

## Minute

### Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 6 February 2019, 10:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



### Present

Councillors Robin W Crichton, John A R Scott, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, Barbara Foulkes, Steven B Heddle, J Harvey Johnston, W Leslie Manson, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey, James W Stockan and Owen Tierney.

### Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

### In Attendance

- Wilfred Weir, 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 (for Items 1 to 12).
- James Wylie, Head of Education (Curriculum and Community Learning).
- Catherine Diamond, Lead Officer Early Years (for Items 7 to 16).
- Keith Foubister, Works and Inspection Manager (for Items 2 to 4).
- Avril Litts, Accounting Manager (Strategic Finance).
- Christine Scott, Business Manager, Orkney College (for Items 1 to 11).
- Peter Trodden, Solicitor.
- Luke Fraser, Team Leader (Policy and Planning) (for Items 1 to 12).
- Lesley Mulrairie, Team Leader (Housing and Homelessness) (for Items 1 to 12).
- Rachel Boak, Curator (for Items 7 to 12).

### Observing

- Edward Abbot-Halpin, Principal, Orkney College (for Items 1 to 11).
- Hazel Flett, Senior Committees Officer (for Item 7).
- Kirsty Groundwater, Press Officer.

### Apologies

- Hugh Halcro-Johnston.
- Jo Hill.
- Mary Maley.

## **Declarations of Interest**

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

## **Chair**

- Councillor Robin W Crichton.

## **1. Disclosure of Exempt Information**

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 15 and Appendices 2 and 4 of Item 7, as the business to be discussed involved the potential disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant paragraph 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 Accounting Manager (Strategic Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

**2.1.** The revenue financial summary statement in respect of Education, Leisure and Housing for the period 1 April to 31 December 2018, 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 £379,200.
- A net Non-General Fund overspend of £58,600.

**2.2.** The revenue financial detail by Service Area statement, in respect of Education, Leisure and Housing for the period 1 April to 31 December 2018, 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 Accounting Manager (Strategic Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

**3.1.** The summary position of expenditure incurred as at 31 December 2018, 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, attached as Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing and the Head of Finance.

#### **4. Housing Revenue Account – Draft Budget**

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:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the draft revenue budget for the Housing Revenue Account for financial year 2019 to 2020, attached as Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing and the Head of Finance, be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration through the budget setting process.

#### **5. Council House Rents**

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 Team Leader (Policy and Planning), the Committee:

Noted:

**5.1.** That consultation, undertaken in December 2018, in relation to the annual increase for Council House rent levels to take effect from 1 April 2019, proposed an increase of the Consumer Price Index as of September 2018, namely 2.4%.

**5.2.** The results of the consultation on the annual increase for Council house rent levels, as detailed in section 4 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

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

**5.3.** That, with effect from 1 April 2019, Council house rents should increase by 2.4%.

#### **6. Housing Revenue Account**

##### **Revenue Repairs and Maintenance Programme**

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 Team Leader (Policy and Planning), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that, subject to an adequate budget being made available, the undernoted Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2019 to 2020 be approved:

- Cyclical Maintenance – £45,000.
- Planned Maintenance – £538,200.
- Reactive Repairs – £450,000.
- Voids/Improvements/Adaptations – £100,000.
- In-House Professional Fees (Development and Infrastructure) – £170,000.
- Contingency budget – £20,000.

## **7. Sheltered Housing Service**

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:

**7.1.** That, on 12 September 2018, when considering the outcome of a consultation on sheltered housing services, the Committee recommended that consideration of removing the sleep-in provision from the Council's sheltered housing service be deferred to enable the question of removal of the sleep-in provision at Rae's Close, Stromness, in particular, to be remitted to the Orkney Health and Care Committee, in the first instance, to seek its view on wider health and social care matters.

**7.2.** That, on 15 November 2018, the Orkney Health and Care Committee considered a report detailing the health, social work and social care services currently available overnight on mainland Orkney that supported individuals in their own homes, noting that support services were available to an individual following a community care assessment.

**7.3.** That legal opinion from senior counsel, attached as Appendix 4 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, determined that the call out service was not required to be delivered specifically by a warden and that the service provided did not import a requirement that the warden must live on site and must personally provide the call in service or emergency call service.

**7.4.** That, consequently, the call out service could be delegated by the warden and the Council may choose to provide the emergency call service through another service such as the Community Responder.

**7.5.** Options for future provision of sheltered housing services, as detailed in section 6 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, with the preferred option being Option 2, namely that the sleep-in provision be removed from Rae's Close, Stromness, as soon as reasonably practicable during financial year 2019 to 2020.

Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor W Leslie Manson, moved:

- That the sleep-in provision be removed from Rae's Close, Stromness, as soon as reasonably practicable during financial year 2019 to 2020.
- That, should the sleep-in provision at Rae's Close, Stromness, be removed, the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should arrange for every resident at Rae's Close, Stromness, to have full engagement with Orkney Health and Care to ensure they were informed of all available community care services.

Councillor Stephen Sankey, seconded by Councillor Robin W Crichton, moved an amendment that the existing sleep-in service for current residents should continue to be delivered at Rae's Close, Stromness, but should not be offered to any future residents.

The result of a recorded vote was as follows:

For the Amendment:

Councillors Stephen G Clackson, Robin W Crichton, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey and Owen Tierney (5).

For the Motion:

Councillors Alexander G Cowie, Barbara Foulkes, Steven B Heddle, J Harvey Johnston, W Leslie Manson, John A R Scott and James W Stockan (7).

The motion was therefore carried, and the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

**7.6.** That the sleep-in provision be removed from Rae's Close, Stromness, as soon as reasonably practicable during financial year 2019 to 2020.

**7.7.** That, should withdrawal of the sleep-in service be approved, the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should arrange for every resident at Rae's Close, Stromness, to have full engagement with Orkney Health and Care to ensure they were informed of all available community care services.

**7.8.** That the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should submit, to a meeting of the Committee no later than November 2019, a scoping report for a full review of the Sheltered Housing Service, including financial implications and a consultation process and involving the Third Sector.

**Please refer to the Minute of the General Meeting of the Council held on 5 March 2019.**

## **8. Empty Homes Strategy**

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 Team Leader (Policy and Planning), the Committee:

Noted:

**8.1.** That Scottish Government figures indicated Orkney had the highest percentage of empty homes in Scotland.

**8.2.** That, between 27 September and 24 October 2018, the draft Empty Homes Strategy 2018 to 2023, was the subject of consultation, with input sought specifically from partners, including Shelter Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and isles development trusts.

**8.3.** That three responses were received to the consultation, resulting in minor revisions to the draft Strategy.

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

**8.4.** That the Empty Homes Strategy 2018 to 2023, attached at Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

## **9. 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:

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

**9.2.** Performance in relation to the undernoted range of service areas within Housing Services, for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, 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.

**9.3.** Areas of positive performance within Housing Services for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, 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 has been lost.
- Low levels of former tenant arrears written off.

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

- Low levels of energy efficiency in properties.
- High 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.

## **10. Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers**

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:

**10.1.** That the advice and information functions within Housing Services were subject to an inspection, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, as part of its reaccreditation under the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers.

**10.2.** That the process of reaccreditation, undertaken by the Scottish Legal Aid Board, consisted of two separate parts, namely:

- Peer review.
- Audit.

**10.3.** That a process of peer review, being a detailed review of case work, was undertaken remotely during January and February 2018, with the reaccreditation then ratified by the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

**10.4.** That recommendations made during the peer review process related specifically to individual cases rather than policy matters.

**10.5.** That, during the second phase, a remote desktop audit was undertaken on a broad range of the Council's housing policy and business management processes with an onsite inspection taking place during October 2018.

**10.6.** The Compliance Audit Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which contained two recommendations as detailed in section 5.3 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

## **11. College Management Council Sub-committee**

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 21 January 2019, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

**11.1.** On the motion of Councillor John A R Scott, seconded by Councillor Robin W Crichton, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 21 January 2019 as a true record.

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

**11.2.** That the recommendation at paragraph 2 of the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 21 January 2019, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

## **12. Collections Development Policy**

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 Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion), the Committee:

Noted:

**12.1.** That the Council-run museums were currently undergoing a review of Museums Accreditation status.

**12.2.** That a requirement of continued Museums Accreditation status was ensuring a Collections Development Policy, which complied with Accreditation standards, was in place.

**12.3.** That Arts Council England, which managed the Accreditation Standard, had produced a new template for Collections Development Policies, which must be used in order to adhere to the Accreditation Standard.

**12.4.** That the current Collections Development Policy had been reviewed by curatorial officers in light of recent guidance in relation to Museums Accreditation standards and updated accordingly.

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

**12.5.** That the Collections Development Policy 2019 to 2024, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

## **13. Support for Learning – Review**

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 Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion), the Committee:

Noted:

**13.1.** That, on 14 November 2018, the Committee considered a review of the support for learning service and, on recommending approval of the recommendations arising from the review, requested a prioritised three-year action plan.



**13.2.** The proposed Action Plan timeline, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, setting out a summary overview of the priorities and actions in order that workstreams could be easily articulated but also linked and cross referenced.

**13.3.** The proposed Work Plan, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which provided more detail on the work associated with the priorities and actions.

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

**13.4.** That the Action Plan timeline for implementing the recommendations arising from the review of the support for learning service, together with the detailed Work Plan, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

On the motion of Councillor W Leslie Manson, seconded by Councillor Barbara Foulkes, the Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

**13.5.** That the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should submit reports to the Committee, no later than Autumn 2019 and Spring 2020, highlighting progress with the next two key stages relating to recommendation 3.5 of the Support for Learning Review, namely establishing and maintaining an effective process for allocation of resources to support the most vulnerable learners throughout their lives.

## **14. Early Learning and Childcare – Policy Update**

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 Lead Officer Early Years, the Committee:

Noted:

**14.1.** That, in October 2014, the Council adopted the Early Learning and Childcare Policy, which had been updated and revised to align with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

**14.2.** That the Scottish Government was funding a phased increase to 1140 hours to the statutory hours of early learning and childcare to be completed by August 2020.

**14.3.** That the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare and phasing activity over the next two years had resulted in the existing policy no longer meeting the needs of the service.

**14.4.** That the proposed changes to the policy, detailed in section 4.1 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, should enable parents of eligible children to have increased choices to meet their childcare needs.

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

**14.5.** That the revised Early Learning and Childcare Policy, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, be approved.

## **15. Early Learning and Childcare**

### **Proposed Establishment of Additional Posts**

On the motion of Councillor Robin W Crichton, seconded by Councillor John A R Scott, 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 1 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, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Lead Officer Early Years, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to the proposed establishment of additional posts in respect of early learning and childcare.

**The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.**

## **16. Conclusion of Meeting**

At 15:13 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Robin W Crichton.