

Minute

Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 21 February 2023, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors James W Stockan, Heather N Woodbridge, Graham A Bevan, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, David Dawson, P Lindsay Hall, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Kristopher D Leask, Raymond S Peace, John A R Scott, Gillian Skuse, Jean E Stevenson, Ivan A Taylor, Owen Tierney and Duncan A Tullock.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance).

In Attendance

- Oliver D Reid, Chief Executive.
- Karen Greaves, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.
- Hayley Green, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
- Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- James Wylie, Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Gavin Mitchell, Head of Legal and Governance.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education (for Items 20 to 22).
- Sweyn Johnston, Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth (for Items 10 to 25).
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- Jim Lyon, Interim Head of Children, Families and Justice Services and Chief Social Work Officer (for Items 5 to 9).
- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Lorna Richardson, Head of Neighbourhood Services (for Items 1 to 21).
- Alex Rodwell, Head of Improvement and Performance.
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing (for Items 20 to 22).
- Inga Burton, Programme Manager Islands Deal (for Items 10 to 12).
- Stuart Allison, Service Manager (Enterprise) (for Items 11 to 20).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance) (for Items 1 to 4).
- William Moore, Service Manager (Improvement and Performance) (for Items 1 to 11).
- Ian Rushbrook, Service Manager (Property and Capital Projects) (for Items 1 to 4 and 21 to 25).

- Maureen Spence, Service Manager (Democratic Services and Communications) (for Items 1 to 8).
- Anna Whelan, Service Manager (Strategy and Partnership) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Christie Hartley, Team Manager (Sustainable Tourism) (for Items 11 to 13).

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Stephen Brown, Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.

Observing

- Kenny MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities (for Items 1 to 5 and 20 to 25).
- Carole Graves, Service Manager (Revenue and Benefits) (for Items 1 to 11).
- Kirsty Groundwater, Team Manager (Communications) (for Items 21 to 25).
- Glen Thomson, Senior Surveyor (for Items 21 and 22).

Apologies

- Councillor W Leslie Manson.
- Councillor James R Moar.
- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor Steven B Heddle – Item 12.
- Councillor John A R Scott – Item 21.
- Councillor James W Stockan – Item 11.
- Councillor Ivan A Taylor – Item 10.
- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson – Items 10, 20 and 24.

Chair

- Councillor James W Stockan.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Items 20 to 24, 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

2.1. Policy and Resources

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of the undernoted services for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, which indicated an underspend position of £736,000:

- Central Administration.
- Law, Order and Protective Services.
- Other Services.

2.1.2. The revenue financial detail by Service Area statement for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.1.3. 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 report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2.2. Orkney Health and Care

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.2.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, for which the Council was responsible, for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, which indicated a budget overspend position of £1,396,800.

2.2.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, for which the Council was responsible, for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.2.3. 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 report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2.3. Summary

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.3.1. The summary revenue expenditure statement for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, which indicated the following:

- A total General Fund overspend of £1,994,600.
- A deficit in Sources of Funding of £1,651,200.
- A net Non-General Fund deficit of £22,963,000.

2.3.2. The financial detail across individual Sources of Funding for the period 1 April to 31 December 2022, including significant variances identified as Priority Actions, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.3.3. 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 report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

3. Capital Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

3.1. The summary financial position, as at 31 December 2022, in respect of the approved General Fund and Non-General Fund capital programmes, as detailed in section 3.1 of the report by the Head of Finance, which indicated actual expenditure incurred as at 31 December 2022 of £17,695,000.

3.2. That the Head of Finance had reprofiled the capital programme for 2022/23, taking slippage and current timescales for completion of individual capital projects into consideration, in order to reflect the estimated outturn position for the current financial year.

The Committee scrutinised:

3.3. The detailed analysis of capital expenditure, together with project updates in respect of the General Fund and the Non-General Fund capital programmes, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to significant budget variances and on progress being made with delivery of the approved capital programmes.

4. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. That, with effect from financial year 2023/24, the CIPFA Treasury Code required performance against the treasury management strategy and annual investment strategy to be scrutinised quarterly, rather than half-yearly as at present.

4.2. That, as a result of the new requirements within the CIPFA Treasury Code, consideration would be given to appropriate scrutiny arrangements in respect of approval of the treasury management strategy and annual investment strategy, together with quarterly performance reporting.

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

4.3. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

5. Council Plan 2023-28

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, together with an Equality Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. That, on 23 November 2022, when considering the draft Council Plan, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended:

- That the draft Council Plan 2023-2028 be approved for consultation.
- That the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions should submit, to the next meeting of the Committee, a final version of the Council Plan 2023-2028 and supporting Delivery Plan listing the key actions and projects that would deliver the target outcome under each strategic priority theme within the Council Plan.

5.2. That consultation was undertaken during the period 22 December 2022 to 20 January 2023, with the main issues raised summarised in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

5.3. The final draft Council Plan 2023-2028, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, which had been amended to reflect the outcome of the public consultation.

5.4. The Delivery Plan to support the Council Plan 2023-2028, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, which contained a number of priority projects and milestones to indicate the work which would be undertaken to achieve the target outcome.

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

5.5. That the revised Council Plan for the period 2023 to 2028 and supporting Delivery Plan, attached as Appendices 2 and 3 respectively to this Minute, be approved.

6. Orkney Community Plan

Incorporating Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, together with an Equality Impact Assessment and an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Strategy and Partnership), the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. That the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 placed a duty on community planning partnerships to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) setting out the local outcomes that a partnership had prioritised for improvement.

6.2. That the Orkney Partnership chose to publish a Community Plan which incorporated its statutory LOIP.

6.3. That the current Orkney Community Plan/LOIP 2021-23 was a two-year emergency Covid Recovery Plan that would expire at 31 March 2023.

6.4. That the Orkney Partnership Board decided that the new Orkney Community Plan/LOIP should have three strategic priorities as follows:

- Cost of Living.
- Sustainable Development.
- Local Equality.

6.5. That the Orkney Partnership Board agreed that the Plan should be for seven years, 2023 to 2030, so that the end of the Plan matched the target date it had set for the county to reach net-zero carbon emissions.

6.6. That, on 14 December 2022, the Orkney Partnership Board approved the draft Orkney Community Plan/LOIP 2023-30 for public consultation.

6.7. That consultation was undertaken during the period 22 December 2022 to 20 January 2023, alongside the draft Council Plan 2023-28.

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

6.8. The final draft Orkney Community Plan/Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2023-30, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved insofar as it applied to the Council, subject to consideration of the outcomes for digital and transport connectivity under the strategic priority of Local Equality being amended so as to focus on meeting the needs of residents.

7. Review of Flag Flying Protocol

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Communications), the Committee:

Noted:

7.1. That, on 22 June 2021, when considering a request to fly the Rainbow flag at the Council Offices on 26 June 2021 to mark Orkney Pride, the Council resolved that the Chief Executive should undertake a review of the flag flying protocol.

7.2. The revised flag flying protocol, attached as Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, which proposed the flags to be flown from Council properties on specific dates or events each year.

7.3. The proposed criteria which should be applied when considering requests to fly flags not included within the revised flag flying policy, as follows:

- No political element to the activity.
- No commercial element to the activity.
- No significant cost to the Council.
- Flying the flag does not conflict with another event already included in the proposed protocol.

On the motion of Councillor Steven B Heddle, seconded by Councillor James W Stockan, the Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

7.4. That the Council's Flag Flying Protocol, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, be approved.

7.5. That, in regard to a request from an organisation not included within the flag flying protocol, powers be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Convener, Leader and Depute Leader, to fly a flag, provided the request met the undernoted criteria, from either the Council Offices or Kirkwall Town Hall:

- No political element to the activity.
- No commercial element to the activity.
- No significant cost to the Council.
- Flying the flag does not conflict with another event already included in the approved flag flying protocol.

7.6. That, in the event of a continual clash of dates between two organisations, flags to be flown should be alternated annually between the Council Offices and Kirkwall Town Hall.

8. The Coronation of His Majesty the King

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, the Committee:

Noted:

8.1. That the UK Government had announced an additional bank holiday on Monday, 8 May 2023, to mark the coronation of His Majesty the King.

8.2. That the coronation ceremony itself was scheduled to take place on Saturday, 6 May 2023.

8.3. That it was for individual councils to determine whether they wished to award employees an additional holiday on Monday, 8 May 2023.

8.4. That the Council could choose to recognise the event by granting either:

- An additional public holiday for its staff, in which case any employee required to work on Monday, 8 May 2023 would be recompensed in accordance with local arrangements in place for public holiday working; or
- An additional day of fixed annual leave that must be taken on Monday, 8 May 2023.

8.5. That, alternatively, the Council could choose not to award the additional holiday and consider either:

- That the day would be a normal day of Council operations and all employees would be expected to work as normal; or
- The public holiday already agreed for Monday, 1 May 2023 (May Day) be moved to Monday, 8 May 2023 for this year.

8.6. That, should the leave arrangements referred to at paragraphs 8.7 and 8.8 below be approved, the Council Offices, schools and all other services, other than those provided on a 24-hour basis, such as care homes, would be closed on Monday, 8 May 2023.

Councillor David Dawson, seconded by Councillor Steven B Heddle, moved that:

- Employees, in the employment of the Council on Monday, 8 May 2023, be awarded an additional day of fixed annual leave to be taken on Monday, 8 May 2023.
- Those employees who were required to work on Monday, 8 May 2023 to provide essential services should have a pro rata day in lieu added to their holiday entitlement for 2023/24.

Councillor Kristopher D Leask, seconded by Councillor P Lindsay Hall, moved an amendment that the Council should not award an additional annual day of leave to mark the coronation of His Majesty the King and therefore employees should be expected to work as normal.

The result of a recorded vote was as follows:

For the Amendment:

Councillors Alexander G Cowie, P Lindsay Hall, Kristopher D Leask and Owen Tierney (4).

For the Motion:

Councillors Graham A Bevan, Stephen G Clackson, David Dawson, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Raymond S Peace, John A R Scott, Gillian Skuse, Jean E Stevenson, James W Stockan, Ivan A Taylor, Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge (14).

The Motion was therefore carried and the Committee thereafter resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

8.7. That employees, in the employment of the Council on Monday, 8 May 2023, be awarded an additional day of fixed annual leave to be taken on Monday, 8 May 2023.

8.8. That those employees who were required to work on Monday, 8 May 2023 to provide essential services should have a pro rata day in lieu added to their holiday entitlement for 2023/24.

9. Care Inspectorate – Fostering, Adoption and Adult Placement Services

After consideration of a report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That, on 26 September 2022, the Care Inspectorate undertook a short notice, announced, inspection of the following registered services:

- Fostering Service.
- Adoption Service.
- Adult Placement Service (Continuing Care).

9.2. That, on 29 November 2022, the Care Inspectorate published its inspection reports in relation to the registered services referred to above.

9.3. That, in response to the inspection reports published on 29 November 2022, Action Plans were developed, addressing all the requirements and improvement areas identified from the inspection findings.

9.4. The key findings arising from the registered services inspection reports, summarised in sections 4, 5 and 6 of the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.

9.5. The positive findings arising from the registered services inspection reports, summarised in section 7 and attached as Appendix 7 to the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.

9.6. The Action Plans developed to address the findings arising from the registered services inspection reports, attached as Appendices 4, 5 and 6 to the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Committee scrutinised:

9.7. The inspection reports by the Care Inspectorate in respect of Fostering, Adoption and Adult Placement (Continuing Care) registered services, attached as Appendices 1 to 3 to the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, together with the associated Action Plans, attached as Appendices 4 to 6 to the report, and obtained assurance that planning and implementing actions to address the priority areas for improvement continued to develop and improve.

10. Council Tax – Charging on Empty Properties

Councillor Ivan A Taylor declared an interest in this item, his connection being that he held property interests which could, in the future, fall within the ambit of this policy, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she held property interests which could, in the future, fall within the ambit of this policy, and was not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), the Committee:

Noted:

10.1. That the Council had powers under the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 to vary or remove the discount available to taxpayers, or to charge an additional premium, where a property they were responsible for was unoccupied.

10.2. That, on 11 December 2018, when considering recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the level of Council Tax discount or surcharge applied to empty properties the Council resolved:

- 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, with delays beyond the 12-month period for certain categories of property.

10.3. That, on 12 February 2019, when considering the level of Council Tax discount to be applied to second homes, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended:

- That, from 1 April 2019, a second home discount of 50% should apply where a person's sole or main residence in Orkney was separated from their place of work by a body of water, the transport provision over which did not permit daily commuting between their sole or main residence and their place of work, and they occupied a second home in Orkney to enable them to maintain that employment.

- That, from 1 October 2019, the maximum period that a second home discount of 10% could be awarded should be set at 12 months, following which the discount would end.

10.4. That a number of properties were at present exempt from Council Tax due to the owner having signed an undertaking with the Council that they would not allow occupation of the property on the basis of its condition being considered unfit for occupation.

10.5. That the Environmental Health service had reviewed the use of undertakings not to allow occupation, and was no longer permitting undertakings by property owners, having found no legal basis for the historic use of undertakings.

10.6. That the Finance service would review existing awards of exemption granted on the basis of undertakings to establish in each case whether there was a possible exemption from Council Tax on other grounds, or whether the property should be considered chargeable.

10.7. That current policy on when a surcharge was applied took account of how long a property had been unoccupied, rather than looking at whether the owner intended to bring the property back into use.

10.8. That, on the basis that a significant number of the properties, which were the subject of an undertaking, being reviewed had been empty for a number of years, removing the link to how long a property had been unoccupied would introduce a delay in the application of the surcharge in cases where the owner was taking steps to bring a property back in to use.

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

10.9. That the following amendments be made to policy on Council Tax charging applied to empty properties, to take effect from 1 April 2023:

- Removal of the 10% discount for second homes, with the exception of where a person's sole or main residence in Orkney was separated from their place of work by a body of water, the transport provision over which did not permit daily commuting between their sole or main residence and their place of work, and they occupied a second home in Orkney to enable them to maintain that employment.
- When introducing the additional surcharge on empty properties, removal of the two year time limit since a property was last occupied, in cases where:
 - The owner was finishing renovations prior to moving in, letting or selling, to instead introducing a one year time limit from the date renovations began, with discretion delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration to extend the time limit by up to a further year where there were delays in the process, for example obtaining planning permission or a building warrant.
 - The owner was marketing the property for sale or let, to instead introducing a one-year time limit from the date the property was marketed.
 - The owner was working with the Council's Empty Homes and Development Officer to bring the property back into use.

11. Non-Domestic Rates – Empty Properties Relief Policy

Councillor James W Stockan declared an interest in this item, his connection being that he held property interests which could, in the future, fall within the ambit of this policy, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Signed: James W Stockan.

As the Chair, Councillor James W Stockan, had declared an interest in this item and left the meeting, the Vice Chair, Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, took the Chair for this item.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), the Committee:

Noted:

11.1. That, on 23 November 2022, when considering amendments to the current Non-Domestic Rates relief policy, setting a local policy on relief for empty properties, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended:

- That the draft scheme of relief to empty properties, based on the existing national scheme, which aimed to encourage ratepayers to bring empty properties back in to use, by limiting the relief available on longer-term empty properties and protecting the Council from financial risk by applying a 'hard' cap on relief awards of £10,000 per ratepayer, per financial year, be approved for consultation with local ratepayers.
- That the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration should submit a report, to the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, on the outcome of the consultation referred to above, together with a final scheme of relief to empty properties for adoption.

11.2. That consultation with ratepayers was undertaken between 18 January and 5 February 2023, with the main issues raised summarised in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

11.3. That the proposed scheme, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, had been amended to reflect the outcome of the consultation.

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

11.4. That the scheme of relief to empty properties, attached as Appendix 6 to this Minute, which aimed to encourage ratepayers to bring empty properties back in to use, by limiting the relief available on longer-term empty properties and protecting the Council from financial risk by applying a 'hard' cap on relief awards of £10,000 per ratepayer, per financial year, be adopted from 1 April 2023.

Signed: H N Woodbridge.

12. Scottish Highlands and Islands Local Policy Innovation Partnership

Councillor Steven B Heddle declared an interest in this item, his connection being that his spouse was Director of the Institute for Northern Studies, and was not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Programme Manager Islands Deal, the Committee:

Noted:

12.1. That the UKRI Developing Local Policy Innovation Partnership Fund sought to make available £20M over four years for establishing networks of Local Policy Innovation Partnerships to address social, community, economic and environmental priorities that contributed towards inclusive sustainable economic growth.

12.2. That the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and Robert Gordon's University (RGU) approached the Council seeking support as a collaborating organisation as part of a Phase 1 application to the UKRI Developing Local Policy Innovation Partnership Fund, with a deadline of 12 January 2023.

12.3. That, in recognition of the urgency and, in consultation with the Convener, Leader and Depute Leader, on 11 January 2023, the Chief Executive exercised emergency powers by providing the Council's support for the bid by UHI and RGU to the UKRI Developing Local Policy Innovation Partnership Fund.

12.4. That, should the bid be successful, involvement of the Council would be limited from a practical perspective, with no financial requirement, but an expectation to participate in meetings and to help with a landscape review.

12.5. That successful applications would be announced in March 2023 with a project start date of 18 April 2023.

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

12.6. That, should the Phase 1 bid be successful, powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader, to confirm and finalise the Council's involvement in the Scottish Local Policy Innovation Partnership, including a Phase 2 submission.

13. Dounby Visitor Infrastructure Hub

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Enterprise), the Committee:

Noted:

13.1. That, on 15 February 2022, when considering a draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan for public consultation, the Development and Infrastructure Committee recommended that the Interim Executive Director of Finance, Regulatory, Marine and Transportation Services should submit expressions of interest in respect of eligible project development costs associated with the projects, detailed in Appendix 6 to that Minute, to VisitScotland's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF), by the deadline of 24 February 2022.

13.2. That expressions of interest were submitted to the RTIF and the Council was subsequently awarded design grant support, totalling £98,400, to complete the design phase for five tourism infrastructure projects.

13.3. That, given the limited time available before the RTIF application deadline, the Dounby Visitor Infrastructure project was prioritised, as a draft Place Plan, which included the project, had already been developed with the Dounby community.

13.4. That the project proposal described refurbishment of the Council's car park located at the B9057/A986 crossroads to deliver a market green, a civic space with infrastructure to serve the needs of both the community and visitors, at an estimated gross capital cost of £949,500.

13.5. That an application for RTIF grant funding was submitted to VisitScotland on 18 January 2023, seeking up to 75% capital funding for the project, with notification of the outcome expected on 6 March 2023.

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

13.6. That, subject to the successful outcome of the grant funding application to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the Dounby Visitor Infrastructure Hub, attached as Appendix 7 to this Minute, be approved.

13.7. That, as an exception to the Capital Project Appraisal process due to VisitScotland's accelerated timetable, the proposed Dounby Visitor Infrastructure Hub be added to the capital programme for 2023/24 onwards, at an estimated gross capital cost of £949,500.

13.8. That the capital cost of the Dounby Visitor Infrastructure Hub be funded as follows:

- 75% funding from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.
- 25% match funding from the Council's Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

13.9. That, grant funding permitting, the construction contract for the proposed Dounby Visitor Infrastructure Hub should include demolition of the Council's existing public toilets on the B9057 at Dounby, with the site restored to a state suitable for future development.

14. Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with Pension Board

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 16 November 2022, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, seconded by Councillor P Lindsay Hall, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 16 November 2022, attached as Appendix 8 to this Minute, as a true record.

15. Investments Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Investments Sub-committee held on 16 November 2022, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, seconded by Councillor Kristopher D Leask, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Investments Sub-committee held on 16 November 2022, attached as Appendix 9 to this Minute, as a true record.

16. Police and Fire Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Police and Fire Sub-committee held on 24 November 2022, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor David Dawson, seconded by Councillor Raymond S Peace, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Police and Fire Sub-committee held on 24 November 2022, attached as Appendix 10 to this Minute, as a true record.

17. Human Resources Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

17.1. On the motion of Councillor John A R Scott, seconded by Councillor Ivan A Taylor, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023 as a true record.

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

17.2. That the recommendation at paragraph 2.5 of the Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023, attached as Appendix 11 to this Minute, be approved.

18. Police and Fire Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Police and Fire Sub-committee held on 14 February 2023, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

18.1. On the motion of Councillor David Dawson, seconded by Councillor Duncan A Tullock, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Police and Fire Sub-committee held on 14 February 2023 as a true record.

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

18.2. That the recommendation at paragraph 5.6 of the Minute of the Meeting of the Police and Fire Sub-committee held on 14 February 2023, attached as Appendix 12 to this Minute, be approved.

19. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor Graham A Bevan, 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.

20. Cost of Living Crisis – Business Support

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she was involved with a business which might apply for support, 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 report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to potential support schemes for businesses in response to the Cost of Living crisis.

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.

21. Request for Financial Assistance

Councillor John A R Scott declared an interest in this item 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 Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing and the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to a request for financial assistance.

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.

22. Proposed New Nursery at Orkney College

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 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Education, the Committee:

Noted:

22.1. That, on 1 March 2022, when considering a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the proposed new nursery at Orkney College, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended:

- That the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the proposed new nursery at Orkney College, attached as Appendix 10 to the Minute, be approved.
- That the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing should submit an application to the Islands Infrastructure Fund for 2023/24 in respect of the proposed new nursery at Orkney College, which maximised the level of grant funding within the Fund guidelines once established.
- That, as an exception to the Capital Project Appraisal process and conditional upon success of the application to the Islands Infrastructure Fund, the proposed new nursery at Orkney College be added to the capital programme for 2022/23 onwards, at a gross cost of £2.52 million.

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

22.2. That the existing provision within the General Fund capital programme in respect of the new nursery at Orkney College be increased by £630,417, from £2,520,000 to £3,150,417.

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.

23. Asset Management Sub-committee

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 2, 6, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

23.1. On the motion of Councillor Ivan A Taylor, seconded by Councillor Jean E Stevenson, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023 as a true record.

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

23.2. That the recommendation at paragraph 9.12 of the Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 31 January 2023, attached as Appendix 13 to this Minute, be approved.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson left the meeting at this point.

24. Property in Stromness

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson declared an interest in this item and left the meeting at this point.

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 Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to property in Stromness.

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.

25. Conclusion of Meeting

At 15:52 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: James W Stockan.