

Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council

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Minutes of a meeting of Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 8 January 2024 at 7.30pm.

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|----------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Present: | J Priest | Mrs O Jamwal-Fraser |
| | Mrs S Deyell | Mrs J Fraser |
| | J D Garrick | Mrs L Johnson |
| Ex-Officio: | Cllr L Peterson | |
| | Cllr M Robinson | |
| By invitation: | G Morrison, School Bus Operator | |
| In attendance: | Mrs L Fraser, Clerk | |

Mr J Priest presiding

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Ms D Nicolson, Mrs R Fraser, Community Involvement & Development Worker and Mr M Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer.

MINUTES & REPORT: The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2023, having been circulated, were taken as read and were approved. Moved by Mrs O Jamwal-Fraser, seconded by Mrs L Johnson

CHILDCARE FUNDING INFO: The Chairman welcomed Ms Mairi Keith, Project Officer in Childcare within the Council. She explained that in 2020 the Scottish Government committed to 'building a system of school age childcare offering care before and after school and during the holidays by the end of this Parliament. Those on the lowest incomes will pay nothing'. She said that Shetland has received funding from the Scottish Government to become an 'Early Adopter Community' and to develop childcare provision in areas that need it the most.

In Phase 1 they will hire a Project Manager to undertake engagement and scoping work to understand the needs within each community. This will include the childcare needs of the local infrastructure and services needed to provide childcare from nine months to the end of primary school. It is hoped to have the Project Manager in place by February.

Cllr L Peterson asked why a Project Manager is required as she felt it could be headed up by the SIC Change Dept.

In Phase 2 the manager and communities will aim to implement and develop a community-based system of childcare in their areas, with consideration given to priority groups. These provisions will phase into the Government's offer, which will begin throughout Scotland in 2026.

Ms M Keith then explained the areas to develop in the Early Adopter Community.

The West Mainland of Shetland is one of the targeted Communities where there is no non-statutory childcare or childminders.

Cllr L Peterson informed Ms M Keith that Skeld School should have had 30 nursery hours per week since 2020 . There is also no 'out of school' clubs.

Members felt that there is so much red tape connected with child minding that it is not viable for people to provide such a service.

Cllr L Peterson also feels that there should be some provision in all schools.

It was felt that there is discrimination against the smaller schools when the provision is not the same as in the larger ones. The community needs schools in the different areas to encourage people to live there. The members are pleased that the west mainland has been chosen for this provision. Many people would take jobs if childcare was available.

The Chairman thanked Ms Keith for attending. She then left.

BUSINESS ARISING: Road Matters: Road past Garderhouse: Almost completed.

Brig at Burn of Lunklet: Contractor not yet on site.

Creating passing places: No further information about extra passing places.

Hole developing on the Sandsound road: The hole on the Sandsound road reported earlier has not yet been fixed. A reminder will be sent.

Smiley Face signs: A reply was received saying that it is hoped to have the sign placed in Aith soon.

'SLOW' markings on road near Cake Fridge: A reminder will be sent soon in the hope that the signs will be provided by spring time.

Signs in Aith indicating passing places: No further information on this.

Turning area at Tumblin: It was reported that this area has been patched.

Mr G Morrison, School bus Operator, attended. The Chairman welcomed him to the meeting.

Gritting of school bus routes: Mr G Morrison had come along to the meeting to discuss the gritting of the roads in this area.

The school transport providers have formed a What's App group and he is the spokesman. He has discussed this matter with Cllr L Peterson and with Mr M Spence, Head teacher at Aith J H School and has also spoken to the SIC Transport Dept.

Mr G Morrison informed the members that most of the roads where school transport is required are classed as Priority 3 routes. He added that the priority system was agreed in 2013/14 and has not changed since that time with operators being asked to provide school transport on ungritted roads.

Mr G Morrison, on behalf of their Group, will write a letter to the Community Council explaining the situation and we will then send a Letter of Support for them to SIC Education Transport Management.

All individual operators will also write to the Roads Dept regarding this.

Gritting of roads on Christmas & New Year's Days: The need for gritting to take place on Christmas and New Year's Days was discussed. It is felt that it is essential for gritting to take place at these times due to the fact that many carers have to visit clients and it is a time when people like to visit their relatives and friends. This is especially important to people in this area following the tragic accident on Christmas Day due to the slippery roads. A message will be sent to the Roads Dept requesting that the roads be gritted as normal over the festive period.

Broadband: Nothing to report.

Mobile: Nothing further.

Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF): Advance Grant Scheme (AGS): An application was received from the Hillswick Wildlife Sanctuary but it was turned down due to the fact that it is Shetland wide and that most of our funds for this year have already been utilized.

Update on grants: Investing in Communities Fund: The meeting of the 'Invest in the West' group to complete the project will be held soon.

Funding: Funding details have been received from Mr M Duncan and circulated to the members.

Association: The Association encouraged all Community Councillors to comment on the Lerwick Lanes Masterplan. A message will be sent from this Community Council saying that, as a Community Council, they are not in a position to comment on what is best for Lerwick but wish to express the concern felt by many in this Community Council area about parking availability in the town. It is essential that parking is preserved to allow people from our area to park when they are accessing the street for banking, shopping, etc and for those who are employed in the area. Lerwick Port Authority are encouraging more cruise ships to visit each year and, when they are in port, Victoria Pier is often unavailable which makes for even less parking being available.

An update from the December Association meeting was received from Mr M Duncan. The next meeting is planned for Tuesday 12 March 2024.

Community Council Scheme Review: A draft of the questionnaire had been completed and circulated to the members stating the status quo as our preferred option. The members agreed with the replies on the draft questionnaire and it will be submitted prior to the closing date.

Locality Profile for Shetland West: A message was received from Shetland Partnership saying that Locality profiles for the seven localities in Shetland, alongside a profile for Shetland, have been published. The Locality profiles provide detailed information at a local level. They are useful for a number of reasons including service redesign, local plans and maximising opportunities to seek external funding to support community development. The profiles provide data on demographics, economy, education, environment, health and housing. Profiles will be updated every two years, however, the data will be monitored more regularly with the most recent data available on request. They are now available on the Shetland Partnership website.

Reawick Beach Breakwater: The state of the breakwater at the Reawick beach was discussed and it was agreed that Mrs J Fraser will try to find out who owns the land. The state of the breakwater will be reported to the Environmental Health Dept with a request that someone from their Dept should meet with Mrs J Fraser at the site to discuss it. In the meantime the state of the breakwater will be monitored.

Active Travel: A message was received from Ms Robina Barton, Transport Policy and Projects Officer, saying that they are submitting applications for Active Travel funds in time for the 10 January deadline. The applications will cover the project in Aith.

BENCH: A message was received from Mr M Duncan saying Ms J Graham at SSE has been in touch to ask if any Community Council would like to receive a donated bench. They are currently working with people undertaking community service to give them meaningful tasks and projects. To that end there is an opportunity for the community service team to construct a bench for each Community Council area. The members agreed to accept the offer and will let Ms J Graham know. A note will be sent asking what the bench will be made of and if they have a photo of it available. If it is suitable a notice will be placed on the CC Facebook page asking for suggestions for where it could be sited.

PSTN: A message from Ms Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive Officer, regarding the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) switchover and the rising concern about the PSTN switchover and the impacts on the most vulnerable in remote areas like Shetland. The Secretary of State for Technology in UK Government has intervened and Telecoms providers have now signed a Charter committing to concrete measures to protect vulnerable households, particularly those using personal alarms known as telecare which offer remote support to elderly, disabled and vulnerable people with many located in rural and isolated areas. Under the Charter, all providers have agreed to not forcibly move customers onto the new network unless they are fully confident they will be protected.

SCOTTISH COMMUNITY COUNCILS – NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2023: A copy of the Scottish Community Councils Newsletter Christmas 2023 which contained lots of useful information was received.

DATA PROTECTION: The Data Protection Fee reminder was received and will be paid by the due date on 10 February.

MARINE PLANNING APPLICATION: The following planning application was received and considered:-

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

No objections were raised by any of the members and Mr J D Garrick agreed to place a notice on the Sandsound Facebook Group page reminding their members of the need to comment on this application if they wish.

FINANCE: The Clerk brought the members up to date with the financial state of the Community Council. It was agreed to ask for financial applications for consideration at our February meeting.

Notices will be placed in the shops and on the CC Facebook page. There will be a closing date of 8 February with application forms available from the Clerk by email or post.

KEEP SHETLAND SHEEP SCAB FREE: Mrs O Jamwal-Fraser brought to the attention of the members that meetings are being held in Lerwick and Mid Yell to discuss how to keep Shetland free from Sheep Scab. There is also a link on-line. It was agreed that it is very important for Shetland to maintain a scab-free status.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 12 February 2024 at 7.30pm.