

Motion to be presented to Shetland Islands Council on 14th May 2014

We recognise that this is an unparalleled time of change in Shetland's education system and do not wish to cause any more upheaval than necessary for pupils, staff and the wider community.

To this end we propose to put on hold Section C of the "Strategy for Secondary Education in Shetland" resolution passed at the Shetland Islands Council meeting on the 13th November 2013, which was to:

"rationalise secondary education provision...and...
undertake statutory consultation on the discontinuation of stages of education, namely secondary 3 and Secondary 4, with transfer of pupils to the Anderson High School at the end of Secondary 2 for the following schools:

Aith Junior High School

Sandwick Junior High School

Baltasound Junior High School

Mid Yell Junior High School

Whalsay School secondary department

These consultations are to be put on hold until the new Anderson High School has been built and is operating effectively and the Shetland Learning Campus is in place with the future direction of Shetland College and the NAFC Marine Centre settled.

This will allow sufficient staff resources to be allocated to these projects while at the same time ensuring that all schools are effectively supported with the roll-out and continuing development of Curriculum for Excellence. We wish to be reassured that our schools are provided with a level of professional resourcing and support to ensure that all pupils have the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential in the new exam and accreditation system.

We understand that this will leave a shortfall in the savings target for Children's Services, to this end we:

- Ask that the Executive Manager of Finance quantifies what this shortfall is
- Instruct the Chief Executive, or his nominee, to:
 - Bring forward proposals as to how this shortfall might be met without impacting on the quality of education as described above
 - Provide a detailed explanation of the substantial difference in the cost of educating secondary school pupils in Shetland compared with Orkney and the Western Isles
 - Give consideration as to how the Council might make best use of all the resources available to it in a creative way to support education in our rural communities.

All of which in turn will contribute to the social and economic sustainability of those communities.