

# MINUTE

# A&B - Public

**Development Committee**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lerwick**  
**Monday 11 June 2018 at 2.00pm**

**Present:**

P Campbell	S Coutts
A Cooper	A Duncan
J Fraser	A Priest
T Smith	

**Apologies**

M Burgess	S Leask
A Manson	

**In Attendance (Officers):**

N Grant, Director of Development Services  
J Belford, Executive Manager – Finance  
D Irvine, Executive Manager – Economic Development  
A Jamieson, Executive Manager - Housing  
L Malcolmson, Committee Officer

**Chair:**

Mr A Cooper, Chair of the Committee, presided.

**Circular:**

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

**Declarations of Interest**

Mr Duncan declared an interest in any discussion regarding the Agriculture Industry.

The following Members declared an interest in item 2 “Allocation Policy Annual Performance Report”: Mr T Smith as a Member on the Board of Hjaltsland Housing Association; Mr Fraser as a tenant of the Hjaltsland Housing Association and a representative on the Tenants Forum and shareholder. Mr Campbell as a £1 shareholder in Hjaltsland Housing Association.

**Minutes**

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2018 on the motion of Mr Duncan, seconded by Mr Fraser.

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2018 on the motion of Mr Fraser, seconded by Mr Duncan.

19/18 **Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Economic Development (DV-24-18-F), which presented the overall aims and objectives of the Economic Development Service for the period 2018-2022.

The Executive Manager – Economic Development introduced the report and in responding to a question he confirmed that the Council would not support any

business not paying the national living wage. In regard to the graduate placement scheme that the Council used to run, the Director of Development Services advised that under the business transformation programme the Council is considering how it can ensure it maintains a workforce going forward and how it recruits staff, which will include graduate placements and modern apprenticeships.

During discussion Members considered the importance of aquaculture, fisheries and processing and it was noted that the Strategy was about adding value where possible and the availability of labour was an essential element. The Executive Manager – Economic Development advised that the capital funding was being considered as part of the Islands Deal but there was no detail at this stage. The Voluntary Sector was also seen as essential to keeping businesses running.

Reference was made to page 41 and the Districts in Shetland. The point was made that although there is some grant aid, these funds have to be sparingly shared out. The Executive Manager – Economic Development added that the service now targets funding at priority areas.

During further discussion a request was made that within the final version of the strategy there be a better description of the infrastructure requirements and the links between the Economic Development Service and other areas of the Council.

The issue of staff shortages on the Yell Sound ferry was raised and the impact on Isles businesses that were now pulling out of the Isles as a result of the unpredictability of the ferry service. The need for stability into the future was stressed.

The Leader commented that there was a need to extend the Strategy to the wider Shetland Partnership.

In response to a question the Executive Manager – Economic Development advised that the consultation would be carried out in the normal way by issuing the document to industry stakeholders with a list of questions to answer. The Development Committee unanimously approved the recommendations contained in the report.

**Decision:**

The Committee APPROVED the Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 for consultation with industry, community stakeholders and public sector stakeholders.

20/18 **Allocation Policy Annual Performance Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Manager – Housing (HS-01-18-F), which presented the annual performance review information on the housing allocation quota targets contained in the Shetland Islands Council's Allocation Policy for the year 2017/18 and recommendations for the year 2018/19.

The Executive Manager – Housing summarised the main terms of the report.

In referring to the reasons cited by young people when seeking a tenancy it was stated that there is anecdotal evidence that these reasons may not be accurate but used to secure a tenancy. The Executive Manager – Housing advised that there had recently been a significant decrease in applications from 16-18 years age group. She said that this was down to the information provided by the Housing Service and also through family mediation the Housing Service seeks to resolve family issues rather

than assume that homelessness is the only outcome. She stated that homelessness was not an easy route for anyone. The Executive Manager – Housing said that the service investigate applications through a robust assessment process and each case is treated on a case by case basis. She confirmed that there were now fewer people trying to manipulate the system.

In response to a request the Executive Manager – Housing agreed to issue briefing paper to all Members providing further explanation on the 25% new Council tenants who are not satisfied with their new home.

The Executive Manager – Housing responded to a concern and in providing an explanation of the allocations process that would be followed she reassured that advertising of tenancies would continue. In response to a further specific question regarding 12 one bed houses to be built by Hjaltland Housing Association the Executive Manager – Housing advised how the allocations process would be carried out.

During the discussion, reference was made to the private rental properties now available across Shetland as a result of the post oil and gas activity. The Executive Manager – Housing agreed that having more balance in the private market where rents had previously been too expensive, could now be a reason for the reduction in housing applications.

In regard to medical assessments the Executive Manager – Housing explained that a holistic view is taken around medical need rather than driven by points, adding that GP's do not have direct contact with all applicants. She said that the assessment is about what the housing need is and how a change of housing would impact on the medical need. She said that adaptations to existing properties may be better for the individual than moving house. She said that the Housing Service would make contact with the Director of Public Health and others such as the Mental Health service to seek a view on need and it may be that the medical assessment is one small part of the overall assessment. Concern was expressed that the GP role had changed and the view was put across that the GP role should be maintained. Following further discussion on this point, the Executive Manager – Housing said that the decision required sought delegated authority to undertake the review but if it was the view of Members that a report be brought back with input from the organisations involved to provide reassurance to the Committee that could be done. She added however that this was a tried and tested process in every other local authority in Scotland.

During debate, the Leader commented that this was a positive change and a holistic approach. Mr Coutts moved that the Committee approve the recommendation in the report stating that there was no need for a further report to Members and he encouraged all organisations to fully engage with the process. Mr Fraser seconded.

**Decision:**

The Committee RESOLVED to approve:

- the performance reporting targets for 2018/19;
- operational change in the nomination agreement with Hjaltland Housing Association to nominate preferred prospective tenants in the line with the Council's own list positions; and

- review of medical assessment model, with delegated authority to migrate to new assessment system, following full applicant and partner consultation.

The meeting concluded at 2.55pm.

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Chair