Skerries had gone through a very tough time with the loss of the salmon and fishing industry. The community of Skerries had already been involved in consultations on the future of the school, and it could be no clearer that the community want to retain the Secondary School in Skerries.

Mr W Tait referred to the previous decisions to close five schools in the south mainland, and said that these closures had not lead to the heart of the community being ripped out, and the communities were as strong as ever.

Mr B P Gregson moved as an amendment, that the Committee note the report by the Interim Head of Education, that the timetable be prepared, and the evaluation undertaken into the recommendations but to exclude the recommendations relating to Unst. Mr R G Feather seconded.

(Mr J G Simpson and Mrs I J Hawkins gave notice of further amendments).

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

Amendment (Mr B P Gregson)	7
Motion (Mr W H Manson)	10

Following concerns from Mr J P Nicolson that the Review would lead to another plethora of consultations, and to his suggestion that the evaluations be carried out using data obtained during the previous consultations, the Executive Director, Education and Social Care advised that it was a statutory requirement to undertake a current consultation process. The Interim Head of Education confirmed that it was a legal requirement that each school be considered on its own merits, using current data.

Mr J G Simpson said that the individual schools should not be picked out of the report, and moved as an amendment that the report in total should be thrown out. Mr C B Eunson seconded.

Voting took place by a show of hands, and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mr J G Simpson)	5
Motion (Mr W H Manson)	10

Mrs I J Hawkins referred to the recommendations relating to Scalloway Secondary School, and said that she fully supported the proposal for vocational courses to be developed at the school. However she was totally opposed to the further recommendation, that the pupils at Scalloway secondary be transferred to the new build Anderson High School (AHS) and this proposal would use up the spare capacity at the new build AHS. Mrs I J Hawkins moved as an amendment, that the Committee note the report, but remove reference to the second option relating to Scalloway Secondary, for the pupils to be transferred to the new build Anderson High School. Mr J A Inkster seconded.

Voting took place by a show of hands, and the result was as follows:

Amendment (Mrs I J Hawkins)	6
Motion (Mr W H Manson)	10

The Chairperson thanked Mr Galbraith for a very balanced and responsible report.

34/06      **Shared Management of Schools in Shetland: Pilot Project Cullivoe Primary School and Mid Yell Junior High School**

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Head of Schools (Appendix 2) and approved the recommendations contained therein, on the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Mr L Angus.

35/06      **Bell's Brae Nursery – Extended Session**

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Head of Schools (Appendix 3) and approved the recommendations contained therein, on the motion of Mr L Angus, seconded by Mr L G Groat.

In response to a query from Mr J P Nicolson regarding funding for the extended session, the Executive Director, Education and Social Care, advised that currently no budget was in place for any shortfall in funding for the extended session, however funding would be identified. The Interim Head of Education clarified that the additional costs would depend on numbers at the extended session.

36/06      **Orkney and Shetland Association**

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Head of Schools (Appendix 4) and, on the motion of Mr J P Nicolson, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendation contained therein.

Mr W H Manson suggested that the remaining funds could be used to promote the Shetland dialect.

37/06 **Breakfast Clubs in Shetland**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Social Care (Appendix 5).

Mr L Angus said that when Breakfast Club provision had previously been discussed the proposal had been that wherever possible Breakfast Clubs should be organised and located in schools. The Executive Director, Education and Social Care advised that Shetland Childcare Partnership were not moving away from the proposal that Breakfast Clubs should be based in schools, however it was found that the best solution at this time was that the Islesburgh Breakfast Club should remain in Islesburgh Community Centre.

Mrs B J Cheyne noted a typographical error in the table at Section 11.4. The Executive Director, Education and Social Care confirmed that the Kidzone Breakfast Club should continue to operate until 31 December 2006, and not 2007.

Mr L Angus moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report, with the addition that the Council should make a policy decision for Breakfast Clubs to be located, wherever possible, in schools. Mr W N Stove seconded. The Chairperson requested that a report be prepared on the provision of Breakfast Clubs in schools.

38/06 **Scottish Youth Parliament General Meeting, Shetland 2006**

The Committee considered a report by the Youth Services Manager (Appendix 6) and, on the motion of Mr B P Gregson, seconded by Mr J P Nicolson, approved the recommendations contained therein.

In response to a query from Mr Gregson, the Director, Shetland College and Train Shetland said he would find out and advise Mr Gregson of the venue for the meeting.

39/06 **Appointment of Representative to the Shetland Mental Health Partnership**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Legal and Administration (Appendix 7). Mr L Angus moved the recommendation in the report and nominated Mr E J Knight as the Elected Member representative on the Shetland Mental Health Partnership. Mrs B J Cheyne seconded.

40/06 **Staffing Levels Within Community Care – Occupational Therapy Service**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care (Appendix 8) and, on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mrs I J Hawkins, approved the recommendation contained therein.

In response to a query from Mr R G Feather regarding specialist skills for individuals with sensory impairment, the Head of Community Care advised that previously specialist skills had to be sourced from mainland Scotland, however local OT staff were being trained to provide the service.

41/06      **Staffing Levels within Community Care Establishments – Isleshavn, Viewforth, Edward Thomason House, Eric Gray Resource Centre and Banks Broo**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care (Appendix 9) and, on the motion of Mr C B Eunson, seconded by Mr L Angus, approved the recommendations contained therein.

In response to concerns from Mr L Angus, the Executive Director, Education and Social Care clarified that the report was to deal with current staffing levels and the recommendations from the Social Work Task Force. He added that the Council has to ensure that basic standards are met, and that was currently being done with a good standard of service being provided in Shetland. Mr L G Groat suggested that this matter be kept under review.

42/06      **Proposed Reduction of General Fund Budgets 2006/07 – Mental Health Officers**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care (Appendix 10) and, after hearing the Head of Community Care briefly introduce the report, approved the recommendation contained therein, on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr E J Knight.

43/06      **Member Involvement in Care Centres**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care (Appendix 11), and on the motion of Mrs F B Grains, seconded by Mr W N Stove, approved the recommendations in the report.

The Committee agreed that the following Members would have continuing involvement with the care settings/service areas:

Nordalea, Unst – Mr B P Gregson  
Isleshavn, Yell – Mr J P Nicolson  
Fernlea, Whalsay – Mr J G Simpson  
North Haven, Brae – Mr W A Ratter  
Wastview, Walls – Mr F A Robertson  
Overtonlea, Levenwick – Mr W Tait  
Freefield, Lerwick – Mr J C Irvine

Occupational Therapy (OT)/Aids & Adaptations – Capt G G Mitchell

Edward Thomason House, Lerwick – Mr J H Henry

Viewforth House, Lerwick – Mr L Angus

Taing House, Lerwick – Mr W N Stove

Annsbrae, Lerwick – Mr E J Knight

Craigielea/New Kantersted, Lerwick – Mr R G Feather

Independent Living Project – Mr C B Eunson

Eric Gray Resource Centre, Lerwick – Mr J A Inkster

Care at Home – Mrs I J Hawkins

Community Care Fieldwork – Mr W H Manson

44/06 **Sale of Chalets**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing and Capital Projects (Appendix 12).

Captain G G Mitchell moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. However referring to Section 6.3, Captain Mitchell proposed that should the sale of the chalets not proceed, they should be sold on the open market. Mr J A Inkster seconded.

45/06 **Fuel Poverty Strategy – Set Up of Implementation Group**

The Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing and Capital Projects and the Energy Manager, Infrastructure Services (Appendix 13). Mrs I J Hawkins moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report, and that Mr J H Henry be nominated as Chairperson of the Implementation Group. Mr W N Stove seconded.

46/06 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Lerwick Marina Users Association**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Co-ordinator (Appendix 14) and, on the motion of Mr W A Ratter, seconded by Mr J A Inkster, approved the recommendations contained therein.

47/06 **Capital Grants to Voluntary Organisation – Extension and Refurbishment of Walls Public Hall**

The Committee considered a report by the Grants Co-ordinator (Appendix 15) and, on the motion of Mr E J Knight, seconded by Mrs F B Grains, approved the recommendation contained therein.

48/06 **Shetland Child Protection Committee Annual Report and Business Plan**

The Committee noted a joint report by the Executive Director, Education and Social Care and Chief Inspector M Bell, Chair, Shetland Child Protection Committee (Appendix 16).



**In order to avoid the disclosure of exempt information, Mrs F B Grains moved, and Mr W N Stove seconded, to exclude the public in terms of the relevant legislation during consideration of agenda items 17, 18 and 19.**

(Representatives of the media left the meeting).

49/06 **Personal Data Sharing and Standards**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Social Care and, on the motion of Mr J A Inkster, seconded by Captain G G Mitchell, approved the recommendations contained therein.

In response to a query from Mr R G Feather, the Executive Director, Education and Social Care confirmed that the funding for this initiative would be constrained to the allocation from the Scottish Executive.

50/06 **Proposed Reduction of General Fund Revenue Budgets 2006/07 – Meals on Wheels Delivery Contracts**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Community Care and, after hearing the Head of Community Care briefly introduce the report, approved the recommendation contained therein, on the motion of Mr B P Gregson, seconded by Mr R G Feather.

The Head of Community Care confirmed that the proposal to use COPE Ltd. to deliver meals on wheels would offer a wide range of employment opportunities for people with learning difficulties, throughout Shetland.

51/06 **Staffing Structure for Management of Islesburgh Facilities**

The Committee considered a report by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager.

Mr J P Nicolson said it was necessary to enhance the process for recommitment to voluntary participation at the Islesburgh facilities. Mr W A Ratter said that he would like to commend to Committee the thorough work undertaken by the Members involved in the Working Group. Mr Ratter moved that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report. Mr W H Manson seconded.

Mr L Angus referred to Section 7.1 in the report, and noted with some concern a further transition period of three months, following the implementation date of the new staffing structure on 1 July 2006. He added that the services provided at Islesburgh had not suffered during the transfer to the Council, and that excellent facilities continued to be provided.

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Mr L Angus advised that discussions were currently underway to develop the Islesburgh Exhibition as a Shetland Showcase.

In response to concerns from Mr C B Eunson, the Sport and Leisure Services Manager advised that prior to the introduction of charging for member groups using Islesburgh facilities on 1 September, detailed consultation would be undertaken during the summer months. He added that some of the member organisations could be affected by the introduction of charging, however it was envisaged that groups involved in supporting young people, the elderly and those with additional needs would receive concessions. Mr L G Groat stated that throughout the process of the Working Group, assurances had been given to groups using the facilities that services to the groups would not be adversely affected by the transfer of facilities to the Council and he wished to emphasise this point at the meeting.

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F B Grains  
Chairperson