

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.30PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT	Mrs M Davis Mr P Coleman	Mr E MacPherson	Mr C Clark
EX OFFICIO	Cllr R McGregor	Cllr B Peterson	
IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs K Geddes	Alistair Hunter, Transport Planning/ZetTrans	
CHAIRPERSON	Mr G Murray		
APOLOGIES	Mr M Duncan	Mrs P Christie	Miss E Copland
NOT PRESENT	Cllr A Armitage	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.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH JANUARY 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th January were approved on the motion of Mr G Murray and seconded by Mr E MacPherson.

1. ACTIVE TRAVEL SETTLEMENT UPDATE

Alistair Hunter, SIC Transport Planning/ZetTrans Transport Policy and Projects Assistant attended the meeting to share the outcome of the settlement audits from last year – two were for settlements in the Community Council area, in Cunningsburgh and Gulberwick. He explained they had not yet gone before the council for approval yet.

There have been sixteen audits done in total resulting in approximately 300 active travel interventions. The staff responsible for Active Travel have prioritised the interventions for each settlement using discussions at the last Community Council meetings they attended. Mr Hunter is now back to double check that these are indeed the priorities, as it is anticipated that the top priority for each area will be put forward when funding becomes available.

Members asked if they were to prioritise on the interventions or projects, they knew were most viable (due to cost, size, land availability etc) or on what they felt the real priority was. Mr Hunter said that was a discussion they had been having in the office too, explaining that their main stumbling block was on how much work, staff hours and potentially money the purchase of land can take up, if the project is not in a public area.

Both SIC Councillors expressed their view that the staff and resources were inadequate for the amount of work required to progress any of the Active Travel projects and meet funding timescales. Mr Hunter was unable to attend the last Community Council meeting due to a tight funding deadline – five schemes that are 'construction-ready' have been put forward in the latest funding bid. Most of these are around schools and none were in the Community Council area. They totalled around £500,000, the likely amount of annual funding available to Shetland for similar projects next year.

Everyone agreed that the staffing was inadequate for the work needing done. Cllr Peterson calling the Active Travel projects an insurmountable task. Other local authorities have staff dedicated to active travel projects and have staff with knowledge of costing building projects - support for pricing of projects has come from another department, with Neil Hutcheson at Roads using information from past projects and taking into account inflation and price increases to help with the funding applications.

There was a discussion around recent projects which have got funding and which members felt was a waste of money and resources – the cycle path near the Tesco roundabout and the resurfacing of a path near the leisure centre in Unst. Frustration was also felt around the fact that there have been no movement on projects suggested and mapped out by GQC Community Council members back in 2018, meaning several funding rounds have been missed. There was also uncertainty around whether there would be anyone available to do the building work if projects actually got funding.

At the last meeting attended by Mr Hunter and his colleagues, one of the priorities for Cunningsburgh was improving the active travel opportunities to and from Mackenzie's farm shop and café. As this has now closed it is no longer a priority. Members wanted time to consider all the suggested interventions before agreeing priorities so it was agreed to add the item to the agenda for next month.

ACTION: Members to look over paperwork prior to next meeting when Active Travel priorities for Cunningsburgh and Gulberwick will be decided and shared with the SIC.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Nothing to report.

3. POLICE REPORT*

The Police Report for December and January had been previously circulated and was read and noted.

There have been four incidents in the Community Council area over the period of the report:

Road Safety and Road Crime - Road Traffic Collision with Minor or No Injury
Acquisitive Crime - Fraud
Drugs – Attempt to Possess (2)

4. FINANCE

The bank statement on February 7th reads £9,765.37

The only transactions outwith the usual in the account since the last meeting are three Voar Redd Up payments (two £50 payments to Quarff Hall and one to Ability Shetland on behalf of groups who did redd ups) and the clerk's backpay decided at the January meeting.

Out of the original budget of £12,923 (£3,000 of which is Community Development Fund and the remaining £9,923 is Core Budget) £7,445.16 has been spent and £5,477.84 remains.

Of this, a projected spend of £1,359.73 has been budgeted for administration, leaving approximately £4,168 for grants –

Grants to Groups has £3,690 left (£810 has already been spent)
£50 of the £200 budgeted for Da Voar Redd up has been spent and the clerk has confirmation that there are three more groups so the remaining £150 will be spent.
£223 has been budgeted for Roads.

£2,190 NEEDS to be spent on Grants to Groups as it is the CDF fund but the remaining funds can be distributed at the members discretion. We have approximately £155 kept in surplus for unknown costs – up to £1,000 can be carried over to next year.

There was some discussion around purchasing a new computer for the clerk to use as she was having significant problems with how slow it was working despite upgrading software to try to speed it up. There was some discussion around whether the SIC ICT department could provide a computer, but the clerk didn't think this was an option, even if the Community Council paid for it. Computer equipment will probably be looked at as part of the Community Council Scheme Review.

ACTION: Clerk to look into prices for a new 'tower' for the PC and Cllr Peterson said he would investigate what support SIC ICT could give.

5. GRANT APPLICATIONS

GQC CC Applications

Members approved the Cunningsburgh Hall's application for £366 to replace the defibrillator battery installed outside the hall.

Members are encouraged to spread the word that more grant applications are welcomed at the March meeting and that grant forms can be downloaded from here:

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/download/174/community-council-documents>

A road grant for a road which services two households in Gulberwick was approved.

Road grants are not advertised but anyone who enquires is told that while members prefer to grant money towards local groups and organisations, as long as the application benefits more than one household, the clerk is putting them forward for members to decide. A small budget has been set aside and as there are no other applications for community groups currently in, members approved the application.

SCBF Applications

There were no SCBF applications in to consider, though one came in just before the meeting for consideration in March.

ACTION: Everyone to share that grant applications are welcomed. Clerk to pay the hall grant and organise the delivery of road materials.

----- Mr Alistair Hunter left: 8.20pm -----

6. ROADS

1. Proposed Disabled Parking Space, Laxdale Road, Cunningsburgh

Information on this proposal was distributed to members prior to the meeting and there were no objections or comments. It has been approved today.

2. Broken Sign at Black Gaet

Cllr MacGregor reported that the replacement parts for the sign has been ordered. It was broken in half during the January gales.

3. 30mph Limits Changed to 20mph?

Cllr McGregor explained that he had more information on what some councils had been doing to lower the speed limit of all 30mph limits to 20mph ones. The move is intended to

encourage active travel but has been controversial. He explained that it was at the discretion of councils and was not something that had to be implemented.

7. GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE

The North Yell Development Group has agreed to host some GQC Development Group members in order to share what they have been doing and see what can be replicated. The visit was planned for late January but had to be rescheduled due to the snow. It is now in early March.

ACTION: There will be an update after the visit to Yell. Group members to continue to look at progressing projects and keep everyone updated.

8. UPDATES FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

Both Cllr Peterson and Cllr McGregor have given updates on several issues in other agenda items and had nothing further to update.

There was some discussion around the Lerwick Lanes Masterplan with Cllr Peterson explaining that it had been misrepresented on social media, and debate around the finer points of the actual questions in the survey. Several members were worried about the possible reduction on parking spaces in the town centre by some of the proposals. Cllr Peterson said that the car park was only full when Victoria Pier was closed to cars due to cruise ships coming in – a separate issue which could be explored.

There were no updates available from other SIC Councillors.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Shetland Funeral Research

A development officer engaged by the Community Development Company of Nesting has been in touch regarding research they are doing about alternative funerals in Shetland. The email was received on January 31st and encourages people to complete a survey they have created to hear the views of people both in and outside Shetland.

ACTION: Members to complete the survey if they would like to share their views on the subject.

2. Shurton Brae Bins

A member of the public has been in touch about the bins at Shurton Brae, which are not able to remain securely locked. The clerk got in touch with the council and they have already been inspected, with bungee cords put in place until the locks can be replaced.

Mr Coleman gave extra information on the bins and the issues which residents have, which the clerk can pass back to the council.

ACTION: Clerk to provide extra information on the bins to the council.

3. Revised Building Warrant 'value of works' Fee Structure

An email detailing changes to building warrant fees after updating the 'value of works' table was read and noted. The table of value of works was last updated in 2016 and prices have changed significantly since then. The new fees will be effective from April 1st 2024.

10. ASSC MEETING

The next Association for Shetland Community Council meeting is on Thursday 12th March. Mr MacPherson agreed to attend the next meeting on behalf of GQC CC. The clerk has already told Michael Duncan and distributed the agenda to members.

ACTION: Mr MacPherson to attend the ASCC meeting and report back.

11. SHETLAND PARTNERSHIP – LOCALITY PROFILES PUBLISHED

New locality profiles have been published by the Shetland Partnership and are available on their website at [Locality Profiles – Shetland Partnership](#)

Locality Profiles provide detailed information at a local level. They are useful for several reasons including service redesign, local plans and maximising opportunities to seek external funding to support community development.

The profiles contain quantitative data on demographics, economy, education, environment, health and housing.

The profiles are to be updated every two years though information will be monitored regularly and can be supplied on request.

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications in the Community Council area since the last meeting.

13. ROLE OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

After some discussion about whether the chair and vice chair felt willing to carry on in the roles, it was agreed that they would do so. All members expressed thanks as well as confidence in the office bearers and satisfaction in the job they had done so far.

14. AOCB

1. Consultation on Engagement Methods for Shetland's Next Local Development Plan

SIC Development Services have created a survey to consult on engagement methods for the next Local Development Plan. The consultation survey is available here <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/4J1YUT/>

ACTION: Members to complete survey.

2. Scottish Community Councils Conference

An email invite to an online conference organised by the Scottish Forum of Community Councils was received on February 7th. The conference is from 10.30am -12.30pm on Saturday 24th February. Members can register to be sent a Google Meet invite [HERE](#). All Community Councillors are welcome to sign up.

The Conference will be a straightforward event with a guest speaker setting the context, then it's over to the delegates to give their thoughts. The organisers will fit in as many speakers as possible as it's all about hearing views on the [Democracy Matters 2](#) consultation and possible legislation.

The Scottish Forum has also set up a [Democracy Matters Community](#) to share ideas and comment on the 16 Questions in the Consultation, using the Your Priorities Participation Tool. Community Councillors can create a login or respond anonymously. They will use these contributions to inform discussion on the day.

ACTION: Members to attend the conference if they wish to do so.

3. Community Representation on Boards of Public Organisations Delivering Lifeline Services to Island Communities – Response from Community Councils Invited

The Scottish Government's Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee would like comments from Community Councils on the following petition they discussed at meetings in December and January:

"Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce community representation on boards of public organisations delivering lifeline services to island communities, in keeping with the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018."

The [Official Report](#) of the January meeting has been published and a recording of the meeting is available to view [online](#). The Official Report of the evidence the Committee heard from the Petitioners on [20 December 2023](#) is also available to view.

The Committee's clerks would be grateful for any responses in Word format, electronically by no later than Monday 26 February 2024

ACTION: If any member would like to comment then they are to send text to the clerk so she can collate it and submit the document.

4. SIC Debate on Gaza Ceasefire Motion

CLlr Peterson spoke about a motion which will be brought before the Shetland Islands Council next week. More information here: [SIC to debate Gaza ceasefire motion later this month | Shetland News \(shetnews.co.uk\)](#)

He wanted to gather views from constituents as he had not had any representations on the subject so far. There was discussion about the motion, and general agreement that while the situation in Gaza was horrific, there was uncertainty what a letter from the SIC to the UK Government would do to change anything. They also felt uncomfortable highlighting one conflict or humanitarian crisis over any other ones.

5. NorthLink Drydock Timetable

Members agreed that the bad weather and travel cancellations straight after Up Helly Aa this year was made worse by the fact that there was only one boat operating when the weather eased. It was decided to write to NorthLink asking them to consider moving the maintenance period a few weeks later another year, to a time which is likely to be less busy with visitors, tourists and Shetlanders coming home for the festival.

ACTION: Clerk to write to NorthLink.

6. Energy Smart Meters

There was worry that the drive to get more people onto smart electricity meters could result in vulnerable folk being forced into getting one, or at least into getting one without understanding the full implications.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Alistair Carmichael MP drawing his attention to the issue.

7. Get Well Flowers

It was agreed to send flowers to Community Councillor Pat Christie to wish her a speedy recovery from the operation she underwent today.

ACTION: Clerk to send flowers.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES – Subject to approval at the March 2024 meeting

The next meeting is on Tuesday 19th March 2024.

Meeting Ends – 9.45 pm.

CHAIR

14. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

None at present