

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH MARCH 2024 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.30PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT Mrs M Davis Mr E MacPherson Mr C Clark
 Mr P Coleman Mrs P Christie

EX OFFICIO

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs K Geddes

CHAIRPERSON Mr G Murray

APOLOGIES Mr M Duncan Cllr B Peterson Miss E Copland
 Cllr R McGregor Mrs A Arnett

NOT PRESENT Cllr A Armitage Cllr A Duncan

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs M Davis and Mr P Coleman both declared interests in the grant application from the Gulberwick Hall in Agenda Item 4 as they are members of the hall committee.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13th February were approved on the motion of Mr C Clark and seconded by Mrs M Davis.

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

1. Smart Meter Installation Concerns

MP Alistair Carmichael has replied to the clerk's email expressing members' concerns about the consequences of the installation of smart meters. He said he will write to the Minister of Energy, Rt Hon Graham Stuart, and ask him to provide a response.

He has also copied us into correspondence passing the CC email on to the Data Communications Company (DCC) who have responsibility for the roll out of Smart Meters. The DCC indicated they have passed the letter on to colleagues in the high-level escalation team for a response.

Mr Carmichael is also meeting the DCC in person so is going to be in touch following that meeting.

Mr MacPherson explained that the matter came up at the Association of Shetland Community Council meeting (ASCC) which is covered in Agenda Item 10 – AOCB.

2. Dental Provision Letter

A letter to the NHS Dental Services has been sent. Members wanted to add their voice to frustrations surrounding the level of service being provided in the hope it would strengthen the evidence for extra government funding. No reply has yet been received.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up letter for next meeting and add it to Outstanding Items if no reply is received.

3. NorthLink Drydock Timetable

A letter was written to NorthLink last month but there has been no reply or acknowledgement yet. 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. The clerk wrote 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 follow up letter for next meeting and add it to Outstanding Items if no reply is received.

2. POLICE REPORT

None available.

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The bank statement on March 19th reads £7,493.63

There were a few transactions outwith the usual in the account since the last meeting: £84.99 for AVG internet security, £20.75 for envelopes, notebooks and stamps, £60.80 for mileage and ferry fare to Yell, £26 for get well flowers, £50 for a grant for wreaths agreed in November, £614.99 for a new laptop for the clerk – including £45 to transfer the data from the old PC, one Voar Redd Up payment of £50 to the Fladdabister and Ocraquoy Group and £366 to the Cunningsburgh Hall for the grant for the defibrillator batteries.

Additionally, at the pre-agenda meeting the chair and vice-chair agreed that a new printer could be ordered as the old one is not compatible with the laptop, taking several minutes to print one sheet and being unable to do double-sided any more. The new printer and toner cost £355.99 and should be arriving next week.

Out of the original budget of £12,923 (£3,000 of which is Community Development Fund and the remaining £9,923 is Core Budget) £9,689.95 has been spent (£1,774 on grants to groups) and £3,233.05 remains.

Of this, a projected spend of £639.87 is for administration, leaving approximately £2,593.18. There is an overspend of £903.82 in administration largely due to the new ICT equipment but this can be covered from other budgets.

£1,774 must be spent on grants as it is the CDF money. There is also another £596.18 which can be used for grants out of our core budget. This is not as much as anticipated at the beginning of the year due to the unexpected spend on ICT.

£223 has been budgeted for Roads and we have been quoted £216.48 for the materials and delivery.

Up to £1,000 can be carried over from the core budget each year and there are some funds in the account which has been built up from previous years which can also be spent if members chose to do so.

4. GRANT APPLICATIONS

GQC CC Applications

Members approved the full amount for the following grant applications:

The Gulberwick Hall's application for £345 to replace the defibrillator battery installed outside the hall.

SMUHA's application for £300 for internal works for their shed.

Cunningsburgh Village Club's application for £945 for money to put on a range of community activities such as after school clubs and craft activities.

Cunningsburgh Christmas Party Group's £150 application for the 2024 community Christmas party.

A grant application from the Shetland Gymnastics Club for money for various pieces of gymnastics equipment was considered and part funding was awarded as it is a Shetland-wide organisation. Members awarded £234 for the club to purchase a Gymnova Beam Transporter.

SCBF Applications

There was only one SCBF application to consider, from SMUHA for the same project to do indoor work on the galley shed. Members decided to wait until later in the year to see what other applications come in before deciding how much to award. There may also be an application from the Community Council itself so that has to be taken into consideration.

ACTION: Clerk to get in touch with SMUHA to see whether the delay in deciding on the application will affect their ability to do the work. She will also let the SCBF know of the delay in making a decision. Clerk to contact successful applicants and let them know what they have been awarded. Clerk to transfer funds accordingly.

5. ROADS

No updates available. Cllr MacGregor indicated via email he could follow up on anything required even though he was off island.

6. GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE

Vice Chair Mr C Clark and Clerk Mrs K Geddes visited the North Yell Development Group (NYDG) to see first-hand what they have been doing and see what can be replicated. The group are doing amazing things, but this is largely down to the fact they have a ready and large supply of money coming in every year from their wind turbines, allowing them to employ a development worker who is very good at what she does. It was an aspirational and inspirational visit but next steps are likely to be speaking to the Scalloway Development Group as their plans are slightly more at a level with what our group may be looking at.

The lunch club run by the NYDG gave members the idea that running something similar in our communities may be a way to bring people together, allow for consultation, raise the profile of the group and its hopes for the community, and attract everyone in the community without stigma – everyone is welcome at the Yell lunch club and it does indeed attract people from all walks of life. The clerk said she would investigate and use the quieter summer months to pull together a draft grant application to the SCBF for a project.

Mrs P Christie agreed to have another look at the constitution and will organise a meeting to do so.

Mr C Clark said he would look out the draft constitutions sent last year and send them to Mrs Christie. He is also going to get in touch with the Scalloway Development Group and perhaps the Bressay Development Group.

ACTION: Mr Clark to send the example constitutions to Mrs Christie and contact other development groups to organise meetings. Mrs Christie to organise a meeting about the constitution. Mrs Geddes to look at a draft grant application in the summer.

7. UPDATES FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

None available.

8. ACTIVE TRAVEL SETTLEMENT - SELECTING PROJECT PRIORITIES

Members expressed frustration at the fact that a representative from Active Travel visited the Community Council last month to go through the priorities identified for Gulberwick and Cunningsburgh by the settlement audits and within weeks of the visit, a big project is announced for a cycle path on the main road above Gulberwick. The first anyone in the community – let alone the Community Council – heard of the project was when it was announced in the press.

The Active Travel Team have explained that the delays in any projects getting to fruition is due to the amount of work which needs to go in to each one so members felt this project must have been in the pipeline for years. In hindsight, the reduction in speed limit on this road was most likely a first step towards the cycle path and though both the speed limit and the cycle path are welcomed, neither are changes or projects which anyone in the community has ever brought up with the Community Council so neither have been identified as priorities by members.

Not all the paths identified as priorities by Community Council members living in Gulberwick were included in the list of priorities presented at the last meeting and identified by the settlement audits. Active Travel staff also could not recommend to members whether they should select what they felt were the real priorities for the communities, or whether they should select the projects which they felt had the best chance of being delivered – due to cost, the fact that the location is on public land etc.

Members felt they did not want to spend any time on prioritising projects when the team seemed to 'go off and do their own projects anyway'. They asked the clerk to communicate this to Active Travel.

There is a good chance that the Farm Shop and Cafe may be opening under new ownership so the clerk is to let Active Travel know that there is still a need for safer active travel routes to the building if these plans are realised – the project to do so was to be dropped from the list of possible priorities.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Active Travel with comments.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Da Voar Redd Up

Da Voar Redd Up 2024 dates have been announced by the Shetland Amenity Trust (SAT) and have been set as 20th-26th April 2024. SAT have asked the Community Council for suggestions on areas in the community to redd up so the clerk has shared various posts on social media to encourage conversations and for groups to organise themselves.

Members agreed to continue to award £50 to any group who reds up in the GQ&C area and would like a donation for their community group or charity.

ACTION: Clerk to share any suggested redd up locations with Shetland Amenity Trust.

2. Bench from SSE

SSE have been in touch to ask for an address for the bench to be delivered to. The Community Justice Team have almost finished making them and SSE would like to give the bench out free to any Community Council who indicated they would like one. The clerk is happy to have it sitting outside her house until a location is selected and made ready.

There was some discussion about where to site the first bench, and whether it would need to be fixed to the ground and any concrete laid for this to be done properly. It was agreed that choosing a location where it can more easily be sited would be better. The clerk is to email SSE for more details about the size and construction of the bench to help further the discussion.

The gift of a free bench is very welcome but may come with quite a lot of work and perhaps money to make use of it properly. The clerk is to ask Community Council Liaison Officer Mr M Duncan's advice and see what other Community Councils are doing.

Members agreed again to purchase other benches for the other communities so that Gulberwick, Quarff, Cunningsburgh and perhaps Fladdabister all received one.

There have been a couple of suggestions for locations generated by a Facebook post but more are needed.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Mr Duncan to ask for advice about siting the benches. Members to all seek ideas for where to site the benches. Clerk to email SSE for more details of the dimensions and construction of the bench.

10. PLANNING

There was only one planning application for members to discuss, a re-consultation, and there were no comments or objections to return:

[2023/027/PPF](#) Provision of public wastewater treatment, comprising access improvements, formation of site by landscaping, installation of 4 x septic tanks with sludge draw off point, and replacement of a section of the sea outfall.

ACTION: Clerk to return comments to the planning department.

11. AOCB

1. Community Council Scheme Review - Briefing

Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan sent an email dated today with a Briefing Note in relation to the next stage of the Community Council Scheme Review. Members agreed that they were 'quite impressed' by the proposals, in particular those around funding.

They welcomed news on the proposal to merge the core funding and Community Development Fund into one, and to have criteria which provide more flexibility around funding for Community Councils.

A proposal to have the new funding formula be based on a fixed allocation for administration costs and the rest to be linked to population levels was also seen as very good news.

Other proposals included linking the number of members to population to bring more consistency across the Community Councils, and making those who have been elected to bodies such as the SIC or the Scottish Parliament ineligible to stand for election or be co-opted onto a Community Council.

The rest of the proposals were all ones which members felt were already followed by most Community Councils but just consolidated the rules around them.

Members were unsure exactly what it meant by introducing a set of Community Council Standing Orders, so the clerk is to ask for clarification.

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The report is to be published this week and there is to be a special meeting of the SIC on 26th March. The consultation period is to be from April to June this year and the Phase Three Consultation will take place in the last financial quarter of 2024/25. It is hoped that the agreed changes will be adopted in April 2025.

ACTION: Clerk to pass comments and questions back to Mr Duncan.

2. Thanks to Cllr McGregor

Mr C Clark wanted his thanks to Cllr McGregor noted – he responded very quickly to his worry about a low beam in the seating structures in Harrison Square in Lerwick. Mr Clark had cut his head and ended up in A&E due to the severity of his injuries. Cllr McGregor organised for barriers to be erected to ensure no one else was injured until the beam could be replaced at the appropriate height.

ACTION: Clerk to again email thanks to Cllr McGregor.

3. Dog Poo Bins

Mrs Christie said a member of the community has got in touch to say thanks for the installation of the dog poo bins and to ask if more can be provided. Other members agreed they had heard of other locations where bins would be welcomed so it was agreed to look at this later in the year.

ACTION: Clerk to add issue to 'Outstanding Items' from next month to ensure it is picked up again when the new funding comes in.

3. ASCC Meeting

An email from Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan was received on March 13th and was read and noted. It had an update on proceedings following the ASCC meeting.

Mr MacPherson attended the meeting and supplemented the update.

He said the biggest part of the discussion on the night was surrounding the Local Place Plans. He explained that the Community Council has an opportunity to facilitate the creation of a place plan for areas within its boundaries – it can be for just parts of a community, so the whole of GQ&C does not need to be included in one plan. The plans will involve maps as well as narratives so can be quite divisive for communities if not handled correctly. They are supplementary guidance to the Local Development Plans and are similar to planning guidance in the past.

The Shetland Way Hiking Path was also discussed. A revised route has been developed which is to utilise the Amenity Trust's Core Paths but the issue of insurance for any paths developed had not yet been considered. The budget has been reduced from £8M to a few hundred thousand, which heightened Mr MacPherson's concerns that the proper infrastructure to support such a path will not be put in place.

The PTSN Switchover seems to be getting a lot more publicity and there are additional issues which keep cropping up with it. The Radio Teleswitch System (RTS) is a system that was created to help with the control and management of electricity meters that have special tariffs prior to the existence of smart meters. It can remotely switch the meter between Day and Night rates and automatically turn heating on or off, but cannot collect meter readings. Those who have storage heaters often use these type of meters. RTS is due to be switched off in the summer of 2025 which in theory could mean a meter is jammed on the last rate it was on before the signal is switched off, prevent heating/hot water from turning on properly or leave the heating/hot water jammed on 24/7.

Other people have also been forced to get smart meters in areas where there is no signal, meaning that both the electricity company and the homeowner are unable to see what

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electricity is being used – one homeowner is now getting random estimated readings he has no way of knowing if they are correct or not.

Finally it seems that the 3G signal has been switched off and according to an online map where you can check the coverage in your area, 4G coverage is still very patchy and there is still no 5G. This needs to get sorted out before the system using copper wires is switched off.

There are a lot of things in the mix but they have all been flagged up and Mr MacPherson was glad the Community Council were vocal and brought up the issue with Mr Carmichael. Unfortunately, as there are several different organisations and bodies involved in these types of issues, no one is taking the lead on sorting anything out.

It is hoped that regular updates may be able to be provided to Community Councils.

4. NorthLink Ferry Discount Scheme

Mrs Davis flagged up the issue that some people are having accessing their NorthLink ferry discounts. Their existing cards need to be activated on a smartphone, which not everyone has. If they are having problems this can be done in person at the ferry terminal, or in various other locations such as the library.

5. Meeting Clash

Mr MacPherson noted that the June meeting clashes with the next ASCC meeting and proposed that it be moved to a week before so that members could attend both meetings if they would like to do so.

ACTION: Clerk to look at changing date of June meeting.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 30th April 2024.

Meeting Ends – 9.10 pm.

CHAIR

14. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

None at present