

# Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council

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Minutes of a WebEx meeting of Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council held on Monday 11 January 2021 at 7.30pm. 0800 051 3810 128 693 7972

Present: J Priest Ms D Nicolson  
G Morrison J D Garrick  
Mrs S Deyell M Bennett  
Mrs J Fraser  
Ex officio: Cllr C Hughson Cllr T Smith  
By invitation: Ms Beatrice Wishart MSP  
In attendance: Mrs R Fraser, Community Involvement & Development Worker.  
Mrs L Fraser, Clerk

Mr J Priest presiding

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a roll call so that everyone knew who was there no matter in which order they signed in.

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Coutts and Mr M Duncan, Community Liaison Officer.

**MINUTES & HEADLINES:** The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020, having been circulated, were taken as read and were approved. Moved by Mr M Bennett, seconded by Ms D Nicolson.

**MS BEATRICE WISHART, MSP:** The Chairman then welcomed Ms B Wishart MSP to the meeting. She said she appreciated being invited to join us.

**Coronavirus -**

Ms B Wishart explained that she had been contacting Community Councils to see how they are coping as she felt that it is important to retain contact in order to understand how the community is coping with the present circumstances. She agreed that people were feeling a bit more comfortable before the last outbreak but that there are now 3 vaccines available which are in the process of being rolled out. She believes that the NHS now have the Care Homes covered and they are working through their list from the most vulnerable and front line staff to the over 90s, over 80s, etc. So far, there does not appear to be any evidence of the new variant of Covid in Shetland but we have yet to see the full impact of people mixing at the Christmas and New Year period.

The Chairman informed her that many people had suggested that there should be testing of people coming into Shetland.

Ms B Wishart agreed that testing at the points of entry would have been helpful at the beginning of the outbreak and explained that it was when she and Mr L MacArthur MSP for Orkney and Mr A Carmichael MP heard that rapid testing was being carried out for the truck drivers at the Channel Port, they asked that this be done for Shetland and Orkney. Everyone knows the movements of the ferries and planes and it would give another layer of protection.

Mr M Bennett said that he tends not to mix with many people just now but finds that for most of them the overwhelming feeling is that safety should come first and that testing would give some reassurance.

Ms B Wishart also feels that safety is the Number One issue.

The Chairman said that will be no recovery in economy until the virus is sorted.

Ms B Wishart believes that, although Shetland is in Tier 3, lots of people in Shetland are treating it similar to Level 4.

#### **Marine litter –**

Mr M Bennett is very pleased with the progress following our reporting of the marine litter in our area.

Ms B Wishart has corresponded with Ms Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change & Land Reform about marine litter and fishing vessels getting rid of fishing gear. Ms Wishart has also had correspondence with the SIC.

#### **Education –**

Concern was expressed about the number of school days reported lost due to staff absence for reasons of mental health issues. Ms B Wishart said that she believes, from a report by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) that Scottish teachers work the longest hours in the world which shows that teachers are under a lot of pressure. She also thinks there should be a review of conditions for this very worthwhile job.

Mr M Bennett said that he thinks that the stress teachers suffer goes a long way back and is caused by party politics as education is treated as a political football. He feels that education should be more in the hands of professionals with a cross party dialogue and input from politicians and a joint acceptance of responsibility for the outcomes.

Ms B Wishart is a representative on the Education & Skills Committee and she feels that it is one of the most important committees.

#### **Broadband –**

The Chairman asked whether there is any update on this provision.

Ms B Wishart informed the members that a Reaching 100% (R100) Roundtable event is being organised by herself and Alistair Carmichael MP. This is to facilitate a discussion on the Scottish Government's R100 rollout in Shetland now that the R100 North Lot has been signed. The event will consist of presentations from the panel and the opportunity to ask questions about the rollout and wider broadband deployment. It will be held on the afternoon of Friday 5 February and will be an online discussion for local authority and Community Councillors hosted on Zoom and chaired by either herself or Mr Alistair Carmichael. The Chairman hopes to attend.

The Chairman said that the Reawick exchange is a microwave link but that there is a fibre optic cable within 10 metres of it. He hopes that the area covered by the exchange will now be part of the R100 scheme. He added that, during this past year, it has proven how important broadband is to the modern world to allow people to work from home, in home schooling, keeping in touch to prevent isolation, etc.

Ms B Wishart agreed and said that we need connectivity across the board.

As Ms B Wishart had another appointment to attend following this meeting she had to leave at 8.15pm. She said that if anyone needs to contact her the details are as follows:-

Ms B Wishart, Member of the Scottish Parliament for Shetland, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP Tel: 0131 348 6296

Miss B Wishart, Shetland Parliamentary Office, 171 Commercial Street, Lerwick ZE1 0HX  
Tel: 01595 690044 Mobile: 07811 470788

Email: [Beatrice.Wishart.MSP@parliament.scot](mailto:Beatrice.Wishart.MSP@parliament.scot).

She added that she does try to reply to constituents as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked Ms Wishart for her time and said we appreciate her help.

Ms B Wishart thanked the Community Council members for their invitation. She then left.

**BUSINESS ARISING: Broadband:** Mrs J Fraser said that broadband in Skeld is very poor and that working from home is a nightmare.

The Chairman agreed and said that broadband provision in Reawick has also dropped in quality recently.

**Mobile phone coverage:** The Chairman reported that some of the residents in Skeld are benefitting from the Reawick mast.

Unsure whether the Culswick mast is live yet.

**Road Matters:** Road past Garderhouse: No further correspondence.

**Roads Reports:** The Roads Reports have been received each week and circulated to the members.

**Speed of traffic coming down the hill towards Sandsound junction:** Mr M Bennett thanked Cllr C Hughson for the quick reply to the questions we had asked.

1. The 18 month trial period will start when the signs are installed on site. This is likely to be in early May 2021 as it is preferable to get some "before" data, for comparison purposes, on vehicle, pedestrian and cyclist numbers even if it is only for March and April.
2. The temporary or trial limit will be communicated in the same way as all speed limits in Shetland have been to date by simply erecting the mandatory 50mph speed limit roundels on site. This is standard practice and in this way the trial is treated in the same way as a permanent limit.
3. There will be monitoring throughout the period and they are currently determining the best method of achieving this.
4. A further report will be made to the Environmental & Transport Committee for its decision at the end of the trial. A statutory consultation process is required before a permanent speed limit can be introduced. The intention is that this process would be run over the final few months of the trial so that the consultation is complete before the trial ends and subsequent reporting to the Environmental & Transport Committee. In this way they fulfil their obligation in that any objections that may be received can be presented to the committee prior to its decision on whether or not to make the limit permanent.

**Sign on Parkhall/Skeld road:** Signs not yet provided.

**Viking Energy Wind Farm:** A number of questions had been received for consideration at the Liaison Group meeting on 19 January. These will be forwarded to Mr A Archer, Chairman of the Liaison Group.

It was suggested and agreed that the Liaison Group minutes could be placed on our Facebook page or if anyone wishes to have a copy of them they could contact the Clerk.

The members were pleased to learn that it has been decided that anyone travelling to Shetland to work on this project or the Interconnector project will be tested for Covid before they can travel here.

**Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF):** A message was received from Mr C Bunyan, Chair of SCBF informing us of changes that have been agreed to the way the Advance Grant Scheme (AGS) will work. They are hoping to open the AGS applications soon, once they have staff in place to administer it and have all the paperwork completed.

**Update on grants: Investing in Communities Fund:** On hold at the moment.

**Community & Third Sector Community Programme:** Mrs S Deyell had spoken to Ms Wendy Hand at Voluntary Action Shetland. It appears that she may make an application on behalf of all groups and they would then contact her to apply for assistance.

**Community Development Fund – Distribution:** The result of the Community Council short survey was received and the members were pleased that 24 out of the 42 voluntary groups contacted had taken part. It appears that some of the groups do not yet feel ready or safe to get under way.

It was decided to circulate an email to all the groups informing them that finance is available to assist them once they do start up again. It can be used for PPE, hand sanitiser, masks, etc.

**Community Development Fund – Project:** Details of any project has to be available for early March when the application will have to be lodged.

**Financial Spreadsheet:** The up-to-date spreadsheet was circulated to the members.

**Bin at Burn of Lunklet:** Bigger bin not yet provided.

**Funding:** Various information received from Mr M Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer.

**Association:** An email was received from Mr M Duncan asking for items for the agenda of the meeting on 9 March. The problem with walkers on crofting and farming land has already been submitted and no further items were raised.

**Clousta and Culswick phone boxes:** Mrs R Fraser reported that the Clousta residents hope that they have found a group to adopt their phone box and that the Culswick residents are still working towards getting that organised.

**CAB Offer to attend meeting:** No contact from Ms Janice Hawick as to when she intends to join us for a meeting. The Citizens Advice Bureau is normally very busy and may have even more work at the present time as lots of people are struggling.

**DATA PROTECTION:** A reminder to pay our Data Protection fee of £40 by 10 February was received from the Information Commissioner's Office and the Clerk had sent a cheque.

**RUBBISH & RECYCLING COLLECTION DATES:** A message was received from Mr M Duncan giving details of where to find the Council's rubbish and recycling collection calendar. It is available on <https://www.shetland.gov.uk/recycling-rubbish>.

**COSS INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER WEBINARS:** Dates for the webinars were received. However, Community Council are not a legal entity and therefore are not allowed to hold assets.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next WebEx meeting will be held on Monday 8 February 2021 at 7.30pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm