

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 13 November 2024, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Ivan A Taylor, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, David Dawson, Steven B Heddle, James R Moar, Janette A Park, John A R Scott, Jean E Stevenson and Heather N Woodbridge.

Teacher Representative:

Jo Hill.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Councillor Graham A Bevan.

Religious Representative:

Reverend Susan Kirkbride.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- James Wylie, Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Peter Diamond, Head of Education.
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (for Items 1 to 7).
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.
- Catherine Mackenzie, Head Teacher, Hope, Burray and North Ronaldsay Schools (for Items 1 to 5).
- Andrew Trafford, Head Teacher, North Walls Community School (for Items 1 to 5).
- Garry Burton, Service Manager (Leisure and Culture).
- Catherine Diamond, Service Manager (Early Learning and Childcare) (for Items 1 to 5).
- Morag Miller, Service Manager (Primary Education) (for Items 1 to 5).
- Pat Robinson, Service Manager (Accounting).
- Kerry Spence, Service Manager (Community Learning, Development and Employability).
- Georgette Herd, Solicitor.

Observing

- Lesley Mulraine, Service Manager (Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation).
- Jane Partridge, Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education) (for Items 1 to 5).
- Siobhan Wilks, Service Manager (Support for Learning and Inclusion) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Ashleigh Gillespie, Senior Human Resources Adviser (for Items 1 to 7).
- Nigel Fyffe, Team Manager (Maintenance and Heritage) (for Item 3).

Apologies

- Reverend Fraser Macnaughton, Religious Representative.
- Mary Maley, Teacher Representative.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated

Chair

- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

1. Revenue 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 (Accounting), the Committee:

Noted:

1.1. The revenue expenditure monitoring statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a net budget overspend position of £198,400, comprising the following:

- Underspend of £275,400 against General Fund services.
- Overspend of £473,800 against Non-General Fund services.

1.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas for which the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, attached as Annex 2 to report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

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 appropriate action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2. Housing Revenue Account

Revenue Repairs and Maintenance Programmes – 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 (Accounting), the Committee:

Noted:

2.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred, as at 30 September 2024, against the approved Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2024/25, as detailed in section 1.4 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.2. The detailed analysis of expenditure figures and programme updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance regarding significant budget variances and progress being made with delivery of the approved Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs and maintenance programme.

3. Performance Monitoring

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

Scrutinised:

3.1. The performance of Education, Leisure and Housing for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2024, in respect of performance indicators, as detailed in Annex 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

3.2. The complaints and compliments made to Education, Leisure and Housing in the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2024, and for the two preceding six-month periods, as detailed in section 3 of the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

4. North Ronaldsay Community School – Inspection

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 Service Manager (Primary Education), the Committee:

Scrutinised the inspection letter in respect of North Ronaldsay Community School issued by Education Scotland on 1 October 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

5. North Walls Community School and Nursery Class – Inspection

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing reports from the Service Manager (Primary Education) and the Service Manager (Early Learning and Childcare), the Committee:

Scrutinised the inspection letter in respect of North Walls Community School and Nursery Class issued by Education Scotland on 17 September 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance.

6. Community Learning, Development and Employability

Annual Report

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 Service Manager (Community Learning, Development and Employability), the Committee:

Scrutinised the Community Learning, Development and Employability Annual Report for 2023-24, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance regarding the delivery and impact of the Community Learning Development and Employability Service in Orkney.

7. Pickaquoy Centre Trust – End of Year Performance

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 Service Manager (Leisure and Culture), the Committee:

Scrutinised the Pickaquoy Centre Trust end of year usage figures and performance covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance that the aims and priorities detailed in the current extended Service Agreement 2019-22 were being met.

Councillor Janette A Park, Jo Hill and Reverend Susan Kirkbride left the meeting at this point.

8. Empty Homes Support Scheme

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn.

9. Strategic Housing Investment Plan

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, together with an Island Communities Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing, the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That the proposed Strategic Housing Investment Plan included a long-term vision up to 10 years, with a view to achieving a longer term commitment from Scottish Government to support funding for housing in Orkney.

9.2. That the ambitious housing programme would require a strategic and assertive project management approach from the Council, as the Strategic Housing Authority, across all relevant Council services to enable all suppliers to deliver the programme.

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

9.3. That the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Government.

Councillor Janette A Park rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

10. Conclusion of Meeting

At 11:34 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Gwenda M Shearer.