

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 6 June 2018, 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.

Hugh Halcro-Johnston and Jo Hill.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committee Clerk.

In Attendance

- Alistair Buchan, Chief Executive (for Items 4 to 9).
- Wilfred Weir, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education (Leisure, Culture and Inclusion) (for Items 1 to 5).
- Frances Troup, Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services.
- James Wylie, Head of Education (Curriculum and Community Learning).
- Garry Burton, Sport and Leisure Service Manager (for Items 2 to 4).
- Morag Miller, Service Improvement Officer (Items 1 to 3).
- Paul Kemp, Strategic Finance Manager.
- Peter Trodden, Solicitor.
- Hazel Flett, Senior Committees Officer.
- Luke Fraser, Team Leader (Policy and Planning).

Observing

- William Ross, Principal, Orkney College (for Items 1 to 5).
- Kirsty Groundwater, Press Officer (for Items 2 to 11).

Apology

- Mary Maley.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor John T Richards – Item 4.
- Councillor Stephen Sankey – Item 4.
- Councillor John A R Scott – Items 4, 9 and 10.

Chair

- Councillor Robin W Crichton in the Chair.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 10, together with Appendix 1 of Item 4, 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. Performance Monitoring

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

Noted:

2.1. The performance of Education, Leisure and Housing for the reporting period 1 October 2017 to 31 March 2018, as set out in sections 3 to 5 and Annexes 1 and 2 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

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

2.2. That the following action, which had been progressed to completion, be removed from the Education, Leisure and Housing Service Plan:

- 05 – Scapa Flow Visitor Centre – To secure funding package to allow project to proceed to consultation phase.

2.3. That the following actions be amended as indicated and thereafter incorporated within the Education, Leisure and Housing Service Plan:

- 01 – Early Learning and Childcare – target date to be amended to reflect the target date set by Scottish Government, namely August 2020.
- 02 – Review of Learning – target date to be extended to 31 March 2021.

2.4. That the Education, Leisure and Housing Risk Register, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

3. Anti-Bullying Policy for Education, Leisure and Housing

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 (Curriculum and Community Learning), the Committee:

Noted:

3.1. That, in March 1997, the Council adopted a document entitled "Guidelines for Action Against Bullying in Educational Establishments" as its policy for handling bullying in schools in Orkney.

3.2. That the guidelines had been updated to take account of new national guidance, Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, published in 2017.

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

3.3. That the Anti-Bullying Policy for Our Children and Young People, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, be approved.

Jo Hill left the meeting at this point.

4. Universal Leisure Membership Scheme – ActiveLife

Councillors John T Richards, Stephen Sankey and John A R Scott 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 Service Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. That, in October 2016, the Council agreed to introduce a universal leisure membership card, with the scheme, known as ActiveLife, subsequently launched on 16 January 2017.

4.2. That, following a review after six months of operation and in response to representations received from the public, an additional ActiveIslands membership, as part of ActiveLife, was launched on 16 October 2017.

4.3. That ActiveLife had engaged a higher proportion of the local community in physical activity, with 2,570 paying members, or 24.95% of households, as at 31 March 2018.

Councillor Robin W Crichton, seconded by Councillor W Leslie Manson, moved that the amendments to the ActiveLife Scheme, as proposed by the Pickaquoy Centre Trust, be endorsed.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson, seconded by Councillor Barbara Foulkes, moved an amendment that the amendments to the ActiveLife Scheme, as proposed by the Pickaquoy Centre Trust, be endorsed, with the exception of removal of the 50% discount for children's swimming lessons, which should be retained.

On a vote being taken 3 votes were cast for the amendment and 8 for the motion, and the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

4.4. That the following amendments to the ActiveLife Scheme, as proposed by the Pickaquoy Centre Trust, be endorsed:

- Removal of the 50% discount for children's swimming lessons.
- Removal of climbing and bouldering from the ActiveLife membership.
- Reinstatement of the gym induction fee for members.
- Increase the price of the ActiveLife membership from £19.50 to £19.99 for an individual and from £29.50 to £29.99 for a family.

4.5. That powers be delegated to the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council and the Head of Finance, to review and thereafter conclude the Management Agreement with the Pickaquoy Centre Trust in respect of the ActiveLife Scheme.

5. College Management Council Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 28 May 2018, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

5.1. 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 28 May 2018 as a true record.

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

5.2. That the recommendations at paragraphs 2.4, 3.2, 3.3 and 4.7 of the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 28 May 2018, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved.

Hugh Halcro-Johnston left the meeting at this point.

6. Housing Loan Scheme

After consideration of a joint report by the Head of Finance and 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, with reference to the Minute of Meeting of Education, Leisure and Housing Committee held on 28 March 2018, paragraph 1.8, the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. That, with effect from 1 August 2015, the Council resolved that the ceiling for any single housing loan be set at a maximum of £115,000 or £30,000 in the case of an interest-only loan.

6.2. That application of the Retail Prices Index would suggest that the ceiling for any single loan should increase from £115,000 to £123,000, being an increase of £8,000 or 7%.

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

6.3. That, with effect from July 2018, the ceiling for any single housing loan be set at a maximum of £130,000, and thereafter increased annually in line with the Retail Prices Index, or £30,000 in the case of an interest-only loan.

7. Tenant Satisfaction Survey

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:

7.1. That a wholesale tenant satisfaction survey was required by the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the process for which was detailed and prescriptive for landlords with up to 1,500 tenants, including achieving a return rate of 40%.

7.2. That the results of the process, referred to at paragraph 7.1 above, were used by the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of the process of regulating local authority housing services.

7.3. That, during April and May 2018, a tenant satisfaction survey was undertaken by an independent body, IBP Strategy and Research, on behalf of the Council, the results of which were summarised in section 4 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

8. Homelessness in Orkney

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:

8.1. That the number of homeless presentations for 2017 to 2018 had decreased by 6.3% from 2016 to 2017.

8.2. That the reasons for homelessness remained broadly comparable to previous years, although a decrease was evident in respect of domestic abuse and an increase evident in respect of both relationship breakdown and harassment/abuse from outwith the home.

8.3. That homeless presentations for the period 1 April to 9 May 2018 were slightly higher than for the same period in the preceding year.

8.4. That homelessness remained a significant issue in Orkney and that lets to homeless households remained substantial relative to overall lets.

9. Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

Councillor John A R Scott declared a non-financial interest in this item, being a board member of THAW Orkney, 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, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Leader (Policy and Planning), the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That progress towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing was inter-related to works to address the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

9.2. The level of progress towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing, as detailed in sections 5 and 6 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

10. Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes

Councillor John A R Scott declared a non-financial interest in this item, being a board member of THAW Orkney.

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 paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

Councillor John A R Scott left the meeting at this point.

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:

10.1. That the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes was a Scottish Government scheme designed to improve the energy efficiency of private sector housing stock.

10.2. That the Council's contract with Firefly Energi (Orkney) Limited to deliver the programme was due to expire on 31 March 2019.

10.3. The options appraisal in respect of delivery of the programme from 1 April 2019, as detailed in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, with the preferred option being Option 1, namely to procure a Managing Agent.

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

10.4. That the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should procure a Managing Agent to deliver the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes programme from 1 April 2019, for a period of three years, with the option of an additional two-year extension.

11. Conclusion of Meeting

At 12:30 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Rob Crichton.