

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 13 November 2019, 10:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Alexander G Cowie, Stephen G Clackson, Barbara Foulkes, Steven B Heddle, J Harvey Johnston, W Leslie Manson, John T Richards, John A R Scott, James W Stockan, Magnus O Thomson and Owen Tierney.

Jo Hill and Mary Maley.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- James Wylie, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion).
- Frances Troup, Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services.
- Edward Abbott-Halpin, Principal, Orkney College (for Items 1 to 7).
- Don Hawkins, Head Teacher, Kirkwall Grammar School (for Items 1 to 6).
- Garry Burton, Sport and Leisure Manager (for Items 7 to 13).
- Paul Kemp, Strategic Finance Manager.
- Ian Rushbrook, Capital Programme Manager (for Items 16 to 19).
- Peter Trodden, Solicitor.
- Kerry Spence, Community Learning and Development Team Leader (for Items 1 to 8).

Observing

- Hayley Green, Head of IT and Facilities (for Items 1 and 2).
- Darren Richardson, Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects (for Items 16 to 19).
- Keith Foubister, Works and Inspection Manager (for Items 1 to 3).
- Ann Harrison, Catering Manager (for Items 1 and 2).
- Carol McManus, Service Improvement Officer (for Items 1 to 6).
- Morag Miller, Service Improvement Officer (for Items 1 to 6).
- Lesley Mulraine, Team Leader (Housing and Homelessness).
- Emma Gee, Arts Officer.
- Andrew Hamilton, Performance and Best Value Officer (for Items 1 to 4).

Apology

- Hugh Halcro-Johnston.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor John T Richards – Item 10.
- Councillor John A R Scott – Items 9, 10 and 11.
- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer – Item 10.

Chair

- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 18 and Appendix 2 of Item 17, as the business to be discussed involved the potential disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

2. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Strategic Finance Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of Education, Leisure and Housing for the period 1 April to 30 September 2019, attached as Annex 1 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance, indicating the following:

- A net General Fund underspend of £677,000.
- A net Non-General Fund overspend of £65,200.

2.2. The revenue financial detail by Service Area statement in respect of Education, Leisure and Housing for the period 1 April to 30 September 2019, attached as Annex 2 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance.

2.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance.

3. Housing Revenue Account

Revenue Repairs and Maintenance Programme – Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing and the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, the Committee:

Noted:

3.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred as at 30 September 2019, against the approved revenue repairs and maintenance programme in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, as detailed in section 4.2 of the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing and the Head of Finance.

3.2. The explanations given in respect of significant budget variances, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing and the Head of Finance.

4. Performance Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Scrutinised the performance of Education, Leisure and Housing for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2019, as detailed in section 4 and Annex 1 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

5. National Improvement Framework

Education Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Education Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan 2019, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Government and thereafter used to inform the working plan of staff across the Education service for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

6. Sanday Community School and Nursery Class

Education Scotland – Inspection

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion), the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. That Sanday Community School and Nursery Class was inspected by Education Scotland in April 2019.

6.2. That Education Scotland's evaluation for Sanday Community School focussed on the following four areas:

- Leadership of change.
- Learning, teaching and assessments.
- Raising attainment and assessment.
- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

6.3. That, of the four areas inspected for primary and secondary stages, one received a satisfactory grading and three received a good grading.

6.4. That Education Scotland's evaluation for Sanday Community School's Nursery Class focussed on the following four areas:

- Leadership of change.
- Learning, teaching and assessments.
- Securing children's progress.
- Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

6.5. That, of the four areas inspected for the Nursery Class, three received a satisfactory grading and one received a good grading.

6.6. That two areas of improvement were identified by Education Scotland, as outlined in section 4.2 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

6.7. The letter to parents and summarised inspection findings, attached as Appendices 1 to 3 respectively to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

Jo Hill and Councillor James W Stockan left the meeting at this point.

7. Community Learning and Development

Annual Report and Performance Review

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Community Learning and Development Team Leader, the Committee:

Noted:

7.1. The Community Learning and Development Annual Report 2018 to 2019, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

7.2. The Community Learning and Development Team Performance Review 2018 to 2019, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

Councillor J Harvey Johnston joined the meeting during discussion of this item and Jo Hill rejoined the meeting at this point.

8. Orkney Community Learning and Development Partners Plan

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Community Learning and Development Team Leader, the Committee:

Noted:

8.1. That, in October 2018, when adopting the Community Learning and Development Plan for Orkney 2018 to 2021, the Council agreed that an annual review and updated Orkney Community Learning and Development Plan be submitted to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee, to ensure it remained relevant and appropriate to emerging needs.

8.2. Progress made since September 2018 in respect of the Community Learning and Development Partners Plan 2018 to 2021, as detailed in Appendix 1 to report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

8.3. The revised Orkney Community Learning and Development Partners Plan 2018 to 2021, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which had been developed and updated by partners of the Orkney Strategic Community Learning Group and the Orkney Learning Guidance Forum.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

8.4. That the revised Orkney Community Learning and Development Partners Plan 2018 to 2021, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved, in so far as it related to the remit of the Council.

9. Culture Fund – Review

Councillor John A R Scott declared a non-financial interest in this item, in that he participated in a front of house role for the St Magnus Festival, but concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That, following a review of Council funding for cultural activity, the Culture Fund was established in 2011 with the aim to improve the Council's support for cultural activity by giving longer term funding commitments to key cultural organisations alongside providing wider access to cultural funding for projects and small independent organisations.

9.2. That the Culture Fund supported activity in the areas of arts, heritage and language, such as Orcadian dialect.

9.3. That, since establishment in 2011, the Culture Fund had been reviewed every three years, to ensure that it continued to achieve its aims.

9.4. That reviews undertaken in 2013 and 2016 concluded that the Culture Fund continued to be successful in achieving its aims, with the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee subsequently recommending that the Culture Fund continue in its current form, as well as continuing to be reviewed every three years.

9.5. That the review undertaken in 2019 highlighted the continued benefit and success of the Culture Fund.

9.6. That, in advance of the Council's budget setting process for 2020 to 2021 being concluded, any decision on continuation of the Culture Fund would be subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established for financial year 2020 to 2021 onwards.

On the motion of Councillor Steven B Heddle, seconded by Councillor Barbara Foulkes, the Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

9.7. That, subject to an adequate service revenue budget being established for financial year 2020 to 2021 onwards, the Culture Fund continue in its current form and continue to be reviewed every three years.

10. Pickaquoy Centre Trust – End of Year Performance

Councillors John T Richards, John A R Scott and Gwenda M Shearer declared non-financial interests in this item, being Council-appointed trustees of the Pickaquoy Centre Trust, but concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Sport and Leisure Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

10.1. Pickaquoy Centre Trust's end of year usage figures and performance for 2018 to 2019, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which indicated the following:

- Overall annual usage figures of 481,107 which represented an increase of 4% in overall usage against the same period in 2017 to 2018.
- The main positive variances against targets being junior activities, track and infield, sports courses, arena sports, campsite, swimming, cinema and all-weather pitch.
- The main negative variances against targets being health suite, group exercise classes, gym, soft play, grass pitches, squash and other indoor leisure activities.

10.2. That Pickaquoy Centre Trust's audited annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 had been submitted and indicated an operating deficit of £27,359.

Councillor James W Stockan rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

11. Play Area Strategy for Orkney

Councillor John A R Scott declared a non-financial interest in this item, in that he was a member of Papdale East Playpark Association, but concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

11.1. That, since the Orkney Play Area Strategy was approved in 2016, all play area developments had been led by community groups and funded by external funding.

11.2. That three community groups had been awarded a lease or were investigating leasing a play area in order to develop it.

11.3. That the Orkney Play Area Strategy continued to recognise deficiencies in some areas with regard to play area provision and identified specific areas for development and improvement.

11.4. That the Orkney Play Area Strategy had been revised to include additional guidance for groups investigating and developing play areas.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

11.5. That the revised Orkney Play Area Strategy, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

12. St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee held on 11 September 2019, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

12.1. On the motion of Councillor Gwenda M Shearer, seconded by Councillor Alexander G Cowie, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee held on 11 September 2019 as a true record.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

12.2. That the recommendations at paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 of the Minute of the Meeting of the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee held on 11 September 2019, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

13. College Management Council Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 4 November 2019, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

13.1. On the motion of Councillor Stephen G Clackson, seconded by Councillor W Leslie Manson, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 4 November 2019 as a true record.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

13.2. That the recommendation at paragraph 3.2 of the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 4 November 2019, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, be approved.

Councillor Barbara Foulkes left the meeting at this point.

14. Housing Services – Performance Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, the Committee:

Noted:

14.1. That housing organisations were required to report performance against a number of service areas and indicators within the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

14.2. Performance in relation to the undernoted range of service areas within Housing Services for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing:

- Customer Satisfaction.
- Housing Quality and Maintenance.
- Access to Housing and Support.
- Homelessness.
- Rent Collection.
- Housing Revenue Account.

14.3. Areas of positive performance within Housing Services for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, as follows:

- High levels of customer satisfaction.
- Low levels of repairs reported as emergencies.
- Low levels of repairs per property.
- Low levels of abandonments/evictions.
- Homeless cases completed in reasonable timescale.
- Low repeat presentations.
- Low levels of cases where contact had been lost.
- Low levels of former tenant arrears written off.

14.4. Areas where performance within Housing Services could potentially be improved or continue to be improved, as follows:

- Low levels of energy efficiency in properties.
- Slightly higher levels of properties recorded as being exemptions or abeyances from the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.
- High percentage of tenancies ending in arrears and rising debt.
- Rising rent arrears.
- Length of void periods.
- Level of void rent loss.

15. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, the Committee:

Noted:

15.1. That, on 2 May 2019, the Council approved the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, a document which the Scottish Government required as part of its aim to end rough sleeping, transform the use of temporary accommodation and end homelessness in Scotland in a five-year period and which required to be implemented by 1 April 2019.

15.2. That the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for Orkney had been costed at £4,996,300 over the five-year term, with the costs of year one being identified as £1,250,600.

15.3. That feedback had been received from the Scottish Government, as detailed in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

15.4. That the Scottish Government had awarded funding, totalling £22,000, for financial year 2019 to 2020, making full implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for Orkney unaffordable.

16. Local Housing Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, the Committee:

Noted:

16.1. That the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare a local housing strategy supported by an assessment of housing need and demand.

16.2. That the local housing strategy was a local authority's sole strategic document for housing in its area, setting out an agreed strategic vision for the future of housing and housing related services.

16.3. That the Local Housing Strategy 2011 to 2016 required to be reviewed in 2017 and reviewed regularly thereafter.

16.4. That the Scottish Government had recently issued revised detailed and prescriptive guidance on producing a local housing strategy.

16.5. The draft Local Housing Strategy 2017 to 2022, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

16.6. That the draft Local Housing Strategy 2017 to 2022, referred to at paragraph 16.5 above, be approved for public consultation.

16.7. That the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should submit a report, to a meeting of the Committee no later than June 2020, detailing the outcome of the consultation exercise, referred to at paragraph 16.6 above, together with the final version of the Local Housing Strategy 2017 to 2022.

17. Review of Lettings Policy – Consultation

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, the Committee:

Noted:

17.1. That amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 being phased in during 2019 introduced changes to groups who required to be given reasonable preference in respect of allocations of Council housing.

17.2. That the Council was required to undertake a consultation on proposed changes to its lettings policy and to publish a report on the outcomes of consultation.

17.3. That a consultation, which was delivered in various formats including meetings with tenants and applicants, as well as an online and paper copy survey, was undertaken during September and October 2019, where a total of 1,600 surveys were issued.

17.4. The summary of consultation responses, as outlined in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, together with the full responses, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor J Harvey Johnston left the meeting during discussion of this item.

18. Evie School – Post Project Review

On the motion of Councillor Gwenda M Shearer, seconded by Councillor Alexander G Cowie, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion), the Committee:

Noted:

18.1. The Post Project Review in respect of Evie Community School, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

18.2. That, in accordance with the funding arrangements, the Evie School Post Project Review, attached as Appendix 6 to this Minute, be submitted to the Scottish Futures Trust.

Councillor Magnus O Thomson left the meeting during discussion of this item.

19. Conclusion of Meeting

At 15:15 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: G M Shearer.