

BRESSAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Draft Minute of Bressay Community Council meeting:

Held on Monday 26th February 2024 in Bressay Hall.

Minute subject to approval at the next Bressay Community Council Meeting

Present:

Lindsay Tulloch (Chair)
Shirley Gifford
Kath Duffus
Katrina Gifford
Margaret MacDonald
Arwed Wenger
Gary Robinson
Stephen Leask

In Attendance:

Janice Jones (Clerk)
Michael Craigie (SIC Executive Mgr., Transport Planning)
Neil Hutchison (SIC Road Asset and Network Management)

Agenda Items

1. Introduction and Apologies:

The Chair opened the Meeting and welcomed guests and members to the hall. Members were asked for any objections to recording the meeting – as there was one the recording was discontinued.

Apologies were noted from:

Alistair Christie-Henry
Richard Burrell
Matt Mason
Michael Duncan
Joanne Fraser
Kevin Main

2. Declarations of interest:

The Chair asked for declarations of interest – none received.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

The Chairman reviewed the draft minutes of the meeting 29th January 2024 and sought their approval. Proposed by Shirley, seconded by Kath.

4. Matters Outstanding (actions not elsewhere on agenda or completed):

Continued AP1 Community Resilience plan

Ongoing – and will be addressed later in the meeting.

Action: Chair

AP1: Feedback on Ferry timetable and other issues

Will be addressed by Michael Craigie later in the meeting.

Action: Chair/Shirley

AP2: Follow up in funding for Ferry and NHS appointments

The Chair has further emailed Beatrice Wishart to lobby the new Scottish Minister for NHS etc. she in turn is waiting for Neil Grey to come back on the revised Highlands and Islands transport scheme.

Action: Chair

AP3: Raise the issue of Ferry (Lerwick side) parking – we will discuss later in the meeting.

Action: Kevin

AP4: Assess age of Speldiburn defibrillator batteries and order replacements - Completed

AP5: Advance the repairs/ownership of the Kiosk at Ham. – This has progressed and the History group will be taking over the ownership and maintenance of the Kiosk. Stephen has now received a more detailed quote and the History Group will be applying for a Disbursement Grant to fund the £688.86 repair cost. - Completed

AP6: Advertise meeting regarding Island Connectivity - Completed

AP7: Organise quotes for hard landscaping at Ella's Park – will be discussed later in the meeting.

AP8: Enquire as to the status of verge cutting – will be discussed later in the meeting

AP9: Reply to BDL re Funding for till - completed

AP10: Forward Shingles Vaccination query to Kim Anderson – completed

AP11: Advertise Community Ferry Run on FB – Completed

5. Member and Visitor Reports:

All three SIC members have been busy with Council meetings and budgets. SIC rents will increase although these will probably be less than those of Hajltland Housing association. Council Tax is frozen as the directive of the Scottish Government, although Argyle and Bute council has defied this and Orkney Council who put rates up last year may chose to do so again. The problem of deferring increases is when they do come, they will be excessively high. This is scant help during the cost-of-living crisis although the government were offering other things that might bring in revenue like the increased rates on second homes and workplace parking. This may also trigger a review of rating. Some discussion amongst the councillors took place detailing the selection of Gary to the Transport Group Sounding Board, whilst all three had wanted to take the role they had discussed and felt Gary was the best fit.

6. Transport/Ferry Timetables – M Craigie (Executive Mgr., Transport Planning)

Micheal had already fed back to the Chair that the addition of early runs was not possible because this needs a change to crew conditions of contracts and starting and finishing times, they have been in discussion with the crew and the Union and there is an impasse that some of the crew do not want to change their hours. Whilst the Council could take a hard-line approach this would take quite some time and negotiation with the individuals. He was asked if different crews on different ferries had different contracts what then happened

when crew came in from another ferry. He could explain that yes each route had different hours, and this had been done last year on the Whalsay route and negotiations had been very protracted. When crew change ferries, this is handled by a voluntary change to Ts & Cs. It was explained the Community Council would be keen for this to be pursued, especially due inability to connect with early flights, a number of which is for medical appointments, as well as islanders not being able to take advantage of job opportunities with an earlier start. People were discouraged from taking up residence on the island or moved out because of this. It was pointed out the other Islands had ferries that could connect with the earlier flights. Michael was asked to push forward with this and he will take it back to Ferry Operations. He pointed out there would also be a cost issue associated with this - Scottish Government funding has been given at the same level for next year as last year and there is some savings on the reduced cost of fuel, year on year may be an issue, depending on any cap that may or may not come in. It was pointed out this had already been discussed with Andrew Inkster who had promised to come back with information but none had been fed back. An early run on-demand would have much of the same constraints. In an emergency there are exemptions to the crew working hours directive that allows for an emergency run that is different from the routine.

The next bus network review is underway and hoping to have revisions by the next contracts issued next August and they will be looking for consultation during the summer.

A number of problems with the contactless payments was highlighted where long delays in payment being taken resulting in multiple payment coming off together – this could be an issue for some people. There had also been an issue with amended forms given to a junior where the form had been changed from a foot passenger and a car added after the form had been signed, this had been added in a different pen/handwriting. The Clerk was asked to highlight to Islanders via Facebook that they should check their statements.

Michael has had discussions with Transport Scotland regarding under 22 free traveling on ferries as well as busses. This is now looking fairly likely, subject to budgets etc. however will not start until 2025, currently they are working to get ticket machines etc. aligned.

The question had been raised on Lerwick parking: a response had come from Ferry Operations to say no direct solution was available however they are going to look at overnight parking in the two outermost lanes. We have also requested further information on the linkspan restricted service and asked for a representative to come to the next meeting as well consideration being given to emergency services coverage.

7. Infrastructure: Roads - Neil Hutchison (SIC Road Asset and Network Management)

This week or next week the tarring squad will be starting on the road at the ferry, then moving on to the Lighthouse Road where there is a collapsed culvert. The ditching is ongoing and he recognised there was concern about the depth of the ditches, they are perhaps slightly wider and deeper than needed so they have spoken to the operative regarding this. There is no doubt a good job has been done, however much of the width is due to the years of ingrowth making it look worse when subsequently dug out. Verge cutting – there is little left to cut and in places a lot of the soil coming out has been piled on top of the verge. Some of the cut-offs has been done just with the bucket with no end taken out, in the wrong place and in places unsafe (particularly Sissie's brae) where there is nowhere to get off the road. Longer term the resurfacing of the Heogan Road is still on the list for a future year, although there are currently a number of pot holes. Alistair Fraser had been very positive about the path at the Maryfield Road, the report is going in at the end of March after which a timetable will be created, subsequently the task will be to speak to landowners.

8. Community Resilience – generator

The Chair has visited the Yell Halls to see what they have done/are doing with their generator projects. They plugged the funding gap from the Coastal Communities fund for

the same generator as we are looking at, supplied by DH Marine. He is therefore very positive our application would also be successful. The next step is to get D H Marine to come across and look at the existing plinth at the Hall to assess its suitability. The Yell Mens Shed Group has been manufacturing their housing and it would make sense to obtain one from them and include that in the funding application. Yell halls have also had funding for starter packs, blankets etc. which we could also include in the application. Good to see what they are doing – the development group are doing quite a lot, for example lunches for the Community etc.

9. Island Connectivity Meeting preparation

This is scheduled for Thursday 7th March. Would like to encourage people to form a Tunnel Action Group to ensure our voice is heard and have an open conversation with the public. We need to look at the bigger picture as our ferry is getting old and would need replacing. It will take 10 years for a tunnel and the question is will the ferry keep going for that long or will there be a need to say hire in a ferry. The SIC has been looking at the different routes and the Bressay Ferry is better than some, for example the Whalsay Ferry will need replacing soonest so will probably need a ferry sooner than a tunnel project. The SIC would look at leasing ferries in the short term.

11. Ella's Park Garden Project

Have decided to not go with putting in paths as these are too expensive and can't get a contractor interested in doing it, so will source flags for the benches to sit on instead. If we were to put in paths these would need to be to a prescribed specification – hence more costly, as we could be liable for any accidents. Instead, we will purchase strimmers and other equipment for the ongoing maintenance. It was also recommended that dogs were banned from the garden and signage erected to effect. We would also ask the SIC to put in rubbish bin so it gets emptied regularly.

12. Planning Applications: None

13. Finance: Grant & SCBF applications & Financial position.

The clerk shared the current financial position with projections for year end. £550 is still to be allocated from the distribution fund and £1100 left in the core budget. This is sufficient to part support the new tills at BDL and from the core fund we can afford another skip. The boating club was happy to host a skip with a metal/white-goods trailer, and this was arranged for the weekend of 30th March. The clerk will notify Speldiburn of the assistance to their new tills. Attention was then drawn to the split of the requests for next years grants. Members looked at how we had spent funds this year in comparison to what we requested. It was pointed out we normally had an allocation of quarry cleanings so some consideration might need to be given to that, previously these had cost around £1500 although the price may have increased. Next year we will not need to spend on defibrillator batteries which would save £300 another saving might be not doing Christmas vouchers. We would have an obligation to maintain roads and we could look at alternatives to Christmas vouchers with the support of other funding. One thing that has been done elsewhere was done through the Development company and the Hall from the warm places funding. For the Project Fund for next year it was suggested to work with the History Group to improve signage and promotion of the island. It would be good to bring groups together working with other Community Groups.

14. Bressay Groups Update (Hall, Sports Club, Boating Club, BDL etc.)

The Sports Club has afternoon teas planned in April. The Hall activities is dominated by Up Helly Aa, and the electronic meeting equipment due to arrive.

15. Any other business:

Kath has attended the ASCC forum on line which revolved around democracy matters. The communication from the Scottish Government had been quite negative. She will share the Community Council annual report with them. She had also attended the BDL AGM and asked about the toilet/shower block that had previously been planned. This is still with the architect and now seems although it will be prohibitively expensive. This is disappointing, particularly not getting the big washing machines such as those at the marina in Yell. The visiting member of the public raised the question of parking in Lerwick, pointing out this was the only ferry in Shetland without parking and this is something that our elected SIC members should be addressing. This was an SIC issue rather than the LPA. The problem with parking in the outermost two lanes was the middle car gets blocked in. Gary could explain it was LPA policy not to sell or lease any areas. It was requested this needed to be brought to the full council to look into. Gary was happy to ask for a report although due to LPAs stance he was not hopeful this would get things very far. It was pointed out a report could highlight the disadvantages Bressay ferry users have to face adding to the other issues – as in the weekend in May when the linkspan is being updated – which could help our promotion for a fixed link. Gary was asked to take an action.

16. Meeting Review: no comments

15. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was due to be on the 25th March, however due to the unavailability of the Chair will be brought forward to the 18th March. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20.45 and thanked those attending.

Chairman:

Date

To contact the Community Council please email us at bressaycc@gmail.com or telephone 07532054521 or contact any Community Council Member.

The remainder of this document does not form part of the public minute

Summary of new and outstanding actions

<u>Continued AP1</u> Community Resilience plan	Action: Chair
AP1: Feedback on Ferry timetable and other issues	Action: Chair/Shirley/ SIC ferry Operations/Transport
AP2: Follow up in funding for Ferry and NHS appointments	Action: Chair
AP3: Raise the issue of Ferry (Lerwick side) parking	Action: Gary
AP4: Advise the public to check their ferry charges	Action: Clerk
AP5: Obtain flag stones, equipment & signage for Ella'sParl	Action: Katrina
AP6: Advise BDL of availability of part funding for their till Project	Action: Clerk
AP7: Organise skip for w/e of 30th March	Action: Clerk