

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3rd OCTOBER 2023 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.30PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT	Mr P Coleman	Mr E MacPherson	Mr C Clark
EX OFFICIO	Cllr R McGregor		
IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs K Geddes	Ms E Copland (online via Zoom)	
CHAIRPERSON	Mr G Murray		
APOLOGIES	Cllr B Peterson	Mrs P Christie	Mrs M Davis
NOT PRESENT	Cllr A Armitage Mr M Duncan	Cllr A Duncan	Mrs A Arnett

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R McGregor declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 – Planning, as he is Chair of the SIC Planning Committee. He also said he wished to abstain from taking part in the discussion for Agenda Item 8 – Shetland Community Council Scheme Review – as he wanted to allow for as open a discussion as possible to gather ideas and suggestions out with the options presented in the consultation documents.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30th AUGUST 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30th August were approved on the motion of Mr C Clark and seconded by Mr P Coleman.

1. CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBER

Following introductions of all present, the chair welcomed Ms Copland to her first GQC Community Council meeting and reiterated what everyone else had said – that they were pleased to have her onboard. Ms Copland is a Gulberwick resident who is currently attending university in Edinburgh. She will attend the majority of the meetings online but members hope to see her in person when she is home for holidays.

As Ms Copland is already an Associate Member Mr Coleman proposed her co-option to become a Co-opted Member with voting rights and Mr Clark seconded the motion.

ACTION: Clerk to send the Co-opted Member Appointment Form to Ms Copland for her to sign and return to Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan.

2. MATTERS ARISING

1. Active Travel Update

Members had asked for an update on Active Travel and on whether there had been any missed funding opportunities due to the perceived lack of progress being made. An email from SIC/ZetTrans Transport Policy and Projects Officer Robina Barton was received on 25th September.

She explained she was meeting with Roads that day to discuss Active Travel plans and would be re-engaging with communities in Gulberwick and Cunningsburgh later this year to refine priorities from the audits.

She said: “We have not missed out on any funding opportunities for these areas. Funds have been secured from the new Active Travel Transformation Fund to progress work in the Heather Park and Hillside areas of Gulberwick. We will be looking to secure further funds for the 24-25 financial year to progress priorities in across Shetland.”

Mr Clark said he had written a summary of progress so far and the frustration that members feel with the slow progress and had shared it with Cllr McGregor who had passed it on to Michael Craigie SIC Executive Manager, Transport Planning, and Moraig Lyall SIC Environment and Transport Chair. Mrs Barton had replied with further explanation and Cllr McGregor is going to liaise between officials and report back at the November meeting.

ACTION: Mr Clark to share email with everyone and Cllr McGregor to report back at the next meeting with an update.

2. Broadband Switchover and Emergency Planning Update

Shetland Telecom (SIC) Project Manager Marvin Smith, visited the August meeting to speak about the plan to switchover from landline telephones to fibre broadband in December 2025. There are a lot of technologies and systems which rely on the landline telephone network to operate and there does not seem to be a plan in place to ensure these systems are still in place. There are also worries about what could happen in the event of prolonged power cuts as broadband is reliant on power and this could leave Shetlanders completely cut off. Members felt they wanted answers from all organisations involved as to what will be done and who will do it and Mr Smith advised them to contact Scalloway Community Council for a copy of the well-worded letter they had already written on the subject.

Scalloway chair Mark Burgess who wrote the letter for the Association of Shetland Community Councils (ASCC) was kind enough to share it as well as some additional information and a link to a news article on the subject.

As no reply had yet been forthcoming it was decided to wait until the next meeting to see if a response had come back. It was also decided to try to make sure that the item is on the next ASCC agenda whether there is a reply or not. A letter from the ASCC would have more clout than one from a single Community Council so it was agreed to wait and see what happens with the ASCC response first before drafting any of our own letters.

Mr Smith had advised that the funding which could be available to support connections was currently held up as the UK Government was going through the procurement process. The details of the new fund which will be most relevant to Shetland had also not yet been announced. It was decided to keep in contact with Mr Smith to see if there are any updates on the situation. It is hoped individual community councils may be in a position to help their own communities through the switchover process and any resulting issues from it.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Mr Smith for an update on funding. Clerk to contact Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan to ask whether a reply to the letter had come in yet and to check whether it would be on the ASCC agenda. It was decided to add the issue to the GQC CC agenda for the November meeting.

3. **POLICE REPORT**

No report available. Members had no questions or concerns for the clerk to raise with the police either.

4. FINANCE

The bank statement on October 3rd reads £13,510.63

The only transaction out with the usual in the account since the last meeting is an £86.04 payment for a three-year subscription to a PC Tune-Up product from AVG Technologies.

Out of the original budget of £12,923 (£3,000 of which is Community Development Fund and the remaining £9,923 is Core Budget) £3699.90 has been spent and £9,223.10 remains.

Of this, a projected spend of £3,679.97 has been budgeted for administration, leaving approximately £5,000 for grants to groups and approximately £500 for money to go towards groups taking part in Da Voar Redd Up (DVRU) or for road grants. Any money left over from Roads and DVRU would go into the grants to groups budget.

The accounts have been sent to Michael Duncan and he has indicated that he is happy to accept the accounts as presented and will update our file accordingly.

A new spreadsheet the clerk has created to ensure members are more aware of the accounts throughout the entire year was welcomed by members. The clerk advised that Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan had tweaked and improved the document further.

In the last month a funding and finance meeting with SIC Community Council Liaison Officer/Grants Officer Michael Duncan, Community Involvement and Development Officer Ana Arnett and the chair, vice chair and clerk was very useful for sorting out grants and finance going forward.

5. GRANT APPLICATIONS

GQC CC Applications

There were no new grant applications for the Community Council. It has been decided to consider applications at the November and February meetings and this has been communicated with the public. There are a few applications already coming in but most of them still need to send accompanying documents before they can be progressed to the November funding meeting.

The previously mentioned funding and finance meeting was useful for helping Community Council members fully understand grants and the best way to administer them.

SCBF Applications

There were no new Shetland Community Benefit Fund Applications to consider.

ACTION: Everyone to continue to share the word that grant applications will be accepted for the November meeting with a deadline of November 1st.

6. ROADS

1. Complaints of Speeding on school road at Quarff

Councillor McGregor had emailed on September 6th to say he had received two reports about speeding on the school road in Quarff and that he had passed them on to SIC Team Leader - Road Asset and Network Management, Neil Hutcheson. At the meeting Cllr

McGregor was able to update that Mr Hutcheson had responded quickly and he was pleased to say there would be speed monitoring going in place on the road in the near future.

ACTION: Cllr McGregor to report back at the next meeting if there is any update.

2. Complaints of Speeding and Poor Driving in Gulberwick

A Gulberwick resident had approached the clerk with concerns about speeding through the lower road in Gulberwick. He was also concerned that drivers seem to be unaware of the need to give way to traffic coming up the hill, especially on Stunken Brae. A lorry driver had not stopped to allow his car up the hill and had ended up ripping the side of his car off as he attempted to squeeze past the car.

Members commented that the infrastructure in Gulberwick had not kept up with the density of housing and this was continuing to cause issues.

ACTION: Clerk to email the details to Cllr McGregor who will bring it up at a meeting on Thursday.

7. GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE

There have been no recent meetings of the group that aims to try to push forward development ideas for the Community Council area. A meeting to organise an event is to be scheduled. The event is to try to attract new members, to share the general aims of the group and to start community consultation was required. Making sure that the projects already identified are agreed by the community and gathering new ideas for projects was a secondary aim for the event.

Quarff Hall have indicated that they would be willing to support and help organise a Sunday Teas style event to draw people in. As well as refreshments there will also be information boards and the opportunity for members to speak to the public too.

Steps are also required to make the group more official and to look at things like constitutions and bank accounts and this will also be considered at the meeting. Mrs Arnett had sent examples of constitutions to the group and is willing to continue to help.

Cllr McGregor advised that SIC North Isles Councillor Robert Thomson may be able to advise on development groups as Yell is doing well with their one. He suggested inviting him to a future meeting and members agreed that they would welcome his advice and counsel.

ACTION: Mr Clark to email current Development Group members to organise a meeting to plan the event. Cllr McGregor to speak to Cllr Thomson to see if he would be willing to attend a future GQC CC meeting.

8. SHETLAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW

An email from CCLO Michael Duncan received today confirmed that a Special Meeting of the Shetland Islands Council was held today to consider a report into the Community Council Scheme Review.

He explained that the Council has agreed to extend the current two-year Community Council term by up to 12 months and to commence the first stage of the consultation. Phase one will focus on Community Council boundaries and composition and is due to start later this month. He will update again soon.

If the consultation sticks to the planned timetable, the November meeting will be the only meeting in which members have the chance to come together to give a joint response.

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Accordingly, if any member knows they will not be able to attend, it is important that they send a response in writing to the clerk prior to the meeting.

Mr MacPherson can't attend the next meeting so had already drafted a response as the clerk had requested. He shared it at the meeting and it will be added to, and considered as part of the full Community Council response. He said:

The structure of Shetland's Community Councils should be guided by the following principles: -

Equality of representation across all the Shetland Community Councils, in terms of the ratio of elected members to the number of constituents. Obviously if all seats are not filled then this won't be achieved.

Local and widespread accountability, to maintain the local knowledge and connection with the local geography, population and issues. The greater the local representation, the more effective the performance of the Community Council. If they are to be concentrated in a single council for a greater geographical area, then they become district councils, and no longer true community councils.

Impartial, non-biased representation for local constituents, should the need arise. Community Councillors provide a level of representation that is not compromised by the priorities of a Council Corporate body, or that of the political ideology of a political party.

Members agreed with Mr MacPherson's points and the general consensus was that Community Councils needed to have more power and to have access to increased funding, with grants awarded to them linked to inflation.

ACTION: All members to spend time reading over the report and any further correspondence on the subject sent by Mr Duncan with a view to drafting a full response at the November meeting. Anyone who can not attend in November is asked to send a written response before the meeting date. Mr Clark to send an email to Mr Duncan as a first response to the consultation, highlighting the need for increased power and funding for Community Councils.

9. UPDATES FROM SIC COUNCILLORS

Cllr McGregor emailed on September 6th to say that Tour Guides had been in touch with him about the 'appalling state of the public toilets in Bigton'. He had contacted South Mainland Councillors as well as SIC Director of Infrastructure Services John Smith. He included GQC CC in the correspondence as the bus operators are in our area.

He explained that the toilets were cleaned very quickly and the mess seemed to be as a result of the sheer volume of bus tours that particular day. The tourists are welcome but the infrastructure to support their visits is lacking capacity, especially in Bigton and at the Mousa Ferry Terminal. It is not likely to be a problem in the winter but it is an issue that needs to be kept an eye on, especially as it may get worse.

There were no updates available from other SIC Councillors.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

1. SIC Cost of Living Winter Campaign

An email forwarded on by Mr Duncan was received on September 22nd. It was from Emma Perring, Team Leader – Community Planning and explained the SIC was refreshing its cost-of-living campaign, We Shine Brighter Together, in anticipation of another difficult winter for many this year.

They are asking:

- If organisations can share content from the planner on their social media platforms (as well as sharing posters/videos where relevant)
- If you could let us know if there are any significant dates that we should be including
- For suggestions of where to promote the campaign
- Whether a short vlog from someone in your organisation is possible

ACTION: Clerk to share content and share suggestions and significant dates when appropriate. Anyone interest in providing a vlog to get in contact with emma.perring@shetland.gov.uk

2. Democracy Matters – Phase 2

An update about Phase 2 of Democracy Matters was shared via email from Mr Duncan on September 14th. Details of webinars were discussed as well as the Scottish Community Councillors Development Network or Knowledge Hub. There are two webinars coming up which may be of interest to members but Mr Clark shared that he had already attended the first webinar on offer – one on Carbon Literacy Project Community Councils Toolkit which offered a free toolkit for us. Unfortunately you have to pay for a trainer to be able to access the Toolkit so it was not as free as he had been led to believe.

ACTION: Anyone interested to sign up and attend the webinars on offer or access the Knowledge Hub. Details in the newsletter previously circulated.

3. Scottish Forum of Community Councils

An email from West Lothian Joint Forum of Community Councils was passed on from Mr Duncan on September 22nd. The Joint Forum have set up a Scottish Forum of Community Councils (SFCC) and invite us to join. The clerk has signed up and will share any updates she receives. An online Scottish Conference was held in June and was what kick started the set-up of the SFCC. Another online Conference is planned in October.

11. 2024 MEETING DATES

The meeting days for 2024 were agreed and set as follows:

Tuesday 9th January
Tuesday 13th February
Tuesday 19th March
Tuesday 30th April
Tuesday 11th June
Tuesday 20th August
Tuesday 1st October
Tuesday 19th November

Cunningsburgh School have indicated these dates are suitable and that they are willing to continue to host us. The meetings will happen in Cunningsburgh School with the option for online attendance if someone is unable to attend otherwise.

ACTION: Clerk to share the dates with CCLO Michael Duncan.

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllr McGregor left the room during the discussion on this agenda item.

There was only one planning applications to consider:

[2023/224/PPF](#) | Erect house with attached garage | Plot 8 Aisterlea, Cunningsburgh, Shetland

There were no objections or comments to return.

ACTION: Clerk to send response to SIC Planning.

13. **AOCB**

1. South Mainland Community Council Christmas Night Out

Cllr McGregor shared that there was a suggestion at the Sandwick Community Council meeting that a Christmas night out for the South Mainland Community Councils would be a nice idea. There will probably be some correspondence coming soon. Members agreed that a social evening would be good to have.

ACTION: Clerk to share the information on the night out when it arrives.

2. Climate Change Agenda Item

Mr Clark proposed that an item on Climate Change should be added to the agenda and it was agreed to do so. Members felt it was important to ensure that action points came out of the agenda item and Mr Clark agreed that it needed to be a priority to make some positive changes to tackle climate change in the community.

He shared that he had been on a fully funded Climate Solutions course which he would recommend. He had already shared information on the course and anyone interested in taking up one of the 30 places is to contact Voluntary Action Shetland Development Officer Ayesha Huda before Friday 6th October. Her direct dial number is 01595 743905.

ACTION: Anyone interested in the Climate Solutions course to contact Ms Huda before Friday. Anyone with ideas or items for the Climate Change agenda item to let the clerk know before the next meeting.

3. Proposed Master Plan for Lerwick Lanes

Mr MacPherson brought up the issue of the Master Plan being developed for the Lerwick Lanes. He was worried that it may lead to a reduction in car parking in the town – a huge worry considering it was already under strain. Not only is parking needed for residents but Lerwick town centre is what is classed as a Central Business District and this is for the whole of Shetland – not just Lerwegians. It is where the majority of Shetlanders go for banking, retail and business and as a result the whole of Shetland should have a say.

The swimming pool car park has had a lot of public money spent on it to get it to a good standard and there is a chance it will be lost. There is also worry that the seating areas and green spaces within the town centre may be lost too.

It was agreed to ask if the issue can be added to the ASCC agenda.

ACTION: Clerk to contact CCLO Mr Duncan to put issue on ASCC Agenda.

4. Poor State of Former Enviroglass Building in Cunningsburgh

Complaints have been received about the poor state of the grounds around the former Enviroglass building in Cunningsburgh, specifically about the broken glass being dangerous and the mess that it looks. People have reported punctured bike tyres and injuries to dog paws. It is thought that the premises may be owned by one individual who is unwell at present. Cllr Armitage indicated on social media he would follow it up with SIC Environmental

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Services to see what can be done to clean up the area and Cllr McGregor said tonight he will also.

ACTION: Clerk to reply to social media post and Cllrs Armitage and McGregor to speak to SIC Environmental Services about it and report back at the next meeting.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 21st November 2023. (Please note change from previously advertised date).

Meeting Ends – 8.52 pm.

CHAIR

14. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

August 2023 – Review of roles of vice-chair and chair to be discussed at March 2024 meeting.