

Minute

Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 24 November 2020, 10:30.

Microsoft Teams.



Present

Councillors James W Stockan, W Leslie Manson, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, Norman R Craigie, Robin W Crichton, David Dawson, Barbara Foulkes, Steven B Heddle, J Harvey Johnston, Rachael A King, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Graham L Sinclair, Magnus O Thomson, Owen Tierney, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Senior Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- John W Mundell, Interim Chief Executive.
- Gavin Barr, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.
- Gillian Morrison, Interim Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care (for Items 1 to 16).
- James Wylie, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Gareth Waterson, Head of Finance.
- Karen Greaves, Head of Executive Support.
- Gavin Mitchell, Head of Legal Services.
- Lynda Bradford, Interim Head of Health and Community Care (for Items 1 to 8).
- James Buck, Head of Marine Services and Transport and Harbour Master.
- Roddy Mackay, Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (for Items 1 to 15).
- Darren Richardson, Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects (for Items 1 to 14).
- Pat Robinson, Chief Finance Officer, Orkney Health and Care (for Items 1 to 8).
- Jackie Thomson, Development and Regeneration Manager (for Items 3 to 15).
- Stuart Allison, Economic Development Manager (for Items 1 to 10).
- Lorna Richardson, Strategic Policy and Projects Manager (for Items 1 to 9).
- Maureen Spence, Democratic Services Manager (for Items 12 to 20).
- Anna Whelan, Strategy Manager (for Items 1 and 2).

Observing

- Hayley Green, Head of IT and Facilities.
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of HR and Performance.
- David Sawkins, Depute Harbour Master (Strategy and Support) (for Items 12 to 14).
- Laura Cromarty, Transportation Manager (for Items 12 and 13).
- Claire Kemp, Business Gateway Manager (for Items 1 to 10).
- William Moore, Revenues and Benefits Manager (for Items 1 to 9).
- Alex Rodwell, Senior Project Officer, Change Programme (for Item 12).
- David Hartley, Communications Team Leader (for Items 10 to 20).
- Christie Hartley, Volume Tourism Development and Management Officer (for Items 1 to 9).
- Raema Lyon, Project Officer, Change Programme (for Item 12).
- Rebecca McAuliffe, Press Officer (for Items 1 to 15).

Apology

- Councillor Andrew Drever.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor David Dawson – Item 16.
- Councillor Steven B Heddle – Item 8.
- Councillor W Leslie Manson – Item 8.
- Councillor Stephen Sankey – Item 10.
- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer – Items 10 and 15.
- Councillor Graham L Sinclair – Item 15.
- Councillor James W Stockan – Item 15.
- Councillor Duncan A Tullock – Item 8.
- Councillor Heather N Woodbridge – Item 10.

Chair

- Councillor James W Stockan.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

Councillor John A R Scott moved that the public should not be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 18, Empowering Committees. On receiving no seconder, his motion fell, and the Committee:

Noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Items 12 to 18, 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. Political Engagement Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Strategy Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. That the Political Engagement Strategy, adopted in October 2018, had been reviewed and revised to take into account changes in national and international political circumstances impacting on the Council since that date.

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

2.2. That the updated Political Engagement Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

3. Complaints Handling Procedure

After consideration of a report by the Chief Executive, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Legal Services, the Committee:

Noted:

3.1. That the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure, approved in July 2012, was based on the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure published by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

3.2. That, in 2018/19, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman conducted a review of the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure to establish its effectiveness and usability.

3.3. That, following the review, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman published a revised Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure on 31 January 2020.

3.4. That the revised Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure included a "Customer-facing Guide", which was a separate, but integral, part of the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure.

3.5. That the revised version of the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure incorporated a number of updates to reflect feedback from stakeholders and to address issues identified in casework.

3.6. That Part 4 of the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure had been amended to reflect the Council's existing governance arrangements and roles and responsibilities in relation to the handling of complaints.

3.7. That the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman required local authorities to adopt the revised Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure, including any changes that they wished to make, by April 2021.

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

3.8. That the revised Local Authority Complaints Handling Procedure, attached as Appendices 2 and 3 to this Minute, incorporating the amendments referred to in paragraph 3.6 above, be approved.

4. Council Tax – Charging on Empty Properties

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. That, on 11 December 2018, when considering recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee regarding Council Tax charged on empty properties and second homes, the Council resolved inter alia that, from 1 October 2019, an additional surcharge of 100% be applied to empty properties that had been unoccupied for a period exceeding 12 months.

4.2. That introduction of the surcharge could be delayed in certain circumstances where the property owner was making efforts to bring the property back in to use, as detailed in the leaflet attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance.

4.3. That the Head of Finance had discretion to delay introduction of the surcharge for up to 12 months where exceptional circumstances existed.

4.4. That, since introduction of the surcharge on 1 October 2019, owners of a number of empty properties had experienced lengthy delays in having work completed due to restrictions put in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

4.5. That, while restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic remained ongoing, the discretion afforded to the Head of Finance to delay introduction of the 100% surcharge in Council Tax chargeable on empty properties be increased, from 12 months to up to 36 months, where the Head of Finance was satisfied that exceptional circumstances, relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, existed.

5. Third Party Funding Applications

After consideration of a joint report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure and the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services, the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. That there were a number of grant funds to which only local authorities, or partnerships involving local authorities, could apply, such as the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund and the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.

5.2. That, conversely, other funding streams only available to community organisations could potentially be accessed as match funding in applications to funding sources of the type referred to at paragraph 5.1 above.

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

5.3. That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure and the Head of Finance should develop a draft framework that would allow the Council to submit applications to funding schemes available only to local authorities on behalf of community organisations.

5.4. That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure and the Head of Finance, should submit a joint report, to a meeting of the Committee no later than June 2021, presenting the draft framework referred to at paragraph 5.3 above.

6. Clinical and Care Governance Committee

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn.

7. Review of Integration Scheme

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

7.1. That, on 24 March 2015, following a period of consultation, the Council approved the Integration Scheme for submission to the Scottish Government by 1 April 2015.

7.2. That Orkney's Integration Joint Board was approved by Scottish Ministers, in terms of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, on 6 February 2016.

7.3. That section 44 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 required the local authority and the health board to carry out a review of the integration scheme before the expiry of a period of five years, beginning with the day on which the scheme was approved by the Scottish Ministers, for the purpose of identifying whether any changes to the integration scheme were necessary or desirable.

7.4. That the statutory review of the Integration Scheme, referred to at paragraph 7.3 above, was therefore due no later than 5 February 2021.

7.5. The outcome of the review of the Integration Scheme, undertaken in line with Scottish Government guidance due to the impact of COVID-19, as noted in section 4 of the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care, namely that there were currently no areas requiring immediate attention.

7.6. The proposed process for a further, more detailed, review of the Integration Scheme, as set out in section 5 of the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care.

7.7. That, following the detailed review, should NHS Orkney and/or the Council seek to amend the current Integration Scheme, the Interim Chief Officer and the Chief Executives of the Council and NHS Orkney would work with the Joint Discussion Forum, comprising Chairs of relevant groups and senior officers from both organisations, to agree a common approach and consult formally with the public.

7.8. That, following consultation, the Council and NHS Orkney must thereafter decide whether any changes to the Integration Scheme were necessary or desirable.

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

7.9. That a more detailed review of the Integration Scheme be commenced by March 2021.

8. Telecare Services – Proposed Introduction of Charges

Councillors Steven B Heddle, W Leslie Manson and Duncan A Tullock declared non-financial interests in this item in that close family members were in receipt of Telecare services and were not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a report by the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Interim Head of Health and Community Care, the Committee:

Noted:

8.1. That, on 14 November 2019, the Orkney Health and Care Committee recommended that consideration of introducing charging for Day Care and Telecare services be deferred, to enable the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care to submit a Strategic Charging Policy for social care services, in line with COSLA guidance and best practice.

8.2. That, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, day services had been closed and, although some of those services were reopening, that was on a much reduced capacity basis and therefore it was proposed that charging for those services should not be pursued at this time.

8.3. That, although a Strategic Charging Policy could be developed, the policy could not currently be implemented, as detailed information in relation to individual service users was not easily accessible.

8.4. That, once the issues regarding extracting detailed information in relation to individual service users had been addressed, a charging policy would be presented to Committee.

8.5. That, as charging for Telecare services was proposed at a flat rate per week, introducing such a charge would not impact any future charging policy.

Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor Barbara Foulkes, moved that, with effect from 1 January 2021, a flat rate charge of £3.50 per week be introduced in respect of Telecare services provided by the Council.

Councillor David Dawson, seconded by Councillor Stephen G Clackson, moved an amendment that, taking account of the result of the consultation and recognising the risks to vulnerable service users, as highlighted in the Equality Impact Assessment, no charge should be introduced in respect of Telecare services provided by the Council at this time.

The result of a recorded vote was as follows:

For the Amendment:

Councillors Stephen G Clackson, Norman R Craigie, David Dawson, J Harvey Johnston and Owen Tierney (5).

For the Motion:

Councillors Alexander G Cowie, Robin W Crichton, Barbara Foulkes, Rachael A King, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Graham L Sinclair, James W Stockan, Magnus O Thomson and Heather N Woodbridge (12).

The motion was carried.

Councillor Stephen Sankey, seconded by Councillor Rachael A King, moved a further amendment, notice of which had been given, that consideration of introducing a charge for Telecare services be deferred, to enable the Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care to submit a Strategic Charging Policy for social care services, in line with COSLA guidance and best practice.

The result of a recorded vote was as follows:

For the Amendment:

Councillors Stephen G Clackson, David Dawson, J Harvey Johnston, Rachael A King, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey, Owen Tierney and Heather N Woodbridge (8).

For the Motion:

Councillors Alexander G Cowie, Norman R Craigie, Robin W Crichton, Barbara Foulkes, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Graham L Sinclair, James W Stockan and Magnus O Thomson (9).

The motion was therefore carried.

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

8.6. That, with effect from 1 January 2021, a flat rate charge of £3.50 per week be introduced in respect of Telecare services provided by the Council.

Please refer to the Minute of the General Meeting of the Council held on 8 December 2020.

9. Burial Grounds

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects, the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That, on 8 September 2020, when considering proposed amendments to the Burial Grounds Code of Practice and the associated resource requirements, the Development and Infrastructure Committee recommended:

- To support, in principle, Option 4 of the proposed resource options, namely further increased resource to enable full compliance with the recommendations arising from the internal audit report on memorial safety works within burial grounds and thereafter implementation of the revised Code of Practice.
- That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee, setting out the financial and other implications of Option 4.
- That, subject to the necessary funding being identified and made available to the Development and Infrastructure Service, the revised Code of Practice be adopted.

9.2. Details of the four options, together with the required resource, to enable implementation of the Burial Grounds Code of Practice, as set out in section 4 and Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

9.3. That the total cost of the preferred option, Option 4, supported by the Development and Infrastructure Committee, was estimated at £247,000 over a five-year period.

9.4. That, in 2018/19, a contribution of £250,000 was made to the Repairs and Renewals Fund to cover the estimated cost of gravestone repairs, arising as a result of the internal audit on memorial safety works.

9.5. That, during 2019/20, additional exceptional costs were incurred by the Development and Infrastructure Service in carrying out remedial works to headstones, funded by a contribution of £116,500 from the Repairs and Renewals Fund, resulting in an unallocated balance of £133,500 remaining available.

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

9.6. That Option 4, being the provision of additional resource to ensure full implementation of the endorsed Burial Grounds Code of Practice, at a total cost of £250,000 over five years, be considered as a service pressure in the revenue budget setting process for 2021/22, to which a contribution of £133,500 from the Repairs and Renewal Fund was available.

Please refer to the Minute of the General Meeting of the Council held on 8 December 2020.

10. Review of Council's COVID-19 Business Response Grants

Councillor Stephen Sankey declared a financial interest in this item, in that his company could potentially benefit from proposals to assist local businesses, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Councillor Gwenda M Shearer declared a non-financial interest, in that a close family member could potentially benefit from proposals to assist local businesses, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Councillor Heather A Woodbridge declared a non-financial interest, in that a close family member could potentially benefit from proposals to assist local businesses, and was not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Economic Development Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

10.1. That, on 16 April 2020, the Council established a Coronavirus Response Fund, with an opening balance of £5,000,000.

10.2. That the Council had established several financial support measures drawing from the Coronavirus Response Fund during the response phase to the Coronavirus pandemic, including the following:

- Business Hardship Support Grant, launched on 1 May 2020.
- COVID-19 Response Grant – Orkney Islands Council 10% top-up grant, launched 19 August 2020.
- Protective Equipment Grants, launched 19 August 2020.
- COVID-19 Recovery Development Grant, launched 19 August 2020.

10.3. That, as at 31 October 2020, the Economic Development service had processed:

- 73 successful applications for Business Hardship Support Grants, amounting to a total of £445,000, with 10% top-up supplement payments totalling £44,500.
- 11 successful applications for Protective Equipment Grants, amounting to a total of £5,284.
- 21 successful applications for COVID-19 Recovery Development Grants, amounting to £131,728.

10.4. That, although a wide range of UK and Scottish Government support mechanisms had been, and continued to be, available to businesses, Orkney businesses continued to be impacted by COVID-19 and associated government restrictions and faced the threat of job losses and financial hardship.

10.5. That the Business Hardship Support Grant scheme had been reviewed and an amended Phase 2 of the scheme was now proposed.

10.6. That most businesses were now assumed to have purchased protective screens or other public safety equipment required to comply with guidance, so it was not anticipated there was a continued need for the COVID-19 Protective Equipment Grant, for which demand had been low.

10.7. That the COVID-19 Recovery Development Grant scheme had been reviewed and awards totalling £131,728 had been committed against the approved financial ceiling of £300,000 within the Coronavirus Response Fund.

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

10.8. That the Business Hardship Support Grant be closed to new applications on 8 December 2020.

10.9. That the Business Hardship Support Grant Phase 2 be launched on 9 December 2020.

10.10. That the Protective Equipment Grant scheme be closed at 17:00 on 18 December 2020.

11. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor W Leslie Manson, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, as the business to be considered involved the 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.

12. Grounds Maintenance

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

12.1. That, in 2019, following concerns regarding proposed savings as part of the grounds maintenance service, a short life Member/Officer Working Group was established to review the grounds maintenance portfolio of the Council and assess options for future service delivery.

12.2. Total spend by the Council on grounds maintenance and road maintenance verge cutting activities, as detailed in section 5.1 of the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

12.3. That an analysis of the Council's grounds maintenance activity had been undertaken.

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

12.4. That the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 22 June 2021, detailing the outcome of the options appraisal for future contract delivery, together with final specification models for grounds maintenance services, based on consistent standards across all areas.

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.

13. Inter-Island Air Services – Public Service Obligation Contract

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Marine Services and Transport and Harbour Master, the Committee:

Noted:

13.1. That the Inter-Island Air Services Public Service Obligation (PSO) Contract was due for renewal on 1 April 2021, with no provision to extend the current contract beyond that date.

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

13.2. What action should be taken with regard to the Inter-Island Air Services Public Service Obligation Contract for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2025.

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.

14. Proposed Remediation Works at Lyness

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Marine Services and Transport and Harbour Master, the Committee:

Noted:

14.1. That, on 27 November 2018, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended that consideration of undertaking remediation works on the brownfield site at Lyness be deferred, to enable the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure to advise of the response from the Ministry of Defence in relation to a financial contribution towards the cost of undertaking the remediation works, as a result of the site being a former Royal Navy/NATO fuel depot.

14.2. That the Chief Executive wrote to the Ministry of Defence on 20 December 2018.

14.3. That the Council received a reply from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation dated 29 May 2019.

14.4. That, in order to allow future development at Lyness, the area should be remediated, taking into account that the works would take at least 12 months from award of contract.

14.5. That, in order to mitigate the risk associated with any development proposals, the proposal to undertake remediation works at Lyness, as detailed in section 4 of the report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

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

14.6. That remediation works on the brownfield site at Lyness be undertaken.

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.

Councillor John T Richards left the meeting at this point.

15. Orkney Research and Innovation Campus

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Graham L Sinclair and James W Stockan declared non-financial interests in this item, being Council-appointed Board members on the Orkney Research and Innovation Campus Limited Liability Partnership, but concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 4 and 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Development and Regeneration Manager, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to the Orkney Research and Innovation Campus.

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.

Councillor John T Richards rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

16. Orkney Housing Association Limited

Councillor David Dawson declared a non-financial interest in this item, being a Director of Orkney Housing Association Limited, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 4 and 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

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

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to a request from Orkney Housing Association Limited.

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.

Councillor Steven B Heddle left the meeting at this point.

17. Highlands and Islands Airports Limited

Proposed Changes to Air Traffic Management System

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Legal Services, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to Highlands and Islands Airports Limited's proposed changes to its Air Traffic Management System.

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.

Councillor Rachael A King left the meeting at this point.

18. Empowering Communities

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been 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 Act.

After consideration of a report by the Chief Executive, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Executive Support, the Committee:

Noted:

18.1. That, on 18 June 2013, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended:

- That the Sustainable Communities initiative be rebranded as Empowering Communities to reflect the objectives of the project.
- That the Chief Executive should submit a report, to a meeting of the Committee during year three of the project, evaluating whether the pilot project objectives had been met, providing evidence of efficiencies and savings achieved over the three year pilot and making recommendations for the future of the pilot island projects and proposals for other island projects, if appropriate.

18.2. That an evaluation of the project was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 20 June 2017, which demonstrated that good progress had been made to identify potential services which could be redesigned to be delivered in accordance with the empowering communities model.

18.3. That a further review of the Empowering Communities project had been undertaken during 2019 and early 2020, with the project achievements and outcomes to date, both from the Island Link Officers' perspectives and those more centrally supported by the Empowering Communities Liaison Officer, detailed in Annex 1 to the report by the Chief Executive.

18.4. That the principles of the Empowering Communities project could be expanded outwith the original four islands of Papa Westray, Stronsay, Sanday and Hoy and there was clear demand and scope to develop the project as a resource for all Community Councils across Orkney.

18.5. The proposal to establish a Link Officer, initially on a temporary basis, to assist with exploring opportunities for expanding the principles of the Empowering Communities project within the West Mainland area, the cost of which could be contained within existing resources.

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

18.6. What action should be taken with regard to the Empowering Communities project team.

18.7. That, in order to assist with exploring opportunities for expanding the principles of the Empowering Communities project within the West Mainland area, a temporary part-time post of Link Officer (17.5 hours per week), Grade 5, be established.

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.

19. Potential Strategic Land Acquisition

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn.

20. Conclusion of Meeting

At 16:58 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: James W Stockan.