

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 28 March 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

- Hazel Flett, Senior Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Wilfred Weir, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Gareth Waterson, Head of Finance (for Item 1).
- Peter Diamond, Head of Lifelong Learning and Inclusion.
- Frances Troup, Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services.
- James Wylie, Head of Education and Improvement.
- William Ross, Principal, Orkney College.
- Graham Bevan, Service Improvement Officer.
- Catherine Diamond, Service Improvement Officer.
- Garry Burton, Sport and Leisure Manager (for Items 1 to 4).
- Paul Kemp, Strategic Finance Manager.
- Katharine McKerrell, Solicitor.

Observing

- Don Hawkins, Head Teacher, Kirkwall Grammar School.
- George McKinlay, Principal Teacher.
- Morag Miller, Service Improvement Officer.
- Carol McManus, Service Improvement Officer.
- Kerry Spence, Community Learning and Development Team Leader.

Apology

- Mary Maley.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor John T Richards – Items 1 and 4.
- Councillor Stephen Sankey – Item 4.
- Councillor John A R Scott – Item 4.

Chair

- Councillor Robin W Crichton.

1. Review of Charges – Housing Loans

Councillor John T Richards declared a non-financial interest in this item, in that he was a Director of Hi-Scot Credit Union, but concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

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

Noted:

1.1. That the Council operated a Housing Loan Scheme to support housing purchase, development, improvement and repair in the private sector.

1.2. That the Housing Loan Scheme was administered by Finance Services, with each application requiring to be fully assessed to ensure compliance with the recommended parameters, which incurred the following fees:

- An administration fee of £25.
- Legal Fees of £250.

1.3. That the fees charged to applicants for housing loans, detailed at paragraph 1.2 above, no longer reflected the level of work undertaken by Finance and Legal Services in respect of each application.

1.4. That a review had been undertaken to determine the level of charges that would be incurred by the applicant if applying for a loan from another financial institution, such as banks and building societies.

1.5. That the proposed net fees, detailed in section 5 of the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, compared favourably with those made by other institutions.

Councillor Robin W Crichton, seconded by Councillor Barbara Foulkes, moved that:

- The undernoted net fees associated with administration of the Housing Loan Scheme be increased as follows:
 - Administration Fee – increase by £125, from £25 to £150.
 - Legal Fee – increase by £125, from £250 to £375.
 - Redemption Fee – increase by £145, from £50 to £195.
- The following net fees associated with administration of the Housing Loan Scheme be introduced:
 - Bank Transfer Fee – £22.
 - Early Repayment Charge – 1% of the value of the early repayment if within two years from the start date of the housing loan.

Councillor John T Richards, seconded by Councillor Owen Tierney, moved an amendment that fees associated with administration of the Housing Loan Scheme be increased, with the exception of fees in respect of interest only loans, which should remain at the current level, namely £25, with legal fees of £250.

On a vote being taken 2 members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion, and the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

1.6. That the undernoted net fees associated with administration of the Housing Loan Scheme be increased as follows:

- Administration Fee – increase by £125, from £25 to £150.
- Legal Fee – increase by £125, from £250 to £375.
- Redemption Fee – increase by £145, from £50 to £195.

1.7. That the following net fees associated with administration of the Housing Loan Scheme be introduced:

- Bank Transfer Fee – £22.
- Early Repayment Charge – 1% of the value of the early repayment if within two years from the start date of the housing loan.

1.8. That the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing should submit a joint report, to the next meeting of the Committee, reviewing the loan ceiling, which was currently £115,000 or £30,000 for an interest only loan.

2. Housing Support Service

Sheltered Housing – Care Inspectorate Inspection

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:

2.1. That the Sheltered Housing Service was inspected by the Care Inspectorate during late 2017, with the inspection completed on 14 December 2017.

2.2. That the Care Inspectorate's inspection focussed on the following three areas:

- Quality of care and support.
- Quality of staffing
- Quality of management and leadership.

2.3. That all three areas inspected received a level 3 or "adequate" grading.

2.4. That the inspection report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, contained four recommendations and no requirements and consequently the Council was required to submit an Action Plan for improvement.

2.5. The Action Plan, attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which was submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

3. College Management Council Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 19 March 2018, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor John A R Scott, seconded by Councillor J Harvey Johnston, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the College Management Council Sub-committee held on 19 March 2018, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, as a true record.

4. Pickaquoy Centre Trust

End of Year Performance Monitoring

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 Head of Lifelong Learning and Inclusion, the Committee:

Noted Pickaquoy Centre Trust's end of year usage figures and performance for 2016 to 2017, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which indicated the following:

- Overall annual usage figures of 427,209, which represented an overall increase of 10% in usage against the same period in 2015 to 2016.

- The main positive variances against targets being gym (including strength and conditioning), group exercise, health suite and spa, other indoor leisure, swimming, climbing and bouldering and grass pitches.
- The main negative variances against targets being sports courses, campsite and all-weather pitch use.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

5. National Audit Report: Scotland's Colleges 2016

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 Principal, Orkney College, the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. The national audit report, Scotland's Colleges 2016, issued in August 2016 by Audit Scotland, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

5.2. The key messages contained within the national audit report, a summary of which was detailed in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

5.3. That references to Orkney in the national audit report were limited to the context of the University of Highlands and Islands.

5.4. That Council had previously agreed that a robust medium to long term business plan for Orkney College be developed.

6. National Audit Report: Early Learning and Childcare

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 Catherine Diamond, Service Improvement Officer, the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. The national audit report, Early Learning and Childcare, issued in February 2018 by Audit Scotland, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

6.2. The key messages contained within the national audit report, a summary of which was detailed in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

6.3. That references to Orkney in the national audit report were limited but generally presented a positive picture of actions taken by the Council in delivering 600 hours of Early Learning and Childcare.

7. Orkney Schools Attainment

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 Education and Improvement, the Committee:

Noted the Orkney Schools Attainment Report for academic session 2016 to 2017, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, which outlined the level of success and achievement of Orkney's young people.

8. Conclusion of Meeting

At 12:00 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Rob Crichton.