

# MINUTES

# A&B - PUBLIC

## Development Committee

### Remote meeting

Tuesday 1 September 2020 at 10am

#### **Present:**

A Cooper	S Coutts
S Flaws	J Fraser
S Leask	A Manson
M Lyall	A Priest
T Smith	

#### **Apologies**

A Duncan

#### **In Attendance (Officers):**

N Grant, Director of Development Services  
A Jamieson, Executive Manager - Housing  
J Manson, Executive Manager – Finance  
I McDiarmid, Executive Manager – Planning  
A Cogle, Team Leader - Administration  
S Pallant, Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management  
S Shearer, Team Leader – Development Plan and Heritage  
J Belford, Solicitor  
M Hodgson, Solicitor  
C Anderson, Senior Communications Officer  
L Adamson, Committee Officer

#### **Chair:**

Mr Cooper, Chair of the Committee, presided.

The Chair advised that whilst the public are excluded from attendance at this meeting under the terms of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, Members of the local media were in attendance via remote link. He also advised that this meeting was being recorded and would be published online for public access after the meeting.

#### **Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Mr T Smith declared an interest in item 1, “Allocation Policy Annual Review Report” and Item 2, “Annual Assurance Statement 2020” as a Board Member of Hjaltsland Housing Association (HHA). Mr Smith said that he did not intend to leave the meeting unless there was specific discussion around HHA.

Mr Fraser declared an interest in item 1, “Allocation Policy Annual Review Report” and Item 2, “Annual Assurance Statement 2020”, as a tenant of Hjaltsland Housing Association (HHA), a representative on the HHA Scrutiny Panel and a shareholder. Mr Fraser indicated that he would not leave the meeting unless there was any specific discussion around HHA.

## **Minutes**

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 on the motion of Mr Leask, seconded by Mr T Smith.

7/20

### **Allocation Policy Annual Review Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Housing (DV-15-20-F), that presented the annual performance review information on the housing allocation quota targets contained in the Council's Allocation Policy for the year 2019/20, and recommendations for the year 2020/21.

The Executive Manager – Housing summarised the main terms of the report. In referring to Section 4.7, the Executive Manager – Housing advised on the quota proposals for the current year to be retained at the 2019/20 levels, but would be kept under review.

In response to a question relating to the the 'low-demand' properties as reported in the table at Section 4.6, the Executive Manager – Housing advised that these properties were mainly in areas where there was supply but no live demand. She confirmed that the Housing Service were active to advertise these properties to try to generate interest. She added that with the small number of 'low-demand' properties, any uptake in demand can markedly change the statistics.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Executive Manager – Housing advised on the approach taken when anyone presents as homeless, where prevention and early intervention are key to the solution to get people into settled accommodation as quickly as possible.

During debate, the Leader noted the high percentages reported in the table at Section 4.6, relating to new tenants satisfied or very satisfied with the standard of both new permanent and temporary homes, and he commended staff on the very high standards that had been achieved.

In referring to the highest demand being for single-bed properties, Mr Fraser said that whilst he understood the reasoning to allocate one-bed properties to single people to avoid under-occupancy, he said that to allocate a single young person a one-bed property could only be for a short while, until they required a larger property. In that regard, he suggested that single people should be allocated larger properties in the first instance, where they could settle, raise their family, become part of the community, and potentially live in the same accommodation for their lifetime. He said that as a consequence these tenants would take more pride and care of their long-term home. In that regard, Mr Fraser questioned whether, at some point in the future, consideration could be given to allocating 2-3 bed properties to single young people, as part of a review of the Council's housing allocation policy. The Chair advised that the Stanley Hill housing development would include a mix of property sizes, which could present options for single people, and he also advised that larger properties are allocated to single people in the landward areas. In responding to a request from Mr Fraser for further consideration to be given to allocating larger properties in Lerwick to single persons, the Chair indicated that the opportunity for raising the matter would be during the regular reporting on the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

During further debate, comment was made on the good report, and thanks was expressed to the staff in the Housing Service. Ms Manson moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report, and Mr T Smith seconded.

**Decision:**

The Committee RESOLVED to approve the performance reporting targets for 2020/21 as identified at 4.7 and set out in Table 3 at 4.4.

8/20

**Annual Assurance Statement 2020**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Housing (DV-16-20-F), that sought approval of the Housing Service's annual assurance statement 2020 for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

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

There were no questions. During debate, comment was made on the excellent report. In referring to Appendix 2, it was noted that all the Assurance Checklist requirements had been graded as having a 'Green' ranking, which demonstrated the exceptionally hard work of the staff within the service.

The Chair referred to the recent decision by the Scottish Housing Regulator to extend the deadline for submission of Annual Assurance Statements from the end of October 2020 to the end of November 2020. He went on to advise that as the Housing Service's Annual Assurance Statement was now complete, the intention would be to submit the Statement timeously.

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

**Decision:**

The Committee RESOLVED to approve the Housing Service's annual assurance statement 2020 for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

9/20

**Local Development Plan - Development Plans Scheme 2020**

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader - Development Plans and Heritage (DV-21-20-F), that sought approval of the Development Plan Scheme, attached at Appendix 1.

In introducing the report, the Team Leader - Development Plans and Heritage advised on the revised format of the Development Plan Scheme (DPS) to be more clear and concise on its content. She also informed on the proposed delivery of the Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) with the aim to have reached the consultation of the proposed plan stage by December 2021.

In response to a question, the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that while there had been delays with recruitment during the lockdown, it has now been possible to resume the process. In that regard, she advised that a

Business Support Officer should be in post soon, and recruitment to a Planning Officer post was to commence in the coming weeks.

In response to a question regarding consideration given to requirements stipulated by outside agencies that can restrict developments, the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that all matters have to follow the Development Management process, to ensure compliance with the LDP and Scottish Government Policies.

In referring to the recent Call for Sites and to the importance for the LDP2 to be a current document, it was questioned whether the recent employment situation in the North Mainland would be taken into account. The Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage gave assurance that the LDP2 would be as up to date as possible taking into consideration all changes throughout Shetland, including the North Mainland and COVID-19 related impacts on land use. She also advised on the encouraging response during the Call for Sites process from developers and landowners in Shetland.

In response to a question regarding public engagement on the LDP2 going forward, the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that there would be opportunities for people to comment and engage on-line, by phone and through virtual displays. She added that the next stage in the process requiring public engagement was the Main Issues report.

In response to a question, it was advised that the work associated with the Environment Report was being carried out by Natural Heritage officers within the team, and there should be no slippage on that part of the process.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised on the importance for the Housing Needs and Demands Assessment (HNDA) to be completed, as the latest housing demand figures are required to inform where to allocate housing in Shetland. In that regard, she confirmed that the HNDA was required before further progress can be made on the LDP2. The Director of Development Services echoed the need for the LDP2 to be as current as possible, taking into account all activities in Shetland. In terms of housing needs in Shetland, he advised that a robust and credible HNDA was an important factor, and he confirmed that the Housing Service were working closely with the Scottish Government to that end. In response to a question, the Executive Manager – Housing advised on the proposal for submission of the HNDA to the Scottish Government before the end of this month.

In response to comments regarding the importance for the LDP2 to take cognisance of proposals for a new hospital in Lerwick, the Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage advised that it was for the Shetland Health Board to make contact to advise on their proposals.

The Chair advised on his disappointment on the timescale proposed, whereby the LDP2 would not be resolved within the term of this Council. In that regard, he questioned whether completion of the HNDA could advance the timescale in any way. The Team Leader – Development Plans and Heritage confirmed that the completed HNDA would allow further work to progress. She also advised on the intention to use more innovative community engagement methods, being less resource intensive, which could also speed up the process.

During debate, reference was made to the importance that the LDP2 takes into account the proposals for a new hospital in Lerwick, and also for fixed links.

In noting reference to the duty to assess and review the impact of its Policies, comment was made on the Environmental Impact being at the heart of the LDP2, and it was hoped public engagement would emphasise that element further.

Comment was made on the need for the LDP2 to be written in such a way as to allow for some flexibility for Planning officials, during their assessment of planning applications.

In referring to the importance to monitor and expedite the LDP2 process going forward, Mr Cooper moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report, with an additional recommendation, that a report be presented at the next cycle of meetings on ways to bring forward the timescale for completion of the LDP2. Mr T Smith seconded.

### **Decision:**

The Committee RESOLVED:

- to approve the Development Plan Scheme attached at Appendix 1, and
- for a report to be presented at the next cycle of meetings on ways to bring forward the timescale for completion of the LDP2.

10/20

### **Scalloway Local Place Plan - Adoption**

The Committee considered a report by the Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management (DV-17-20-F), which sought the adoption of the Scalloway Local Place Plan (Appendix 1) as non-statutory planning guidance to the Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP).

The Chair advised Members that the report would be updated, to also be presented to the Council on 9 September 2020, as the decision to adopt the Local Place Plan as non-statutory planning guidance to the LDP rests with the Council, rather than Committee.

In introducing the report, the Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management provided background to the Scalloway Local Place Plan (LPP) pilot project, which he advised had been taken forward by Scalloway Community Council in partnership with services of the Council and had involved significant public engagement.

In reporting from the public consultation on the Scalloway LPP, he advised that seven comments had been received, being mainly in support of the proposals, and therefore no changes to the LPP had been required. The Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management advised that it would not be possible for the Council to commit similar resources to further LPPs, however communities would be informed on the process followed and lessons that had been learned throughout development of the LPP.

In response to a question regarding the Scottish Government Town Centre funding that had been received in November 2019, the Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management confirmed that progress was being made on a number of the projects in Scalloway that had been awarded funding.

In response to a question regarding proposals for a caravan park that formed part of the Scalloway LPP, the Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management advised that planning permission had recently been granted for a site at Asta, Tingwall.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Team Leader- Coastal Zone Management confirmed that the Scalloway LPP was one of the first LPPs completed in Scotland. He advised that while free rein had been given to the Scalloway LPP, the Scottish Government were now working to develop guidance on LPPs, and it is hoped that the Scalloway LPP can be used as a good practise example and for lessons learned. The Chair advised on the funding from the Scottish Government towards the pilot project in Scalloway to create the knowledge. He referred to the understanding that the Council would not be able to devote similar resources to further LPPs, however the knowledge and lessons learned can be shared should other communities decide to progress their LPP.

During debate, Members commented on the wide range of consultation and public engagement undertaken to develop the Scalloway LPP, which it was hoped would encourage other communities to take the lead to develop their LPPs. The Scalloway LPP was a great example of joint working, being progressed by the efforts of community involvement and Council officers, and was an excellent template to be rolled out going forward when funding becomes available. It was noted that a number of the projects in the LPP were now coming to fruition, to be of benefit to Scalloway and to other communities in Shetland. All involved in the development of the Scalloway LPP were commended, with particular tribute paid to the Team Leader – Coastal Zone Management.

During further debate, reference was made to a request some eight years ago for a review of developments in the central mainland, which it was advised at that time could not be undertaken due to the lack of resources within the Planning Service. Comment was made that as a Scalloway LPP had now been completed it was hoped that other areas of Shetland, that continue to experience issues with planning matters, would benefit from similar LPPs being developed.

The Chair referred to the flair, capability and significant engagement, particularly with young people, in taking forward the Scalloway LPP. In that regard, he said that the Scottish Government could learn from the Scalloway LPP pilot project, to inform their guidance on future LPPs.

Mr Cooper moved that the Committee recommend to the Council that it resolve to adopt the Scalloway LPP as non-statutory planning guidance to the Shetland LDP. Mr Leask seconded.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee RECOMMENDED to the Council that it resolve to adopt the Scalloway Local Place Plan (Appendix 1) as non-statutory planning guidance to the Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP).

#### **Development Committee Business Programme**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Development Services (DV-18-20-F), that allowed Members to consider the business planned for the remainder of the financial year 2020/21.

The Director of Development Services introduced the report.

During the discussion, the Director of Development Services advised on the intention to report on the Skills and Employability Action Plan to Committee in November 2020.

Clarity was sought on the opportunity to raise a matter relating to the Council's Housing Allocation Policy. While it was advised that any proposals for change could be raised when the Policy was next reported to Committee, the Executive Manager – Housing undertook to provide a briefing note to Members in early course, on the proposal raised by Mr Fraser, for larger properties to be allocated to young single people, set within the context of the existing Housing Allocation Policy.

In response to a question, the Director of Development Services advised on the recent interest in the Crown Estate Grant Fund. It was further noted that applications for funding of over £50k would be reported to the Council, rather than Development Committee.

**Decision:**

The Committee:

- CONSIDERED the business planned for Development Committee for the remainder of the financial year 2020/21; and
- ADVISED the Director of Development Services of any changes required including new items where the timescale will be confirmed at a later date.

The meeting concluded at 11.15am

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Chair