

Minute

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Wednesday, 12 November 2025, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Gwenda M Shearer, Ivan A Taylor, 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.

Religious Representative:

Reverend Fraser Macnaughton.

Teacher Representatives:

Jo Hill and Mary Maley.

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Councillor Graham A Bevan.

Religious Representative:

Reverend Susan Kirkbride.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- James Wylie, Director of Education, Communities and Housing.
- Garry Burton, Head of Active Communities.
- Wendy Bowen, Head of Education.
- Alex Rodwell, Head of Performance and Business Support.
- Frances Troup, Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness.
- Andrew Hamilton, Service Manager (Resources).
- Morag Miller, Service Manager (Primary Education).
- Kerry Spence, Service Manager (Community Learning, Development and Employability).
- Pat Robinson, Service Manager (Accounting).
- Cathy Lyner, Principal Educational Psychologist (for Items 1 to 6).
- Georgette Herd, Principal Solicitor.

- Lindsey Johnson, CLD Employability Team Manager (for Items 1 to 10).
- Katell Roche, Team Manager (Sport and Leisure) (for Items 6 to 8).
- Laura Baillie, Team Manager (Housing Strategy, Development and Data).

In Attendance via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

- Erik Knight, Head of Finance (for Items 1 and 2).
- Seonaidh McDonald, Principal, UHI Orkney (for Items 1 and 2).
- Siobhan Wilks, Service Manager (Support for Learning and Inclusion) (for Items 2 to 15).
- Vikki Kerr, Team Manager (Libraries and Archives) (for Items 6 to 7).

Observing

- Catherine Diamond, Service Manager (Early Learning and Childcare).
- Lesley Mulraine, Service Manager (Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation).
- Nigel Fyffe, Team Manager (Maintenance and Heritage).
- Ashley Gillespie, Senior HR Advisor.
- George Vickers, Community Planning Business Manager (for Items 10 to 15).

Apology

- Councillor Stephen G Clackson.

Declaration of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Gwenda M Shearer.

1. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor Gwenda M Shearer, seconded by Councillor Ivan A Taylor, the Committee resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Items 2 and 3, 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.

2. UHI Orkney Task Force

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 paragraph 1 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, the Committee:

Noted the initial work carried out by the Task Force and UHI Orkney towards reducing the loan required to balance the UHI Orkney budget, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

Mary Maley left the meeting at this point.

3. Stock Condition Survey

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 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 be authorised to commission an independent stock condition survey for all properties held on the Housing Revenue Account.

Mary Maley rejoined the meeting at this point.

4. National Improvement Framework

Orkney Islands Council Report and Plan

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 Education, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the National Improvement Framework: Orkney Islands Council Report and Plan 2025/28, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Government.

5. Promoting Positive Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, 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 Principal Educational Psychologist, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Promoting Positive Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

Councillor Graham A Bevan left the meeting during discussion of this item.

Reverend Susan Kirkbride and Reverend Fraser Macnaughton left the meeting at this point.

6. Included, Engaged and Involved

Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusion – Guidance for Schools and Early Learning and Childcare Settings

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, 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 Principal Educational Psychologist, the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the guidance entitled “Included, Engaged and Involved – Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions”, attached as Appendix 3 to this Minute, be approved, as the authority’s key guidance on supporting schools to prevent and manage exclusions.

Jo Hill and Mary Maley left the meeting at this point.

7. Orkney Archive Management Scheme

After consideration of a report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, 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 Team Manager (Libraries and Archives), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030, attached as Appendix 4 to this Minute, be approved.

8. Inspection of Outdoor Education

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 (Sport and Leisure), the Committee:

Noted the inspection report in respect of Outdoor Education, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority in May 2025.

9. Pickaquoy Centre Trust – Annual Performance Report

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 Active Communities, the Committee:

Noted the Pickaquoy Centre Trust end of year usage figures and performance covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

10. Local Employability Partnership Annual Report

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 CLD Employability Team Manager, the Committee:

Noted the Local Employability Partnership Annual Report 2024/25, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing, in so far as it related to the Council.

11. Local Housing Strategy – Annual Report

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:

Noted:

11.1. Progress in implementation of the Local Housing Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

11.2. The consultation and ongoing engagement that had been undertaken with the Housing Market Partnership and the wider construction sector during 2024 and 2025.

12. 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:

12.1. 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 2025, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a net budget overspend position of £336,900, comprising the following:

- Underspend of £567,600 against General Fund services.
- Overspend of £904,500 against Non-General Fund services.

12.2. The revenue financial 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 2025, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

12.3. 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.

13. 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:

13.1. The summary position of expenditure incurred, as at 30 September 2025, against the approved Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2025/26, as detailed in section 1.4 of the report by the Head of Finance.

13.2. The detailed analysis of expenditure figures and approved programme updates in respect of the approved Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs and maintenance programme for 2025/26, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance.

14. Performance Monitoring

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 Service Manager (Resources), the Committee:

Noted:

14.1. The performance of Education, Communities and Housing for the reporting period 1 April to 30 September 2025, in respect of directorate priorities and performance indicators, as detailed in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 respectively to the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

14.2. The complaints and compliments made to Education, Communities and Housing in the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2025, and for the two preceding six-month periods, as detailed in section 5 of the report by the Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

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

14.3. That the following actions be amended as indicated and thereafter incorporated within the Education, Communities and Housing Directorate Delivery Plan:

- Former Education, Leisure and Housing Directorate Delivery Plan:
 - 2.4 – Service Reviews (Sport and Leisure Service, Culture Service, and Library and Archives) – Recommendations from the Member Officer Working Group and suggestion from the member seminar to be presented to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee – target date to be extended from 31 March 2026 to 31 December 2026.
- Former Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions Directorate Delivery Plan:
 - 3b – Review and update corporate performance framework – target date to be extended from 31 March 2026 to 31 March 2027.
 - 3c – Develop the tools, approaches, and training to embed the framework across the organisation through to an individual team level – target date to be extended from 31 March 2026 to 31 March 2027.
 - 10 – Develop modernised suite of tools and protocols for community consultation and engagement which meet the needs and expectations of the community and ensure better co-ordination between the Council, OHAC and The Orkney Partnership. This includes elements of participatory democracy – target date to be extended from 31 March 2026 to 31 March 2027.

- 15a – Corporate Leadership Team prioritised rolling programme of improvement priorities for ‘Improvement and Performance’ and ‘Customer Services and Corporate Administration’ prioritised and agreed. This should include outstanding projects from previous initiatives such as the change programme – target date to be extended from 31 March 2026 to 31 March 2027.

14.4. That the following action, which had been progressed to completion, be removed from the former Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions Directorate Delivery Plan:

- 09a Community Councils – Engage with Community Councils to understand their support requirements including areas like clerking and training. Develop support and training arrangements based on Community Council requirements.

14.5. That the revised Education, Communities and Housing Risk Register, attached as Appendix 5 to this Minute, be approved.

15. Conclusion of Meeting

At 13:00 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Gwenda M Shearer.