



TINGWALL, WHITENESS & WEISDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held online on Wednesday 17th January 2024

*N.B. There was a change to the order in which items were considered.
The minutes reflect the order of the meeting.*

1.0 Present:	Andrew Archer (Chair)	Catherine Hughson
	Linda Tulloch (Vice Chair)	Ian Scott
	Charlie Hodge	Moraig Lyall
	Neil Leask	Davie Sandison
	John Clarkson	Angela Sutherland
	Martin Randall	
	Birgit Wagner	
	Margaret Cooper	
	Paul Stevens (Clerk)	

2.0 Apologies: Michael Duncan

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

4.0 Active Travel

Two representatives from ZetTrans — Alistair Hunter and Robina Barton — attended this section of the meeting to provide an update on active travel initiatives. Robina reported on the completion of 16 settlement audits by Systra, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach. The audits identified approximately 300 actions, including shared-purpose cycle routes and new speeding limits, based on local group recommendations. Their focus is on prioritizing 16 projects, each involving multiple ideas, to be presented at the ZetTrans meeting on 19th February. Robina highlighted two main priorities for the Tingwall area: the junction between the A970 and B9077 at Veensgarth, and walking/cycling routes in Gott along the A970. Due to ongoing changes in land ownership which could cause delays, the former option is deemed a priority.

[Angela Sutherland arrived at this point]

The necessity of needing proposals ready a few weeks in advance of the board meeting was emphasised and there was discussion as to whether this would impact WinFurt's consultation timeline. Members explored the idea of the junction crossing, with possible safety measures suggested. Robina thought that future funding would likely have an increased emphasis on changing behaviour, and encouraged early progression of projects, even if WinFurt plans are not finalized, with the potential to change the details at a later date. The potential for using SCBF for land purchase/design and ScotGov

funds for construction was discussed, with a suggestion to engage other community councils. Finally, Andrew Archer thanked Alistair and Robina for coming to talk to the CC.

[Robina and Alistair left at this point]

5.0 SCBF

Angela Sutherland updated members on activity, saying that the SCBF board had been busy: creating a business plan based on the recent survey; negotiating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with SSE in relation to future windfarm income; working with financial advisers on short term investments (e.g., amalgamating money sitting in multiple accounts into a single high-interest account to increase the benefit fund value); and tendering out for a new website.

Angela described the 'six issues to solve' ([more details are available on the SCBF website](#)) that had been identified as residents' priorities from the survey, these being:

1. More younger people wanting to stay and/or come back to Shetland
2. Better transport links within and between communities
3. Reduced cost of living in Shetland
4. Better broadband and/or mobile phone connections
5. Improved housing supply and affordability
6. Preservation and enhancement of Shetland's natural environment

She confirmed that SCBF would not pay for things that the Scottish Government or SIC should be paying for. In response to a question from Andrew Archer, she said that SSE did sign off on the business plan but that she was not aware of any objections to plans so far, although this involved a subcommittee of which Angela was not a member. Members felt that that more detail in future SCBF minutes would be useful and might improve public engagement, to which Angela replied that there is often an issue with confidentiality but that she would feed this back to the board, adding that this should improve once the MOU was completed. John Clarkson pointed out that details of future funding opportunities would be useful so that applicants would be able to plan ahead. Angela said she would suggest a three month lead-in before any new funding round was launched. Andrew Archer thanked Angela for her report.

[Angela Sutherland left at this point]

The discussion continued with John Clarkson saying that he had met with Chris Bunyan (SCBF Chair) to ask about the potential of the benefit fund supporting people with energy issues. SCBF will not provide emergency funds to help with energy bills but are instead interested in enabling smaller companies to obtain training and certification to become heat pump installers, energy saving advisers, and so on, either via direct top-up funding or through the creation of an umbrella company that would handle the administration load for the smaller companies.

Birgit Wagner said that there was a risk that it might be a long time before the new funding is up and running but Andrew Archer thought that there would be public pressure to move quickly. Moraig Lyall felt that the SCBF often appears disconnected from the community it serves, and that there should be more emphasis on CC representatives having primary responsibility to their CC. Andrew Archer had informally canvassed opinions from other CC Chairs about this and there did not appear to be any general concerns. Davie Sandison emphasised that the benefit fund administration was a highly complicated process, with confidentiality being key in any interactions with commercial businesses. This inevitably means that Directors are not representatives per se but instead have primary responsibility to the SCBF and each other. He felt that how the money has been distributed has been exemplary to date.

6.0 Approval of Minutes

On a motion proposed by Birgit Wagner and seconded by Neil Leask, the minutes of the meeting held

on Wednesday 15th November 2023 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

7.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Defibrillator: Andrew Archer had spoken to Andrew Inkster (Executive Manager, Ferry and Airport Operations and Port Infrastructure, SIC), who is happy to support the defibrillator being sited at Tingwall Airport. Andrew Inkster had indicated that they would be in touch to collect and install the defibrillator, though it was unclear whether a dedicated cabinet would need to be procured by the CC. Moraig Lyall has an upcoming meeting that Andrew Inkster will be attending so will seek further details.
- Safety on Stromfirth road: the Clerk had contacted Roads at the end of October but there had not yet been a response. Charlie Hodge referred to an earlier CC meeting which referred to existing signage on the road whereas he had checked and found none. He also related reports from local residents suggesting there had been near-misses of cars coming round the blind summit.
 - ACTION: The Clerk to contact Colin Gair at SIC Roads again.
- Flooded junction at Strand Loch: Andrew Archer had written to Neil Hutcheson last week about this, including a photograph showing exactly where the problem happens.
- Christmas donations: Andrew Archer expressed the CC's thanks to Linda Tulloch for her sterling work on raising funds and working with the local schools to produce Christmas cards for all the over 80s in the TWWCC area. The Christmas cards had been sent out with vouchers for the local shops to 80+ year old residents, who had also expressed their gratitude.
- Copper telephone line switch off: There had reportedly been some further progress on this in the UK Parliament. Where people make use of telecare safety monitoring systems, telecommunications companies will now ensure that those people are protected during the change to the new system. However, there is no indication that the overall switch-off plan (due by the end of 2025) will change. Regarding the Radio Teleswitch Service for heating systems, a question was asked in the Commons, with the answer implying that ministers were working towards another year's extension. John Clarkson raised the issue that spares for those systems were now very limited, estimating that stock would last roughly two years at most, and that the new smart meters currently do not work with heat storage systems. However, he said that the relevant MSPs are aware of the issue and pushing for action.

8.0 Decisions since last meeting

None.

9.0 Police Report

The report for October/November 2023 was circulated to Members on the 16th December 2023.

10.0 Finance

- The Financial Report, updated to 10th January 2024, was distributed to members.
 - ACTION: The Clerk to contact the Whiteness and Weisdale Hall Committee regarding an application for stage safety curtains.

11.0 Correspondence

- Grit bin for vulnerable residents on unadopted track. Members discussed this matter and agreed that current budgetary constraints meant that there could not be any change to the CC policy of not funding grit for unadopted roads.

→ ACTION: The Clerk to reply to the resident who had written to the CC.

- Bench offer: Julie Graham (Viking Wind Farm Community Engagement Manager) had been in touch to say that SSE were offering to pay for a wooden bench for each CC area, to be built by the Community Payback Team. Members had concerns about responsibility for installation, maintenance, and repair. John Clarkson suggested that the Wormaldale viewpoint would be a potential site, as long as suitable, wind-proof mounting could be achieved. Neil Leask raised the issue of potential car damage given the width of the layby, with John Clarkson suggesting it be sited next to the information board and Moraig Lyall suggesting the other end was wider with less cars choosing to park there. Andrew Archer recalled problematic planning issues with steps installed at Eshaness and was concerned that the bench installation might encounter similar problems.

→ ACTION: Andrew Archer will contact SSE to get more details about the offer.

12.0 Planning

- 2023/299/PPF To renovate the existing dwelling by adding/upgrading insulation, replacing roof material and an extension, to the front, to increase the kitchen/living area, retrospective Flag Pole in front garden, Indianara Laxfirth Tingwall.

→ ACTION: The Clerk to respond "No comment"

- 2023/291/PPF Change of use from Domestic Outbuilding to allow exercise classes to be held. Includes small extension for sanitary facility, Tananger Gott.

→ ACTION: The Clerk to respond that there are no objections to the change of use but that Members had slight concerns about the effect of excavation on the bank of the adjacent play area.

- 2023/285/PPF New domestic garage building, Ocean View Gott

→ ACTION: The Clerk to respond "No comment"

- 2023/017/MAR To develop a new salmon farm comprising of nine 160m and one 120m-circumference cages in a 125m mooring grid, a feed barge and pole mounted top nets, Billy Baa entrance to Sandsound Voe & Weisdale Voe.

→ ACTION: The Clerk to respond "No comment"

13.0 Viking

- Andrew Archer reported on the most recent VCLG where the issue of the state of the roads past Dale golf course and Ladies Drive junction was raised. He then contacted Gerry Hamill (SSE Project Manager) last week who said that SSE do not currently think there is an issue but that a section 96 review with SIC is upcoming. Neil Leask said that both he and Linda Tulloch had observed deep water on the roads, sufficient to cause aquaplaning in cars.

→ ACTION: The Clerk to contact SIC Roads for their view on the matter.

- Andrew then asked Moraig Lyall about SWEAG's views on green burials. Moraig had not yet brought this up with them but would do so. She also highlighted the current [green funeral and burial consultation](#) by the Community Development Company of Nesting.
 - Having found that the new gate at the north end of the Dale Track was closed with cable ties, Moraig had talked to John Holden at SIC Planning regarding the withdrawn closure application. John had said that no alternative plan had yet been submitted and that he would look into the gate issue.
 - ACTION: Andrew Archer to write to Jared Deeney (SSE project manager) about this.
 - Birgit Wagner brought up the recent media reports about turning the wind farm construction compound near Voe into a car park. Moraig Lyall said that she believed the reports were not accurate as the proposal was just about the smaller section next to the road and not the entire site as implied, which will still be reinstated as planned.
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14.0 Footpaths

- Andrew Archer reported that leaflets regarding the preferred route are due to be sent to residents next week, and asked members to encourage friends and contacts in the area to vote.
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15.0 SCBF applications

Andrew Archer recused himself from the discussion, which was chaired by Linda Tulloch.

- 180499 Hillswick Wildlife Sanctuary £300.
 - ACTION: The Clerk to inform Eleanor gear that the full £300 was awarded.
 - 180486 Shetland Swimming Association £2165.34.
 - ACTION: The Clerk to inform Eleanor gear that a partial amount of £1500 was awarded.
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16.0 Roads

Covered earlier in matters arising. No further issues were raised.

17.0 Councillors' Reports

- Catherine Hughson had been dealing with residents' issues regarding damage from recent winds. She would also be attending SIC budget meetings for the next few weeks.
 - Davie Sandison had been in similar meetings regarding future protection from the elements. He is also involved in the budget setting process and is currently pushing proposals for public consultations on which SIC services are perceived as essential and valued.
 - With the recent heavy snowfalls, Moraig Lyall had received correspondence about the SIC policy on not gritting roads on Christmas day and New Year's day. With more people being cared for at home there was now an increased need for staff to travel even on public holidays, so she would be pursuing this.
 - Ian Scott is involved in budget planning over the next few weeks.
 - Andrew Archer asked Councillors about the cost of rescheduling bin collection from public holidays. Davie Sandison replied that it was not particularly expensive. Andrew wondered whether
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money could be saved by skipping recycling collections rather than rescheduling, to which Moraig Lyall expressed agreement.

- Charlie Hodge asked for Councillors' opinions on the proposed tourist tax. Moraig Lyall said that, as it was only proposed for self-catering/hotel accommodation, she doesn't think it will benefit Shetland unless cruise ships are included. Davie Sandison agreed but said that current legislation limits what local authorities can do.
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18.0 AOCB

None.

19.0 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on the 21st February, in the Whiteness and Weisdale Public Hall.
