

MINUTE

A&B - Public

**Special Shetland Islands Council
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick
Thursday 10 October 2013 at 2 p.m.**

Present:

M Bell	M Burgess
P Campbell	A Duncan
G Cleaver	A Cooper
S Coutts	B Fox
R Henderson	A Manson
D Ratter	F Robertson
G Robinson	D Sandison
C Smith	G Smith
T Smith	M Stout
J Wills	A Wishart
V Wishart	

Apologies

A Westlake
S Coutts (for lateness)

In Attendance (Officers):

M Boden, Chief Executive
H Budge, Director – Children’s Services
J Gray, Executive Manager - Finance
K Johnston, Solicitor
S Laurenson, Consultant Advisor
J Thomason, Management Accountant
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer
A Cogle, Team Leader – Administrative Services

Chair:

M Bell, Convener of the Council, presided.

Circular:

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

Declarations of Interest

None

- 95/13 **Blueprint for Education - Decision on Skerries School Secondary Department**
The Council noted that this report had been withdrawn from the Education and Families Committee, and would be presented to a reconvened meeting of the Committee at a late date, and therefore there was no recommendation or report to be considered at this meeting.
- 96/13 **Blueprint for Education - Decision on Olnafirth Primary School**
The Council considered a report by the Director of Children’s Services (CS-48-13-F), which presented the Consultation Report on the proposed closure of Olnafirth Primary School.

The Director of Children's Services outlined the terms of the report, after which she responded to various questions from Members. During this, she confirmed that Brae High School had the capacity for additional pupils, and that the policy decision had been made to consult on the closure of Olnafirth Primary School. Regarding transport arrangements, the Director confirmed that separate transport arrangements would be made so that all primary pupils would travel together between Brae and Voe. With regard to staffing, the Director confirmed that the Council's staffing policies would apply, with redeployment being looked at in the first instance. In response to further questions, she confirmed that the play park would continue to be available for use and would be managed by the Sports and Leisure Service.

Regarding the role of Education Scotland during the preparation of its report on the proposal, the Director said that Education Scotland had a duty, as part of any statutory consultation process, to visit the staff and young people in both schools, and prepare a report, which was set out in full in Appendix B. She confirmed that Education Scotland had no opportunity to comment any further on the report being presented to the Committee or Council, but had confirmed that the relevant points raised by them were being addressed, and detailed in Section 14 in the consultation report.

[Mr S Coutts attended the meeting.]

In response to questions regarding future use of any closed school, the Director confirmed that, using Uyeasound Primary School closure as an example, consultation with the community would be undertaken first to determine if there was any local interest in alternative uses for the building before it was offered for sale on the open market. It was also confirmed that once a building was declared surplus to requirements in terms of the functional service, the asset would then transfer to the Capital Programme Service and if a sale was concluded, the capital receipt would be used to fund the Asset Investment Plan.

Members agreed to minute their thanks to the Director of Children's Services and her staff for all the hard work they had put in to the process.

Ms V Wishart moved that the Council adopt the recommendation of the Education Families Committee, namely to approve the decisions stated in paragraph 2.1 of the report. Mr G Robinson seconded.

Mr A Cooper moved the direct negative as an amendment. Ms A Manson seconded.

During debate, some Members made reference to the fact that whilst Olnafirth Primary School was functioning well, there were a number of placing requests outwith the area and the school was operating at less than 10% capacity, and it was not a decision they would take lightly. Other Members expressed their concern that whilst there was a wealth of information available and a lot of effort had gone into the process, there were a couple of inaccuracies in the report in terms of the translation of the view of Education Scotland. There was cognisance of the fact the parents were choosing to send their children already to Brae or Lunnasting, but that the Council had to take some of the responsibility for that because of the threat of closure being made for some time and the lack of confidence in the school remaining open.

After further debate and summing up, Members agreed unanimously to a roll call vote. The result was as follows:

M Bell	Motion
M Burgess	Motion
P Campbell	Motion
G Cleaver	Amendment
A Cooper	Amendment
S Coutts	Motion
A Duncan	Motion
B Fox	Motion
R Henderson	Amendment
A Manson	Amendment
D Ratter	Motion
F Robertson	Motion
G Robinson	Motion
D Sandison	Motion
C Smith	Motion
G Smith	Motion
T Smith	Motion
M Stout	Motion
J Wills	Motion
A Wishart	Motion
V Wishart	Motion

Motion (V Wishart)	17
Amendment (A Cooper)	4

Decision:

The Council **RESOLVED** that:

- education provision at Olnafirth Primary School be discontinued with effect from 4 July 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- the pupils of Olnafirth Primary School continue their education at Brae High School Primary Department, from 18 August 2014, or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- the catchment area for Brae High School Primary Department be altered to include the current catchment area for Olnafirth Primary School.

The meeting concluded at 3.10 p.m.

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Chair