

Local Government and Regeneration Committee

Cross-party delegation visit to Shetland

A delegation from the Committee visited Shetland on 28th and 29th May 2012, as part of its consideration of the Local Government Finance (Unoccupied Properties etc.)(Scotland) Bill. The purpose of the visit was to examine the proposals in the Bill to abolish the Housing Support Grant. As of 2012, Shetland Island Council is the only local authority in Scotland still in receipt of this grant.

The members of the delegation were: Joe FitzPatrick MSP (Convener), Kevin Stewart MSP (Deputy Convener), Anne McTaggart MSP and Margaret Mitchell MSP, Eugene Windsor (Committee Clerk) and Allan Campbell (Senior Researcher, SPICe).

The delegation took part in the following meetings and activities:

Shetland Islands Council

Date: Monday 28 May **Time** 1000 **Venue:** Lerwick Town Hall

Purpose: to gain an understanding of the background to historic debt of Shetland Islands Council Housing Revenue Account.

Attendees:

Cllr Gary Robinson –Political Leader, Shetland Islands Council

Cllr Cecil Smith Chair of Social Services Committee, Shetland Islands Council

Cllr Allison Duncan –Vice Chair of Social Services Committee, Shetland Islands Council

Cllr Alastair Cooper – Councillor for Shetland North and Chair of Development Committee, Shetland Islands Council

Alistair Buchan – Chief Executive, Shetland Islands Council

James Gray –Executive Manager – Finance, Shetland Islands Council

Anita Jamieson – Executive Manager – Housing Shetland Islands Council

Tavish Scott MSP, Member of the Scottish Parliament for Shetland

Sullom Voe oil terminal

Date: Monday 28 May **Time** 1300 **Venue:**

Purpose: to gain an understanding of the housing and wider issues in relation to the development and ongoing operation of Sullom Voe.

Attendees: Cllr Alastair Cooper – Councillor for Shetland North and Chair of Development Committee, Shetland Islands Council.

Firth Community House, Mossbank

Date: Monday 28 May **Time** 1500 **Venue:** Firth Community House

Purpose: To gain an understanding of how community learning and other community activities and support are facilitated through the provision of a community house.

Attendees:

Susanne Wilshaw – Chair of the Community Learning and Resource Centre (Firth)
Liz Whitrow – Tenant
Cllr Alastair Cooper – Councillor for Shetland North and Chair of Development Committee, Shetland Islands Council
Anita Jamieson – Executive Manager – Housing, Shetland Islands Council

Hjaltland Housing Association

Date: Monday 28 May **Time** 1700 **Venue:** Hjaltland Housing Association offices

Purpose: To gain an understanding of the role of Hjaltland Housing Association in meeting housing need in Shetland.

Attendees:

Dr Jeff Goddard, Chair, Hjaltland Housing Association
Susan Gray, Finance Manager, Hjaltland Housing Association
Paul Leask, Property Services Manager, Hjaltland Housing Association
Fiona Robertson, Housing Manager, Hjaltland Housing Association

Shetland Tenants Forum

Date: Monday 28 May **Time** 1800 **Venue:** Shetland Tenants Forum office

Purpose: To gain an understanding of tenant participation in Shetland.

Attendees:

Chris Robertson, Chairperson, Shetland Tenants Forum
Joann Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer, Shetland Tenants Forum
Marjorie March, tenant from Kalliness, Weisdale, Shetland Tenants Forum Committee member

Shetland Heat and Power Ltd (SHEAP)

Date: Tuesday 29 May **Time** 0930 **Venue:** SHEAP office

Purpose: To gain an understanding of the management and operation of the Shetland district heating scheme.

Attendees:

Neville Martin, District Heating Manager, SHEAP

Shetland Community Planning Partnership

Date: Tuesday 29 May **Time** 1030 **Venue:** Lerwick Town Hall

Purpose: To gain an understanding of the progress made in Shetland in relation to community planning and the single outcome agreement.

Attendees:

Neil Grant, Director of Development Services, Shetland Islands Council
Chief Inspector Angus MacInnes, Northern Constabulary
Vaila Simpson, Community Planning Manager, Shetland Islands Council
Catherine Hughson, Voluntary Action Shetland
Ian Kinniburgh, Chair, NHS Shetland board
Stewart Robertson, Area Manager Shetland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise