

Minute

Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 25 November 2025, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Heather N Woodbridge, Alexander G Cowie, Graham A Bevan, Stephen G Clackson, David Dawson, P Lindsay Hall, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Kristopher D Leask, W Leslie Manson, James R Moar, Janette A Park, 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)

Councillors Gwenda E Shearer and Mellissa-Louise Thomson.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance).

In Attendance

- Oliver D Reid, Chief Executive.
- Stephen Brown, Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.
- Hayley Green, Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.
- Gareth Waterson, Director of Enterprise and Resources.
- James Wylie, Director of Education, Communities and Housing.
- Lynda Bradford, Head of Health and Community Care (for Items 9 and 10).
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development (for Items 1 to 5 and 10 to 23).
- Sweeny Johnston, Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth (for Items 10 to 12).
- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Gavin Mitchell, Head of Corporate Governance.
- Alex Rodwell, Head of Performance and Business Support (for Items 10 to 23).
- Frances Troup, Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness (for Items 1 to 9).
- David Custer, Service Manager (Engineering) (for Items 1 to 6).
- Ingrid Mainland, Professor of Archaeology and Environmental Science, UHI Orkney College (for Item 7.)
- Susan Shearer, Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning) (for Items 9 to 11).
- Helen Sievwright, Service Manager (Community and Social Care) (for Items 9 and 10).

- Laura Baillie, Team Manager (Housing Strategy, Development and Data) (for Items 1 to 9).
- Mohammedreza Allahyar, Marine Infrastructure Manager (for Items 1 to 6).
- Laura Hutton, Economic Development Manager (for Items 10 to 12).
- Nick Blyth, Climate Change Strategy Officer (for Items 15 to 23).

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Seonaidh McDonald, Principal, UHI Orkney College (for Items 4 to 7).

Observing

- Kenny MacPherson, Head of Property and Asset Management (for Items 10 to 23).
- Rosemary Colsell, Service Manager (Procurement) (for Items 15 to 23).
- Donna-Claire Hunter, Service Manager (Safety and Resilience) (for Items 12 to 15).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance) (for Items 1 to 9).
- Jane Partridge, Service Manager (Secondary and Tertiary Education) (for Item 7).
- Kirsty Groundwater, Communications Team Leader.
- Harvey Crew, Economic Development Officer (for Items 10 to 12).
- Susan Taylor, Committees Officer.
- Chris Andrews, Communications Officer (for Items 1 to 12).

Observing via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Gavin Barr, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services (for Items 10, 11 and 16 to 23).

Declaration of Interest

- Councillor Rachael A King – Item 7.

Chair

- Councillor Heather N Woodbridge.

1. Common Good Fund

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

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

1.1. That the contribution from the Common Good Fund in respect of Fairs and Galas be increased from £15,000 to £35,000, for 2025/26 and subsequent years.

1.2. That the allocation from the Common Good Fund in respect of building maintenance should be extended to include land.

1.3. That powers be delegated to the Head of Finance to determine spend in respect of the allocation from the Common Good Fund relating to building maintenance, up to a maximum spend of £10,000 in any financial year.

2. Empty Homes Support Scheme

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that a total budget of £1,000,000, comprising £200,000 per annum over a 5-year period, be allocated from the Strategic Reserve Fund in order to fund the Empty Homes Support Scheme.

3. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, seconded by Councillor Alexander G Cowie, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded for Items 4 to 12, 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.

4. Request for Financial Assistance

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 joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, 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.

Councillor David Dawson joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

5. North Isles Linkspan System Upgrade

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 Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the proposed upgrading of linkspan systems at the following piers, comprising renewal of the control cabin, installation of a new control system, and replacement of relevant hydraulic cylinders, be added to the Non-General Fund capital programme for 2025/26 onwards:

- Eday Pier.
- Loth Pier, Sanday.
- Whitehall Pier, Stronsay.
- Rapness Pier, Westray.

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.

6. Hatston and Stromness Linkspans –System Upgrade

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 Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the proposed upgrade to the linkspan systems at Hatston and Stromness piers be added to the Non-General Fund capital programme for 2025/26 onwards.

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.

7. UHI Orkney – Archaeology and Environment Science Laboratory Facility

Councillor Rachael A King declared an interest in this item, her connection being that a close family member was a member of staff at UHI Orkney, 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 1, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Professor of Archaeological Sciences, UHI Orkney, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the proposed development of the Archaeology and Environment Science laboratory facility at UHI Orkney be added to capital programme for 2025/26 onwards.

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 David Dawson left the meeting during discussion of this item.

8. Property Development in Kirkwall

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

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Manager (Housing Strategy, Development and Data), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that a proposed property development in Kirkwall be added to the non-General Fund capital programme for 2025/26 onwards.

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 David Dawson rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

9. Demolition of Former Papdale Halls of Residence

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 Director of Education, Communities and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Director of Education, Communities and Housing should submit the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of demolition of the former Papdale Halls of Residence to the Policy and Resources Committee.

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 Janette A Park left the meeting at this point.

10. Telecare – Analogue to Digital

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 Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Health and Community Care, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the proposed purchase of Telecare and Community Care Alarm equipment, to enable the analogue to digital transition, be added to the capital programme for financial year 2025/26 onwards.

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.

11. Active Travel

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

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

11.1. That the Active Travel capital infrastructure projects, detailed in Appendix 1 to this Minute, for delivery in 2025/26 onwards, be fully funded from a combination of Tier 1 Active Travel funding and the Council's Covid Recovery Fund established in December 2021, specifically in relation to Footpath, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements.

11.2. That the Planning Service revenue budget for 2025/26 be increased to allow Active Travel development works, detailed in Appendix 1 to this Minute, to progress, to be funded by Tier 1 Active Travel funding and a contribution from the Covid Recovery Fund.

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.

12. UK Government Long-Term Pride in Place Programme

The Orkney Fund Board – Regeneration Plan

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 1, 4 and 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

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

Resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

12.1. That the Orkney Fund Board's draft 10-year Vision and 4-year Investment Plan, attached as Appendices 2 and 3 respectively to this Minute, be approved.

12.2. That powers be delegated to the Director of Enterprise and Resources to determine individual project awards of up to £55,000, from the Orkney Fund Board allocation, where there were no consequential negative cost implications for the Council.

12.3. That powers be delegated to the Director of Enterprise and Resources, in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader, to determine individual project awards exceeding £55,000, from the Orkney Fund Board allocation, where there were no consequential negative cost implications for the Council.

12.4. That individual project awards, where projects would have the potential for consequential negative cost implications to the Council, should be submitted to the appropriate Committee for determination.

13. Scheme of Administration

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

Noted:

13.1. The proposed revised Scheme of Administration, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Executive, which incorporated the proposals outlined in sections 3 to 7 of the report.

13.2. That Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) required local authorities to develop a Scheme of Delegation for the determination of planning applications.

13.3. That the revised Scheme of Administration would be submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval, prior to implementation of any amendments in respect of determination of planning applications.

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

13.4. That the following members of the Development and Infrastructure Committee be appointed to the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee:

- Councillor Alexander G Cowie.
- Councillor W Leslie Manson.
- Councillor Raymond S Peace.
- Councillor Duncan A Tullock.

13.5. That powers be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise and publish the Scheme of Administration.

14. Scheme of Delegation

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

Noted:

14.1. The proposed revised Scheme of Delegation to Officers, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Executive, which incorporated the proposals outlined in section 3 of the report.

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

14.2. That powers be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise and publish the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

15. Flag Flying Protocol

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Performance and Business Support, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Council's Flag Flying Protocol, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

Councillor P Lindsay Hall left the meeting at this point.

16. Council Climate Change Study

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Climate Change Strategy Officer, the Committee:

Noted:

16.1. The findings of the consultant's phase 1 report, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.

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

16.2. That the approach suggested by the Corporate Leadership Team, namely that the Council should progressively work through and address the consultant's recommendations and forthcoming statutory guidance, as summarised in section 4 of the report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, be endorsed.

16.3. That the Council's new baseline year for emissions reporting should be financial year 2023/24.

The Committee noted:

16.4. That the Council's greenhouse gas emissions inventory for future Public Bodies Climate Reporting will this year increase in scope to include additional emission sources of commuting, Fluorinated gases (F-gases), water consumption, and treatment, and from tenanted properties and Social Housing.

17. 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 24 September 2025, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Alexander G Cowie, seconded by Councillor Rachael A King, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 24 September 2025, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, as a true record.

18. Investments Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Investments Sub-committee held on 24 September 2025, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Alexander G Cowie, seconded by Councillor Rachael A King, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Investments Sub-committee held on 24 September 2025, attached as Appendix 6 to this Minute, as a true record.

19. 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 28 October 2025, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Alexander G Cowie, seconded by Councillor Heather N Woodbridge, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 28 October 2025, attached as Appendix 7 to this Minute, as a true record.

20. Asset Management Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

20.1. On the motion of Councillor Alexander G Cowie, seconded by Councillor Ivan A Taylor, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025 as a true record.

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

20.2. That the recommendations at paragraphs 4, 7 and 9 of the Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025, attached as Appendix 8 to this Minute, be approved.

21. Human Resources Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved:

21.1. On the motion of Councillor Alexander G Cowie, seconded by Councillor Ivan A Taylor, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025 as a true record.

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

21.2. That the recommendations at paragraph 1 of the Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Sub-committee held on 4 November 2025, attached as Appendix 9 to this Minute, be approved.

22. Climate Change Reporting Duties

After consideration of a report by the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Climate Change Strategy Officer, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Climate Change Duties Report, attached as Appendix 10 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Government, by the deadline of 30 November 2025.

23. Remaining Items of Business

The Committee resolved that the remaining items of business be referred to the General Meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 9 December 2025.

24. Conclusion of Meeting

At 16:58 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: (Leader's signature).