

Sandness & Walls Community Council

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Minutes of Hybrid meeting of the Sandness and Walls Community Council held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7 pm

Present:

I Walterson (Chair)
F MacBeath (Vice Chair)
E Johnston
M Forrest
M Macgregor
J Puckey
J Laing
J Haswell
R Smith
Cllr L Peterson

In attendance: D Forrest (Clerk), Lynsey Rendall, PC Steven Anderson, Drew Mayhew, Brian Chittick, Michael Duncan, Penny Armstrong

1. Chairman's Welcome

I Walterson (Chair) chaired the meeting and welcomed all those present.

2. Apologies

C Venus, S Johnston

3. Declarations of Interest

M Macgregor declared an interest in the item on Roads because the track to the Dale of Walls Beach will be discussed and it forms part of her access road.

(Owing to the fact that several visiting speakers were in attendance, it proved necessary to deviate from the order of items as per the agenda.)

4. Police Report

4.1 Verbal Report

Police Constable Steven Anderson was present and provided a verbal report on police related incidents in the Sandness and Walls area. He referred to two minor incidents.

Re: 9.1 of 4/24 Speeding Cars on the A971 Link Road

M Forrest again raised this matter and pointed out that the situation was exacerbated by the presence of parked cars on the pavement outside Stove Cottages. The point was made that there is a shortage of parking spaces at Stove Cottages and there is a reluctance on the part of the housing department to increase the numbers of spaces. PC Anderson indicated he would attempt to patrol this area in the near future.

(PC Anderson left the meeting.)

5. Minutes from 2.4.24

The adoption of the minutes of 2nd April 2024 was proposed by J Puckey and seconded by F MacBeath.

6. Matters Arising

Re: 17.2 of 3/24 Electricity Supply for Papa Stour

J Puckey provided a verbal report on the progress that is being made towards the restoration of a mains electrical cable for Papa Stour. SSEN officials have visited the island on the 24th April and outlined their plans to the residents. They intend to lay a cable across the same route as the previous connection. Ms Puckey went on to explain that the new cable will include a fibre optic line which, with the addition of a hub at either end and upgraded infrastructure can be used as a means of communication. It was pointed out that the inclusion of the fibre optic cable would enable SSEN to monitor the condition of the electricity cable.

Re: 12 of 4/24 Council Tax on Second Properties

J Puckey described a conversation she had had with a Scottish Government minister during which she had raised the subject of council tax on croft houses that are not permanently occupied. She was advised that this was Local Authority matter. Ms Puckey concluded by stating that it would be up to individual crofters to deal with this issue.

Re: 10 of 4/24 West Mainland Connectivity Project

M Macgregor stated that the contractor who had hoped to come to Shetland with a view to assessing the possibility of providing fibre optic connectivity on the West Mainland would not now be coming owing to problems he was experiencing with some work in which he is currently engaged.

(Mr Drew Mayhew and Mr Bryan Chittick entered the meeting.)

7. Visit by Andrew Mayhew – Area Service Manager – Shetland & Orkney – North Region – Scottish Ambulance Service re: Defibrillators

7.1 First Responders

Mr Mayhew explained that the main reason for his visit was to recruit first responders to enable a better spread of emergency cover throughout Shetland. He highlighted the work of Wildcat Cardiac Responders who could provide vital life support in the event of cardiac failure until the arrival of a professional medical team. Level 1 training necessitated a 3 hour course with Level 2 requiring a 4 day course. Mr Mayhew described how this work has been trialled in Hillswick and that interest was being shown in the scheme in Skerries. A phone application called the Good Samaritan App can be downloaded by First Responders which will alert them to an emergency situation. Mr Chittick stated that the presence of First Responders in a community would form part of Community Resilience and could save lives in remote areas.

7.2 Defibrillators

On the subject of defibrillators, Mr Mayhew acknowledged their importance in saving the lives of heart failure casualties. When asked about sourcing replacement batteries and pads, Mr Mayhew acknowledged that this was a problem especially given that different models required different replacement

accessories. The Chair pointed out that this Community Council were currently responsible for five such devices and that the costs of replacement parts was unsustainable for the Community Council given its limited resources. He went on to describe how a defibrillator has been donated for the West Burrafirth harbour area, but that the Harbour Board required assurances regarding its future maintenance before they would install it. He pointed out that a request for a defibrillator for the Dale of Walls area was currently on hold until its future maintenance could be assured. Mr Mayhew indicated he would look into the matter of the provision of replacement batteries and pads.

7.3 Mapping of Defibrillators and First Responders

The need for an updated map showing the locations of defibrillators throughout Shetland was highlighted and it was acknowledged that not every defibrillator in Shetland was on the current map. It is hoped that a student on a summer placement in Shetland may be able to carry out this work. Providing the locations of First Responders is more problematical under current data protection legislation.

7.4 Recruitment Posters for First Responders

Mr Mayhew stated that it is necessary to make the public aware of the need for First Responders. He stated he would supply posters for display in prominent places in the community.

Actions: 1. Mr Mayhew to investigate how replacement batteries and pads for defibrillators can be sourced.
2. Mr Mayhew to supply First Responder poster for display locally.

(Mr Mayhew and Mr Chittick left the meeting and Penny Armstrong joined the meeting via Zoom.)

8. Shetland Community Benefit Fund – AGS 180510

Ms Armstrong was asked why the application for funding from the SCBF had not been Shetland wide. Ms Armstrong stated that Sandness Community Development Ltd. had not considered doing this because they had felt that the main beneficiaries of repairing the jetty and improving the grounds surrounding the jetty would be Sandness and Papa Stour residents. She also indicated that the group were operating on a tight timescale and needed a quick answer. In response to a

question regarding how this aspiration of Sandness Community Development Ltd linked with their ambitions for the former doctors' surgery, Members were informed that the overall plan was to improve facilities throughout the village and help the local economy in the process. The point was made that the future of the project hinged on the success of the feasibility study. A request was made that if the feasibility study is successful, that Sandness Community Development Ltd seek Shetland wide funding for any actual works. This was agreed and the request for £2000 from the Shetland Community Development Fund was approved unanimously.

Action: The Clerk to complete and return form AGS180510

9. Community Council Scheme Review – Phase 2 Consultation

9.1 Background

Mr Duncan introduced Lynsey Rendall who is now employed as a Community Worker in a similar capacity to Roselyn Fraser. He went on to say they were present to talk about the Community Council Scheme Review – Phase 2 Consultation. He began by providing a potted history of Community Councils and their underpinning legislation.

9.2 The Survey

9.2.1 Foula and Papa Stour

Mr Duncan went through the questions contained in the survey. On the subject of the membership of the Sandness and Walls Community Council, the point was made that this ward contains two remote inhabited islands, Foula and Papa Stour, with unique issues that might not be understood or addressed by community councillors with little or no knowledge of the islands. The point was made that these islands need to be represented in the future.

9.2.2 Funding

Concerns were expressed regarding the level of funding currently available to community councils. The fact that the level of funding has not increased since 2013 when it was reduced by 30%. The issue of community development groups having access to part of the funds was also noted. Mr Duncan stated that respondents could suggest that all the available

funds form part of the core grant with decisions relating to how the funds be disbursed be then at the community councils' discretion.

9.2.3 Other Questions

Other questions covered such matters as Youth Membership of Community Councils, Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct, Attendance at Meetings, Dual Roles such as being an Islands' Councillor and a Community Councillor for example. Mr Duncan concluded by pointing out that the final question was a catch all enabling respondents to raise any issue relating to community councils. All responses must be submitted by 28th of June.

10. Housing

10.1 Progress at Forralea

The Chair stated that work was progressing at pace at the Forralea site.

10.2 Housing Seminars

Cllr Peterson stated that she had attended a housing seminar with representatives from local building contractors and Elected Members, She felt it had been successful given the quantity of house building about to take place. She stated that good communications was very important to achieve successful outcomes, and concluded by indicating a similar seminar is planned in the near future.

11. Future of Health Service Provision at the Walls Health Centre.

Following on from the meeting held with Community Health and Social Care personnel on the 30th April, the Chair commented that the situation as regards health care at the Walls Health Centre is changing. The increased dependence on Advanced Nurse Practitioners was highlighted. Anecdotal evidence indicated that the treatment available via an ANP was of a high standard. The main issue still to be resolved is that of communication. It is hoped that a timetable showing when GP cover and ANP cover is available as well as a brief description of the qualifications of an ANP will be on the S&WCC Facebook page soon.

12. ASCC Meeting of 11th June – S&WCC Representation

F MacBeath indicated his willingness to attend the ASCC meeting in June. M Macgregor requested that defibrillator future maintenance be put on the next agenda.

13. Facebook Page for S&WCC

E Johnston stated that everything was satisfactory with the Community Council's Facebook page.

14. Financial Update

The Clerk stated that the only transaction since the last meeting had been the transfer of the Core Grant to the S&WCC account. He also stated that the accounts were currently with the Independent Examiner and should be available in the near future.

15. Unadopted Roads – 2024/25 – Grant Applications

The Clerk informed the Members that this year had seen an increased demand for unadopted roads grants and that £500 more than last year had been requested. A discussion then followed as to how best to meet future unadopted road grant requests. It was also proposed that a discussion on the Community Council's funding be on next month's agenda.

16. Correspondence

16.1 Email from Alex Tresadern re: Shetland CAB Energy & Fuel Poverty Outreach

It was felt that a Community Council meeting might not be the best avenue for conveying information regarding energy and fuel poverty. It was suggested that outreach work would reach a more appropriate audience at such venues as the Methodist Church's Friday lunches or St Paul's Church's Tea, Coffee and Company for example, It was also recognised that some form of session for people who work during the day would be appropriate. Ms Rendall also raised the issue of digital skills and the need for training.

16.2 Local Place Plan

Following a question regarding the launch of the Local Place Plan, Members were informed that the launch is set to take place on Wednesday 15th May. The Chair stated that he hopes to be able to attend.

17. AOCB

17.1 No Parking Sign at Dale of Walls Beach Track

Members were informed that the sign has been knocked over. The Chair asked J Haswell and F MacBeath to visit the site to see what needs to be done.

17.2 Resurfacing on The New Road in Walls.

Concern was raised that cones that have been placed along part of the New Road to prevent vehicles driving over the verge have been removed. Cllr Peterson stated that these cones were due to be replaced when the work is completed. A brief discussion took place regarding how an active travel audit should consider the verges along this stretch of road. (M Duncan, L Rendall and M Macgregor left the meeting)

18. Roads

The beach tracks at Norby in Sandness and the Dale of Walls were discussed. Some consideration was given to other sources of funding to help maintain these tracks but given that there is a more urgent need to carry out some maintenance in the near future, it was agreed to ask Davie Johnston to assess what was needed for each track and to ask him to provide gravel up to a value of £400, this being a similar amount to the funding provided for this last year. It was decided that the Community Council could not afford to increase this for this year. Discussions as to the way ahead on this matter was deferred to a future meeting.

Action: The Clerk to ask Mr D Johnston to check both tracks and distribute £400 worth of materials as needs dictate.

19. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday 4th June 2024 and will be a hybrid meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

(Draft Minutes of the S&WCC May 2024 meeting subject to approval at next meeting)