

Association of Shetland Community Councils (ASCC)

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Minute of the ASCC meeting held on Tuesday 10 March 2020, 6.00 pm, at Town Hall Chamber

Present

Alistair Christie-Henry	Bressay Community Council
Niall O'Rourke	Burra and Trondra Community Council
Sherri Malcolmson	Dunrossness Community Council
John Robertson	Dunrossness Community Council
Maureen Davis	Gulberwick, Quarff and Cunningsburgh Community Council
Ewen MacPherson	Gulberwick, Quarff and Cunningsburgh Community Council
Jim Anderson	Lerwick Community Council (Chair)
Gary Robinson	Lerwick Community Council
David Brown	Northmavine Community Council
Ian Walterson	Sandness and Walls Community Council (Vice Chair)
Iris Sandison	Sandness and Walls Community Council
George Morrison	Sandsting and Aithsting Community Council
Kieran Malcolmson	Sandwick Community Council
John Hunter	Scalloway Community Council
Douglas Anderson	Skerries Community Council
Andrew Archer	Tingwall, Whiteness and Weisdale Community Council
Patrick Fordyce	Unst Community Council
Laurence Odie	Yell Community Council

In Attendance

Michael Duncan	Community Council Liaison Officer – Community Planning and Development, SIC
Louise Robertson	Projects Officer – Community Planning and Development, SIC
Vaila Simpson	Executive Manager – Community Planning and Development, SIC
Mat Roberts	Chief Executive - Shetland Amenity Trust
Pat Christie	CIDO - Community Planning and Development, SIC (Minutes)
Yvonne Scott	Burial Services Officer – Environmental Services, SIC
Carl Symons	Executive Manager – Environmental Services, SIC
Robina Barton	ZetTrans
Matt Mason	Group Manager, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
Amy Gerrard	Firefighter, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
Drew Mayhew	Paramedic, Scottish Ambulance Service

1. Introductions

Mr Jim Anderson, Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received, as noted below. All attendees introduced themselves before proceeding to the agenda items.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Fetlar Community Council; Nesting and Lunnasting Community Council.

3. Defibrillators

Mr Matt Mason of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service introduced himself. He explained that he was here to give information on best practice around cardiac arrests and defibrillation. This is based on the 'Chain of Survival' guidance provided by the Resuscitation Council (UK). Mr Mason noted that this subject has been raised at Community Council meetings and previous meetings of the ASCC. He hopes to do work in the future with the SIC Community Planning & Development Service around joint work with communities. Mr Mason felt it was important to discuss training in use of defibrillators and the need to registration of defibrillators across Shetland.

There are 4 basic steps if you think someone is going into cardiac arrest:

- Call 999
- Start CPR
- Ask someone else to bring a defibrillator
- Follow the instructions on the defibrillator

Mr Drew Mayhew of the Scottish Ambulance Service then went on to emphasise the importance of knowing where defibrillators are in communities. That it is important to have these accessible and preferably outside buildings where they can be available 24/7.

Mr Mason said that the rates of out of hospital cardiac arrest survival rates are an improving picture across Scotland. However, he emphasised that there is still more that can be done. There has been a lot of promotion about using defibrillators to build confidence in the community.

Mr Mayhew emphasised the importance of getting more people trained and the need to get defibrillators registered. Many defibrillators are not known to the Scottish Ambulance Service. Both these points can mean the difference between life and death. There is a national defibrillator register called the 'The Circuit': <https://www.thecircuit.uk/>. This links every defibrillator to the ambulance service across the country.

Mr Mason went on to say that there was free training in the use of defibrillators happening in Shetland through the Resuscitation Council (UK). This includes rolling out basic resuscitation training to students at the Anderson High School followed by use of defibrillators later on. Two main charities support this: the British Heart Foundation: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/> and Lucky2BHere: <https://www.lucky2bhere.org/>. Lucky2BHere also support communities to purchase defibrillators and their ongoing management. Mr Mason said that they are actively working with Luck2BHere to get all defibrillators registered. He urged Community Councils to get in touch with him as he wants to get full registration across Shetland to improve community resilience.

Mr Mason stressed the importance of having defibrillators installed in remote areas. These need to be registered, maintained and accessible. An app may be developed that would help identify and locate defibrillator in communities. There is also scope to improve signage not only at sites but at roadsides.

Mr Archer asked how much defibrillators cost. Mr Mason said they were between £1,000 and £1,500 and that he would urge Community Councils to contact the British Heart Foundation for help with this. There are also ongoing costs such as pads and batteries.

Mr Malcolmson then asked who was responsible for maintenance etc.? Mr Mason said that the body that purchased the defibrillator was ultimately responsible but in the case of no one knowing who that is then a responsible person in the community needs to be identified who would take the task on. Possibly a task for Community Councils? Registration will help here as the machine would be registered to a specific organisation and prompt would then be sent if batteries need updating etc.

Mr Christie-Henry informed the meeting that Bressay Community Council acquired a defibrillator 5 years ago. This is in a central location and THE Scottish Fire & Rescue service support the Community Council with this.

Mr Walterson asked if defibrillators were different across Shetland. Mr Mayhew said there were different models but they are all the same to use.

Mr Anderson wanted to know the retrieval distance. Mr Mason said he was uncertain of the exact distance but it would be good to have as many defibrillators as possible located strategically across Shetland.

Mr Anderson also asked if the statistics mentioned tonight were Scottish. Mr Mason assured him they were.

Mr Christie-Henry mentioned that Argyll and Bute advertise locations of defibrillators at ferry terminals. Mr Meyhew pointed out that this is good practice and could easily be carried out in Shetland as well.

Mr MacPherson asked if the Scottish Fire & Rescue have a list and Mr Meyhew said that they did know where registered defibrillators are in the community. When ambulances are dispatched then the caller will be told if a machine is near and that person will be talked through the procedure. Mr Mason pointed out that CPR is the most important action. Sending someone else for the defibrillator is secondary to that and dialling 999.

Ms Simpson asked if the ambulance service had a list of non-registered defibrillators and Mr Meyhew said they did not.

Mr Christie-Henry asked Mr Duncan what was happening with finding out what Community Councils had done in terms of registering defibrillators. Mr Duncan replied that the Community Councils did have a list. This may be slightly different to other lists and what is required is that all lists are brought together centrally and registered. These can then be mapped and available to the emergency services and to local communities. Signage and publicity could then be planned so that there is as much information as possible in times of emergency.

Contact details:

Mr Matt Mason: matt.mason@firescotland.go.uk tel: 07973211285

Mr Drew Mayhew: scotamb.lerwick@nhs.net tel: 07881356518

[6.50 pm – Mr Mason, Ms Gerrard and Mr Meyhew left the meeting]

4. Grass Cutting in burial Grounds

Mr Carl Symons of SIC Environmental Services explained that he was attending the meeting to speak about burial grounds and ground maintenance in general. There are 70 burial grounds in Shetland covering a 151,000 square metres. In January this year a report was presented to Council following a number of complaints received about the standard of grass cutting in burial grounds. Mr Symons agreed that due to the heavy growth of grass last year not all burial grounds had received adequate cutting. One reason for this was the prioritisation of the Memorial Safety Inspection Programme. The Council have had to tighten up all procedures relating to memorials after being served an Improvement Notice. This meant fewer hours available to cover grass cutting.

Mr Symons said that a Stage 2 approach will be taken next year and that all grass will be cut to a Category 2 standard across the burial grounds in Shetland. This will cost £41,000. A review will then happen in January 2021 and a decision will be taken on whether or not to collect and dispose of mown grass in the future. This comes in at a one off cost of £48,000 with an annual recurring cost of £26,000.

Mr Symons explained that cut grass was not collected in other amenity areas and that the grass there was kept to a certain length. The contract for other amenities has changed from area based to Shetland wide to make savings. This change should mean that there will be the option to have additional services for burial grounds if required. The contract costs £178,000 per year. To add cut grass collection to this will mean an additional £58,000 per annum. Collecting grass also adds to the carbon footprint through the use of vehicles. It is hoped that more frequent cutting and allowing the grass to mulch in will be more cost and carbon effective.

Ms Davis wanted to know frequency of cut this year. Mr Symons said 13 times a year for each yard.

Mr Christie-Henry asked if the SIC had any plans to have local contractors cut yards in more rural areas. Mr Symons said that in Fetlar then there was a plan to employ a community based handy person who could provide this service as part of their contract. This is a new approach and Mr Symons hopes it works as local provision of services is always better. Cutting grass for amenity areas is done by a network of small contractors and this is set to continue.

Mr MacPherson suggested that grass could be composted nearer to burial grounds rather than transporting it from Unst to Lerwick as an example. Mr Symons said that the SIC will be investigating this and looking at where this might happen and what might be done with the compost when it's ready. Could compost be made available as a community resource?

Mr Christie-Henry mentioned that when this had been looked at in the past then it was not considered viable. Mr Symons said he was willing to look at any ideas with Community Councils.

Mr Anderson asked what the Category 2 standard was. Mr Symons said it was a minimum mow of 7.5cm and growth 15 cm.

[7.00 pm – Mr Symons and Ms Scott left the meeting]

5. Note of the previous minute, held on 17 September 2019

The minute of the previous meeting was held to be accurate; proposed by Ms Maureen Davis, seconded by Mr Alistair Christie-Henry.

6. Matters arising from previous minute not on the agenda

- **Action 1:** Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks to advise how to respond to the Boundary Commissions consultation. Mr Duncan advised this had been done and that he was aware of the timescale for Boundary Commission to conclude its work.
- **Action 2:** Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks, once the Complaints Procedure document is ready, to invite Community Council members to participate in a Sounding Board. Mr Duncan advised that this item was on the Agenda.
- **Action 3:** Mr Duncan to invite the Ambulance Service to the March meeting, on behalf of the ASCC. Mr Duncan advised this had been actioned and the Ambulance Service had attended tonight.
- **Action 4:** Grass Cutting in Burial Grounds to be added to the agenda for the March meeting. Mr Duncan advised this had been actioned and that a representative from the service had attended tonight
- **Action 5:** ASCC to write to burial grounds officers, seeking clarification about the criteria for grass cutting in burial grounds. Mr Duncan advised this was covered under Action 4.

[7.03 pm – Ms Robertson left the meeting]

7. Active Travel Strategy

Robina Barton introduced herself and explained that although she was employed by the SIC as the Transport Policy and Procedure Officer she was representing ZetTrans tonight. She said that she was here to talk about the Active Travel Strategy that was being developed at the moment.

Active travel is any form of transport that requires active use of the body e.g. walking, cycling etc. Use of wheelchairs is also active travel and any policy needs to take this into account. The benefit of active travel is that it will encourage people to get out of their cars and use other forms of transport. It is therefore good for the environment and society as a whole. It tackles inequality, improves public health and helps the economy. One of Shetland Partnership Plan's outcomes is carbon footprint reduction. One way to tackle this is to encourage children to walk to school. In Shetland figures show that the numbers of children walking to school had decreased over the years. There are positive benefits to walking more. This is being tackled in Shetland through path upgrades such as the path around the Clickimin Complex. £500,000 came from Sustrans towards that project.

Community Councils all contributed suggestions for walking and cycling routes across Shetland. A list was made up that was looked at by the SIC Roads Department to assess viability. A few years ago ZetTrans undertook a feasibility study for active travel hubs and the NHS and Recreational Trust have also been looking to develop initiatives. Examples are bikes for staff. Cycle tourism is on the increase in Shetland. There are also two large housing developments at the Knab and Staney Hill in Lerwick. These will be looking to encourage less cars and more public transport and cycling. Partner agencies have formed a group to take the ideas forward in a more strategic way. Funding from Sustrans has been secured to develop a strategic plan. Consultants have been appointed to draw together the issues and look at priorities. <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-scotland/>

Funding can come from Sustrans. 100% for design work. 50% for construction. They will fund cycle paths, bus shelters, traffic calming measures etc. Integration of public and private travel is a priority as is safety including lighting etc. Behaviour change is key so that people change travel habits. More information, leaflets, cycle training and updated travel plans for schools are all things that can be improved. Other funders include Paths for All, Cycling Scotland etc.

It is important that public bodies commit to these changes. We need to demonstrate that this is a good 'spend to save' scheme with health benefits that will decrease spending in the long term.

Ms Barton urged people to attend the current Active Travel workshop consultation sessions and/or fill in the survey. A draft strategy should be produced by the end of May. It will then be put to the Council and ZetTrans in June. There will then be a period of consultation on the strategy. The final Strategy will hopefully be adopted by early autumn 2020. Once the strategy is in place then Sustrans will be approached again for funding and we will hopefully be able to work in collaboration with Community Councils at that time.

Mr Archer asked Ms Barton if she knew why car usage has increased. Ms Barton replied that it may have to do with new housing and taking children to school. Car ownership in Shetland is high and people tend to see their car as a necessity here not a luxury. There is scope in more urban areas of Shetland to look at how this might change.

Mr Walterson asked if the SIC had identified a budget and planned ahead for projects that might happen? Ms Barton replied that plans the SIC already had for projects can be factored in for 50% match funding. There could also be scope to match fund projects in areas working with Community Councils or development groups.

Mr O'Rourke asked if there is a standard path that is used or could dirt tracks be used in more rural places for safety? Ms Barton said there are design standards however, in a place such as Shetland adhering to this may be difficult. There is a need to be pragmatic and look at what is needed in individual cases.

Mr Malcolmson asked about the Hoswick path at Sandwick. He commented that the path came about because there was a willingness on the part of the owner to sell the land. He wondered if land purchase was a stumbling block for improvements. Ms Barton answered that it can be difficult but that they hoped to work with communities on this. During the consultation then people are invited to mark on maps where they might like to see paths. Those will be collated and prioritised with communities.

Mr Archer raised the point that recent SIC ditching which undermined verges may be putting people off walking. In some places it is becoming dangerous to walk as there is not enough space to get out of the way of vehicles, particularly if you are disabled or have a buggy. Ms Barton said this has been brought to her attention before and she wondered if something can be done to address the situation. Ms Barton suggested speaking to SIC roads about this.

Action 1 - As there was poor attendance at the Active Travel workshop in Brae then Ms Barton hopes to reschedule this.

[7.32 pm – Ms Barton left the meeting]

8. Shetland Amenity Trust

Mr Mat Roberts of Shetland Amenity Trust (SAT) introduced himself. He handed out copies of SAT's strategic plan 'Caring for Shetland's Heritage'. Mat has been employed by SAT for 2 years now. The new plan has been created with the help of a consultant. SAT's vision and role in the community is set out in the document. Heritage is at the heart of Shetland and also at the heart of what SAT do. The strategy has 5 priorities.

- Innovate for heritage
- Step up on biodiversity
- Inspire wellbeing
- Build communities
- Foster partnership

SAT aspire to improve access to heritage, biodiversity and nature. Mr Roberts explained that because SAT is an independent organisation it does not have to work to Government targets for instance, therefore its records are more objective. He went on to explain that engaging with our heritage and environment is good for our wellbeing. Events such as the nature Festival gets people out and about and active.

Mr Roberts emphasised that staff welfare was very important to the organisation and that their opinions should always be listened to. SAT hope to engage with the network of local heritage groups and the volunteers who run the excellent museums and groups across Shetland. Mr Roberts said that Shetland has some amazing museums, an example being Tangwick Haa. He also explained that people return time and again to the Shetland Museum and Archives to see the exhibits and engage with the stories.

Mr Archer asked how encouraging wellbeing fits into SAT's strategy. Mr Roberts replied that he believed that engaging people with their heritage inspired wellbeing.

[7.51 pm – Mr Roberts left the meeting]

9. ASCC Complaints Procedure

Mr Duncan explained that after the ASCC September meeting a draft Complaints procedure was drawn up. Advice was sought internally within the SIC and Mr Duncan thanked Mr Christie-Henry for his comments from a Community Council perspective to the process.

In January 2020 the draft Complaints Procedure was sent out to Community Councils for comment and Mr Duncan checked the content against procedures in other local authorities. The document circulated prior to this meeting is the updated version.

Mr Anderson asked for approval of the ASCC Complaints Procedure; proposed: Mr Alistair Christie-Henry; Seconded: Mr Gary Robinson

Action 2 - Mr Duncan said that a training course on the Complaints Procedure will be designed over the next few months and rolled out to Community Councillors.

10. Budget update 2020/21

Mr Duncan explained that the date for the SIC Budget setting meeting is 11 March 2020.

Action 3 – Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks, once Budget information is available.

Mr Duncan said that once the SIC Budget is set then he will be able to set deadline dates for the Community Development Fund (CDF). These will be near the end of March/April/May. There will be a new system in place for application forms. This is being tested internally within the SIC, a few of the Community Council clerks and some people from out with the SIC have also trialled the form. So far it seems to be working okay. Once the final tweaks are done then the form will go live. Mr Duncan advised Community Councils to apply to the CDF scheme in plenty of time in case there were any glitches, and ensure people did not miss deadlines. If there are any problems with the new online form then please phone Mr Duncan or Elsa Manson at SIC Community Planning & Development.

Action 4 – Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks, once the CDF dates available.

Mr Duncan said that SIC Human Resources have given an update regarding salary scales. Clerks are currently paid on the equivalent of an SIC H2 pay rate. There has been a recent uplift in the Distance Allowance hourly rate. The ASCC will receive this information from the Council. The ASCC can recommend that Community Councils implement this wage change but it will be up to each individual Community Council whether or not it wishes to do that.

Action 5 – Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks new pay scale information.

Mr Duncan informed the meeting that there is due to be Community Council By-elections in the next few months. For Community Councils that have vacancies then dates and times will be announced in due course. Anne Cogle, Administration Services, is working through the process and an announcement is expected in the near future. It is expected that if there is a need for Community Councils to go to election then a date around the end of May is likely. If people need help with promoting vacancies then help is available from Mr Duncan and the Community Development team.

Action 6– Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks, once by-election dates are available.

Mr Duncan said that work is ongoing to update the Community Council grant forms before April.

Action 7 – Mr Duncan to email Community Council Clerks, once the new Community Council application forms are ready.

11. Items for decision at future meetings

Mr Odie had put an item forward for this meeting but it missed the deadline. He asked that improvements to Inter Island transport links be discussed at the next meeting e.g. fixed links.

Mr Anderson called for any items or presentations to be with Mr Duncan by early April.

Action 8 – Mr Duncan will put out a call for items for the June meeting.

12. Any Other Business

Action 9 - Mr Christie-Henry asked that any link to the CDF application form be sent directly to him rather than the clerk as the clerk is currently on annual leave.

Mr Duncan asked if the format of the meetings is working. Mr Odie replied that he felt the presentations tonight had been too long. He felt the balance of discussion time and presentations needs to be better.

Mr Anderson urged Community Councils to put items on the agenda as they want. Mr Christie-Henry felt that the agenda very much reflected what was asked for in the September meeting but that may have been too much. Mr Duncan said that he was happy to organise what the ASCC wanted, such as networking time. He requested that Community Councillors reflect on this and let him know if they have any ideas or comments.

Action 10 - Mr Duncan said he would put out a call for items for future meetings.

Action 11 - Mr Christie-Henry asked that community resilience be put on a future meeting. This was in light of the current covid-19 virus.

Ms Davis wondered if there was an opportunity to discuss Scatsta and Sumbugh Airport. The ASCC could look at local support, opportunities, impact of job losses at Scatsta etc. Mr Walterson said that Sumbugh Airport had been on the agenda a number of years ago and that this had been a productive discussion. Mr Robinson pointed out that the situation with the Scatsta contract had been a concern for some time. Mr Morrison said that commercial pressures came into play here. Mr Anderson said that how these situations are dealt with makes a huge difference.

It was suggested that population decline and sustainability in rural areas could be a discussion point. Mr Walterson said that housing and local strategies had an effect on rural population and that where housing is placed is crucial to this. Mr Brown said that Northmavine Community Council are to write to the SIC hoping that they would support families in the North Mainland impacted on by the closure of Scatsta Airport and help create employment. Mr Odie said that a number of people in Yell were employed at Scatsta and he had already noticed less traffic on the ferry as a result of the closure. Mr Anderson asked if there had been any surveys done on ferries to see where people’s destinations were. Mr Odie said that there have been a number done in the past but he felt those often asked the wrong questions with the result that people did not fill them in.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 9 June 2020, 6.00pm – Town Hall Chamber

[The meeting closed at 8.15 pm]

Chairperson*Jim Anderson*.....

Date*8th September 2020*.....