

# **Sandness & Walls Community Council**

*Chairman:*

Mr I F Walterson  
Modesty  
West Burrafirth  
Bridge of Walls  
Shetland  
Tel: Walls 01595 809428  
E-mail: [hnpengineers@btconnect.com](mailto:hnpengineers@btconnect.com)

*Clerk:*

Mr D Forrest  
1 Kirkidale  
Walls  
Shetland  
Tel: Walls 01595 809746  
E-mail: [s.wcc.clerk@btinternet.com](mailto:s.wcc.clerk@btinternet.com)

Minutes of a Zoom meeting of Sandness & Walls Community Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7.00pm

Present:

I Walterson (Chair)  
F MacBeath (Vice Chair)  
M Macgregor  
E Johnston  
M Forrest  
J Gear  
J Laing  
J Puckey  
C Venus  
Cllr M Robinson

## **1. Chairman's Welcome**

I Walterson (Chair) chaired the meeting and welcomed all those present. He commented on how valuable it was to be able to conduct meetings via Zoom given the current weather conditions.

## **2. Apologies**

J Haswell, R Fraser, S Johnston, Cllr L Peterson

In attendance: D Forrest (Clerk),

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

None were made at this time.

**4. Police Report**

Receipt of the email of 8/2/23 from Sgt Alexander Barry regarding police incidents between December 22 and January 23 was acknowledged.

**5. Minutes from 7.2.23**

The adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 was proposed by J Gear and seconded by J Puckey .

**6. Matter Arising**

***Re: 11.2 of 1/23 Petrol supply issues***

M Macgregor stated she had been in contact with SIC officials and Beatrice Wishart MSP. She has also spoken to the Walls Shop tenant and whilst he is unwilling to initiate discussions with officials, he would attend any meetings on the subject of petrol supply. After further debate it was agreed that a meeting be organised with SIC officials, the Walls Shop tenant, members of the Community Council and Beatrice Wishart MSP.

**Action:** Clerk to write to SIC in order to set up a meeting with Community Council Members, the Walls Shop tenant SIC officials and the local MSP.

***Re:14.1 of 8/22 Defibrillator for West Burrafirth Pier***

The Clerk informed the members that the SIC Ferries Department had approved the installation of a defibrillator for the Walls Pier provided that no expense was incurred by them. No response has been received regarding a defibrillator for the New Advance, the Foula Ferry. The Clerk was asked to write to the Ferries Department again on this matter and also to ask the same question of B K Marine, the Foula Ferry operators.

**Actions:** 1. The Clerk to write to the SIC Ferry Department and B K Marine to request a defibrillator for the New Advance.

***Re: 14.2 of 2/23 Petition to ban Peat Extraction***

During a discussion on the subject of peat extraction the following points were made:

- Not only crofters but also householder's with open fires should be allowed to extract peat for heating purposes.

- The members agree with the need to ban peat extraction for horticultural use.
- As many people as possible should be encouraged to participate in the government consultation.
- Those extracting peat must take responsibility for ensuring the peat banks are properly maintained.
- A response to the government consultation should be completed by this Community Council.

**Action: The Clerk to complete a response to the consultation on behalf of the Community Council.**

## **7. Housing**

The chairman referred to an e-mail he had received from Cllr L Peterson which stated that it was hoped that de-crofting the site designated for social housing in Walls should be completed within three months. The e-mail also referred to forthcoming meeting between councillor L Peterson and the head of the Shetland Islands Council Housing Department to discuss the need for housing in this area.

## **8. Roads**

### **8.1 The A 971 between the Murrister Quarry and Da Punds in Walls.**

The Vice Chair expressed his thanks to Counsellors Robinson and Peterson for their hard work in pushing through their bid to ensure that the business case stage for the development of the A971 goes ahead. This sentiment was echoed by the Chair and other members of the Community Council. Members were asked to encourage road users to report any near misses or other concerns relating to this stretch of road.

### **8.2 Verges on the New Road in Walls**

Concerns were expressed regarding the verges on the New Road in Walls. They have been damaged by large trucks accessing the pier whilst uplifting seafood recently.

**Action: The Clerk to e-mail Mr Neil Hutcheson of the SIC Roads Department to report this matter.**

### **8.3 Unadopted Road Grants 2023**

It was proposed to continue to offer unadopted road grants in 2023 at the current rate. The methods of advertising this were discussed and it was agreed to continue to place an advertisement in the Shetland Times in 2023 with a view to using Facebook in future years. It was also agreed to put posters in the Walls Shop and on the Sandness notice board. It was agreed to open bids for grants at the beginning of April with applications having to be made by the end of April.

**Action: 1. The Clerk to place an advertisement in the Shetland Times regarding unadopted roads at the beginning of April.  
2. Clerk to print posters providing information on unadopted road grants for the Walls Shop and the Sandness notice board.**

## **9. Electric Ferry Trial for Papa Stour**

A proposal to hold sea trials in March 2025 using an electric powered craft on the Papa Stour run was discussed. The following points were made:

- The current vessel, the M V Snolda, is a reliable boat and those using the service are very satisfied with it.
- The electric vessel proposed is of a landing craft design and in rough seas would most probably ship water which in turn would be detrimental to any vehicles and cargo on board.
- The type of craft recently depicted on the Shetland News website does not appear to have any passenger accommodation and this would not be satisfactory.
- Service users have asked if the current vessel will run in parallel to the vessel on trial given the experimental nature of this trial.
- Given that a private operator will be conducting this trial, Papa Stour residents are concerned that this company might take over the running of this service. This would be against the wishes of the Papa Stour Ferry service users.
- It was noted that for the duration of this trial, the electric vessel will be charged using a diesel generator. This appears to go against any aspirations towards greening the service. However it was also noted that it is intended to erect an aerogenerator and solar panels should it be decided to make an electric craft permanent.
- Members expressed the view that a hydrogen/electric hybrid powered craft would be better.
- Concerns were expressed that prior to the decision to conduct this trial no consultation had taken place with the Papa Stour Ferry users.

- In conclusion members were of the opinion that more information on the proposed trial is required.

Action: The Clerk to write to Mr. John Robert Smith, Head of the SIC Infrastructure Department to seek more information on the proposed trial.

#### **10. Planning Consultation Ref: 2023/043/PPF**

Following a brief discussion on various aspects of the aero-generator, there was unanimous approval that this Community Council should recommend acceptance of the planning application to erect an aerogenerator for the Walls Swimming Pool.

Auction: The Clerk to contact the Planning Department to recommend acceptance of this planning application.

#### **11. Future of Health Service Provision at Walls Health Centre**

Members were advised that to date no response has been received from Mr Chittick on the matter of the report into the future of healthcare provision on the West side of Shetland.

Action: The Clerk to email Mr Chittick with a copy to Lisa Watt requesting an update on the progress being made on the report into the future of healthcare provision on the West side of Shetland. Also, he is to ask if a meeting with Community Council members and Mr Chittick's team would be appropriate.

#### **12. Shetland Community Benefit Fund**

No applications have been made to this Community Council for a Shetland Community Benefit Fund grant since that awarded to Sail Shetland. Given that a request had been submitted for a tall ship or for the Swan to visit Walls, members welcomed the news that the Swan will visit Walls in August.

#### **13. Social Security Scotland**

Members discussed the content of an e-mail dated 22nd February from Nicqui Jones requesting she discuss with members how to better support those suffering under the current financial constraints. Members felt this was not an appropriate issue for the Community Council. It was suggested that she be referred to the Church of Scotland group running the social gatherings on alternate Tuesday mornings.

**Action: T**

he Clerk to refer Ms Jones to the Church of Scotland group running the social gatherings on alternate Tuesday mornings.

**14. Facebook Page for S&WCC**

Members acknowledged that currently the most effective means of communication in Shetland is via Facebook. With that in mind E Johnston was asked if he was willing to set up a Facebook page for the Sandness and Walls Community Council. He agreed to do this. After some discussion about the nature of the proposed Facebook page the following details were agreed:

- The page should carry up to date information including agendas and minutes.
- The administrators to include E Johnston, the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Clerk.
- The page should permit members of the public to report concerns and to respond to any current issues.

Members express their gratitude to E Johnston.

**15. Financial Update**

The Clerk provided a financial update and indicated that in subsequent months the financial update will be provided in the form of a spreadsheet.

**16. Correspondence (including emails)**

The Clerk stated that all correspondence had been received via email and had been forwarded to members.

**17. AOCB**

**17.1 Legal Obligation by Businesses to Accept Cash**

A concern was raised by S Johnston regarding a recent consultation prior to government legislation on the subject of the obligation by businesses to accept cash. It was noted the time scale for the consultation has expired and it is no longer possible to participate.

**17.2 Concerns about the condition of the Garrison Theatre**

Members were informed about several faults in the fabric of the Garrison Theatre in Lerwick. After some discussion on this matter it

Draft Minutes of the March 2023 S&WCC meeting subject to approval at the next meeting

was suggested that the member who raised this issue should take it up with the Shetland Charitable Trust.

### **18. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April in the Walls Hall at 7 pm and will take the form of a hybrid meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.