



## TINGWALL, WHITENESS & WEISDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### Minutes of meeting held at Tingwall Community Hall on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023

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<b>1.0 Present:</b>	Andrew Archer (Chair)	Catherine Hughson
	Neil Leask	Ian Scott
	John Clarkson	Moraig Lyall
	Martin Randall	
	Birgit Wagner	
	Margaret Cooper	
	Paul Stevens (Clerk)	

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**2.0 Apologies:** Linda Tulloch, Charlie Hodge, Angela Sutherland.

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**3.0 Declarations of Interest:** Andrew Archer declared an interest in grant decisions for the SCBF, Catherine Hughson in matters relating to planning, and John Clarkson in matters relating to Viking.

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#### **4.0 Approval of Minutes**

On a motion proposed by Martin Randall and seconded by Neil Leask, the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

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#### **5.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- Defibrillator: Andrew Archer had been unable to contact First Responders but had spoken to Kaylee Robertson at the Ambulance Service, who suggested that the defibrillator would be most useful if placed at a fixed location. Members discussed the options and decided that the E&H Building Shed, while being a known location close to the garden centre and local workplaces, might be too far off the main road for easy visibility. They also felt that the porch of the Herrislea hotel might have access issues and was similarly away from the main road. The preferred location was Tingwall Airport, a central location with easy access and parking, ideally in a dedicated lit, heated, and easily recognisable defibrillator cabinet
  - ACTION: Andrew Archer to approach Tingwall Airport to see if they would be willing to host the defibrillator.
- Safety on Stromfirth road: the Clerk had contacted Roads, who had forwarded the query to Colin Gair for his response in due course.
- War memorial: a reply had been received from the Whiteness and Weisdale Welfare Committee now indicating that they would not be seeking funds until next year.
- Christmas cards fund: Linda Tulloch has written to local businesses seeking donations.

[Moraig Lyall arrived at this point]

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#### **6.0 Decisions since last meeting**

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A comment of qualified approval for planning application 2023/253/PPP was submitted.

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## 7.0 Police Report

The report for August/September 2023 was circulated to Members on the 30th October.

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## 8.0 Finance

The Financial Report, updated to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023, was distributed to members.

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## 9.0 Correspondence

- CC scheme review: SIC had proposed five options, ranging from keeping the status quo to having more or fewer CC areas. The third and fourth options would involve merging several CCs, blurring the distinction between local CCs and more centralised Council wards. Members felt this would cause local representation to suffer (e.g., planning application comments benefit from localised knowledge) and the increased area would create a much bigger workload for CCs who already have problems recruiting members. After some discussion, members felt that the status quo was best for Mainland CCs, with decisions regarding CC for the islands being best left to the island communities themselves,
    - ACTION: The Clerk to submit an objection to both options three and four, with no preference on the other options other than to note that island communities should be the ones to make decisions affecting them.
  - Shetland Digital Forum: members were reminded that this was on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November, and would be a chance to query Ofcom (OpenReach having said that it was not in their remit) on analogue phonenumber shut-off issues faced by rural communities like Shetland (e.g., the high possibility of long power cuts disabling landline phones in areas without mobile signal as backup). John Clarkson indicated that he would attend and would be suggesting that the cut-off be used as an opportunity to add smart meter signalling to homes as a replacement for the Radio Teleswitch signal used by off-peak electricity storage heaters, which is currently planned to end on 31st March 2024.
  - Shetland Women's Aid event: Members were invited to this information and networking event on the 29<sup>th</sup> November.
  - Girlsta bus stop: A local resident had contacted the council to highlight the lack of a designated bus stop on the northbound services through Girlsta. This means the bus variously stops on different sides of the Stromfirth junction and there had been instances of waiting passengers not being seen by the bus driver.
    - ACTION: The Clerk to contact transport planning and request a consistent northbound bus stopping point at Girlsta, potentially with a shelter.
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## 10.0 Planning

There was one prior notification (2023/254/PN) for an access track and new hardstanding area at Gott Farm in Tingwall. No response was needed at this stage.

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## 11.0 Viking

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Andrew Archer reported that, at the last VLCG meeting, a question had been raised as to what would replace the liaison group once construction of the wind farm was complete. Instead of the group, there will instead just be a telephone contact number in case of any issues,

Andrew had written to SSEN regarding the work above Frakkafield, and subsequently Andrew and Martin Randall had met with project managers Jared Deeney and Kevin McLean. He asked whether the new track would be temporary, to which the reply was that the new track will be used as access for heavy vehicles to allow them to bury cables under the adjoining old Dale track. The current plan is for the new track to be removed once no longer needed, though it is possible that the land owner might wish to maintain it in lesser form, in which case planning permission would need to be applied for. The tarmac bellmouth at the main road will stay.

Andrew had then asked about the future of the old track. They replied that they had been informed by Val Turner (SIC's Archaeology Adviser) that, based on cross-section exploratory trenches, the track construction is of simple earth and not of particular archaeological interest. The plan was therefore to bury the large AC electricity cables deep under that track. Andrew asked why the cables couldn't be buried to the side of the track but the cable company had reportedly indicated that this would involve steeper gradients which would be more difficult, requiring an adjacent construction platform and additional landowner permissions. Andrew was referred to John Holden at SIC Development, who said that the old track has no protected status so a simple archaeology survey was sufficient to allow permitted development. Andrew informally canvassed local opinions and found a general lack of concern.

Members discussed the matter. Martin Randall felt that the old track was a part of Shetland's history which would be ruined by the works. Moraig Lyall said she had enquired as to whether the new track could be reused for the forthcoming Mossy Hill windfarm but it appears that it is not suitable. She said that there may be an application in the near future for a closure of the old track for approximately four months (much less time than the earlier withdrawn application). Members decided that there was no response that could be usefully made at the current time.

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## 12.0 Footpaths

- Andrew Archer reported that Win Furth leaflets would be distributed to local residents in January 2024 giving the options for the Whiteness and Weisdale side, with options for the Tingwall side to follow once discussions with landowners have concluded. The Whiteness and Weisdale Public Hall has been booked for 27th January 2024 for a drop-in event to answer any questions from local residents.

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## 13.0 SCB

Angela Sutherland could not attend but emailed an update to members. There were no issues members wanted to raise at this time,

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## 14.0 Roads

Moraig Lyall raised the issue of the repeatedly flooded junction at the end of Strand loch in Tingwall, around the area of the 'sunken' manhole.

→ ACTION: Andrew Archer will contact the Roads department about this.

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## 15.0 Councillors' Reports

- Ian Scott did not wish to report anything but indicated that he was concerned about the lack of information put out in the public domain about the end of the Radio Teleswitch service (see item 9) and would look into this,

- Moraig Lyall had been involved with other SIC councillors in two days of budget seminars, with communications to be issued over the coming weeks. She made the point that the issue was not just about budgetary constraints but also workforce issues, as there was an ongoing problem with recruiting for vacant positions.
  - Catherine Hughson raised the issue of the recent introduction of a coach on the Whiteness Primary school bus service. This had reportedly been damaging the South Whiteness Road and Cott Road, and she is discussing this with the relevant bodies.
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## 16.0 AOCB

- John Clarkson felt that any new community benefit funds should be distributed to alleviate energy poverty. He suggested the example of giving money to the Shetland Citizens' Advice Bureau to enable them to offer small financial help to those most in need (similar to the [Fuel Bank Foundation](#)), at an estimated cost of around £10,000 per year.
  - Andrew Archer reported that Win Furt had applied to the Mental Health Communities Fund for planters. One of the Trustees — Missy Mulla — wants to plant some bulbs and asked if the CC would be willing to post on Facebook asking where residents would like these to be. Members agreed to this,
  - Birgit Wagner reminded members about the SIC We Shine Brighter Together campaign for cost of living support and suggest the associated poster be put up on the TWWCC Facebook page. Members agreed to this.
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## 17.0 Date of next meeting

Members agreed to continuing to hold meetings on the third Wednesday in each month. The next meeting will therefore be on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, in the Whiteness and Weisdale Public Hall (venue to be confirmed).

- ACTION: The Clerk to book a venue for 2024 meetings on 17/01, 21/02, 20/03, 17/04, 15/05, 19/06, 17/07, 21/08, 18/09, 16/10, and 20/11.
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