

## **GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2024 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.30PM**

**A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.**

<b>B. PRESENT</b>	Mr P Coleman	Mr E MacPherson	Mr C Clark
<b>EX OFFICIO</b>	Cllr A Duncan		
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	Mrs K Geddes	Sgt Bryan Mulholland	PC Liam Brannan
<b>CHAIRPERSON</b>	Mr G Murray		
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Mrs A Arnett Mrs P Christie Cllr R McGregor	Cllr B Peterson Mrs M Davis	Miss E Copland Mr M Duncan
<b>NOT PRESENT</b>	Cllr A Armitage		

**C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April were approved on the motion of Mr P Coleman and seconded by Mr E MacPherson.

**2. POLICE REPORT**

This agenda item was moved forward to allow the police officers to leave at the earliest possible opportunity to attend to other matters.

After confirming that members had already seen the police report for February/March, Sgt Mulholland explained that the April/May report to Community Councils was being compiled and had not yet been released. He asked if members had any questions.

The subject of a new chief inspector was discussed, and though the police officers present weren't sure of dates of when CI Stuart Clemenson would be leaving, Cllr Duncan later explained that it would be the end of the month and that there was some promising news with recruitment with a few possible candidates in the pipeline. Members asked officers to thank the chief inspector for his service to the community.

--- Officers left 7:40pm ---

**1. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

1. Meeting Clashes

Sandwick Community Council are unable to change their meeting days – they changed them to Tuesdays a few years ago but this clashes with some of our meeting dates, meaning elected SIC members are unable to get to both meetings.

The clerk will attempt to set the dates to days which do not clash with Sandwick and Sandwick have said they will look to help with moving dates if really needed.

## 2. Active Travel

The clerk wrote formally to Cllr McGregor expressing members' frustration at lack of progress and poor communication with Active Travel. Lack of staffing and resources are clearly causing issues and they would like it addressed. Cllr McGregor is dealing with it and will report back when there are any updates.

Members wondered why they had not seen any plans for the new path on the main road above Gulberwick and asked why certain planning applications do not need to be sent to Community Councils for comment and why they are not available to view on the planning website. They would like a copy of the overall plans for Shetland or at the very least for the plans for their communities as it is obvious the Gulberwick path is part of a bigger scheme the local authority seems to be pushing towards.

**ACTION:** Clerk to ask for more details about planning applications and to see if we can get a copy of the plans for the path above Gulberwick as well as the overall long-term plans.

## 3. Cunningsburgh School Transport in Summer Months

The clerk wrote to SIC elected members to say the Community Council backed Cunningsburgh parents calls for school transport to continue for their bairns during the summer months. As well as the road safety concerns, environmental factors and discrimination against lower income families were additional worries. Cllr McGregor has replied to say he is dealing with it and will report back when there are any updates.

## 4. Remembering Together Plaque

Local artist Helen Robertson was commissioned to make plaques to commemorate the experience of people during Covid. She was one of five artists chosen in Shetland and she has now finished making her art and is distributing one to each Community Council. The halls were contacted to ask if they would like to site them and only Cunningsburgh replied, so it was agreed to put the plaque to the Cunningsburgh Hall when it arrives.

**ACTION:** Clerk to put the plaque to the Cunningsburgh Hall when it arrives.

## 4. Benches

SSE have gifted free benches to Community Councils and members have been trying to figure out where best to put the two GQ&C received. It was agreed to look at siting one bench in the Cunningsburgh Community Garden and the other at the top of Shurton Brae. A location for Quarff has not yet been chosen but a bench can be purchased when it has been decided – we only received two benches from SSE.

Clerk is to speak to members living in each area to help find who owns the land to take the next steps towards getting the benches in position. The Community Justice team can put the cement in for us at a small cost.

**ACTION:** With support from members, clerk to speak to landowners about bench sites.

## 5. NorthLink Drydock Timetable

The clerk wrote to NorthLink several months ago asking them to consider moving their planned maintenance period a few weeks later in future, to a time which is likely to be less busy with visitors, tourists and Shetlanders coming home for the Up Helly Aa festival.

After several attempts to get replies from NorthLink customer service the clerk copied in the Managing Director and he was quick with a detailed response. Stuart Garrett explained that the availability of dry docks plays a significant part in timetabling but they also have to

work within a 'passenger carrying recertification window'. They do look at avoiding busy periods and had purposefully avoided Up Helly Aa.

He explained that even after the boats being cancelled on January 31<sup>st</sup>, the sailings the following two nights only held 1,052 versus a total capacity for 1,200.

He said: "At the recent Shetland External Transport Forum, held on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, we also discussed the impact and consequences of weather affected sailings particularly over the last winter. Whilst unfortunately we cannot mitigate against the full impact of the weather, I can assure members that all potential impacts are considered as part of our operational planning process, and this will continue to be the case when we come to review plans for 2025."

He offered dates when he would be in Shetland if members wanted to meet face to face or had any further questions but members were pleased with his response and felt that they had made their point.

**ACTION:** Clerk to reply to Mr Garrett to say thank you for his detailed response.

## **2. POLICE REPORT**

This item was moved up the agenda.

## **3. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The bank statement on June 4<sup>th</sup> read £2,872.70.

Both of the grants agreed at the last meeting were paid: £300 to the Cunningsburgh Parent Council to go towards tables and £250 to the Sound Parent Council to go towards transport for the P7 activities week.

Our grant funding for both the Core Grant and the CDF grant has been approved and the letters have been signed by the chair and will be put back to the SIC so funds should be in the bank soon.

The 2023/34 accounts were submitted to VAS but we have not heard back yet.

## **4. GRANT APPLICATIONS**

### Shetland Community Benefit Fund

The SCBF five-year Business Plan titled *A Lasting Legacy for Shetland* has been published. Members were sent the plan before the meeting. Guidelines and further information on how to apply to the Viking Community Fund will be published later this summer.

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 award the full amount requested.

### GQC CC Applications

No grants.

**ACTION:** Clerk to return the paperwork regarding the SMUHA SCBF application.

## **5. ROADS**

A member of the public has asked if the south facing Perspex screen in the bus shelter at the Aithsetter junction could be replaced. It has become so opaque that passengers are

unable to see when the bus is coming and are having to stand outside as the road signs also block the view from the shelter door.

They have also asked if the concrete path could be extended further towards the road as passengers have to cross a muddy puddle to get the bus.

**ACTION:** Clerk to email the information to Roads to get it looked at.

## **6. GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE**

The clerk and vice-chair met with Andrew Blackadder from the Scalloway Community Development Group to hear his experience and advice with development of plans and projects for Scalloway. They have done a lot of work over a lot of years and it was inspiring to think what could be done.

It was decided to try to start small and incorporate community consultation into whatever happens next. It is important to make sure that the community are involved in future plans and evidence of this and their agreement with any projects is essential for securing any funding required going forward.

**ACTION:** Smaller projects to be looked at and a possible funding application to the Shetland Community Benefit Fund to be explored to help fund the consultation events. Clerk to look at it over the summer and to liaise with Development Group members.

## **7. UPDATES FROM ELECTED MEMBERS**

Cllr Duncan started off by speaking about the recent incident in which he was stopped by the police for travelling at 52mph on the Sound Brae. His trial is likely to be in the next couple of days and he has been advised that he does not need to be there. He explained that he was up front from the start and offered his resignation as a councillor but only one of his colleagues said he should go. He has endeavoured to be open and transparent about it all, especially as that was the principle he stood for election on.

He has also been charged with driving with an expired licence and explained that it was a genuine oversight on his part as he keeps his licence in a safe place and doesn't think to look at it. He is glad that his oversight has led to a lot of people checking their own licences and has meant that a few people have been able to renew their licences in time.

He intends to plead guilty and is prepared to take the penalty. He wanted to be as open and transparent as possible.

The chair thanked Mr Duncan for his openness and said he hoped everything went as well as it can do.

Cllr Duncan then spoke a little about the visit from the new chief of police for Scotland who was due to be up here at the end of the month but whose visit has been delayed.

He reported on the continued success of the Dogs Against Drugs funding and support campaign. The dogs have now found more than £1M in total of illegal drugs and it is important their work continues as there have been three possibly four deaths recently in Shetland which have been drug related. He said the problem had reached epidemic proportions and he was committed to doing what he can to support any way it can be reduced.

Cllr Duncan's role as the Chair of the Safety and Resilience Board has meant he has been heavily involved in calls for updates to some of the retained fire stations in Shetland. The fire service in Scotland is undergoing a complete review of everything but he would just like the stations in Shetland to be brought up to a suitable standard to allow firefighters to do their jobs safely and in buildings of decent standards. He didn't think the poor state of the buildings was doing anything to encourage recruitment which is a big issue as several have been unable to have 24 hour cover at times.

Issues such as no washing facilities, outdoor toilets, inadequate heating, no insulation, bird infestations, inadequate storage, no shower facilities as well as buildings only being leased or having to share use with other people in the community were all discovered.

He now has the support of Beatrice Wishart and Alistair Carmichael who have also visited the stations and Ms Wishart has written to the chief of the fire service and meetings are due to be held soon. Cllr Duncan has vowed to report the fire service to the Health and Safety Executive if he doesn't see progress soon. Bressay, Walls and Hillswick are the worst affected stations.

Cllr Duncan also spoke through his worries for firefighters after a 2018 report into the increased health risks due to the job has come to light – compared to the general public firefighters' mortality rate for cancer is 1.6 times higher, heart attacks are five times more likely to happen and strokes three times more likely. They are twice as likely to develop anxiety and three times as likely to have depression, and they are developing cancer at a higher rate and at a younger age.

Some members wanted to share their frustrations with Cllr Duncan about the loss of parking spaces in the town centre at the 'old swimming pool' car park, describing it as scandalous.

Apart from emails from Cllr McGregor regarding specific projects there were no updates from other SIC councillors available.

## **8. COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME REVIEW**

The second phase of the Community Council Scheme review has been launched and members spoke through each of the questions in the survey. Several members had put their own survey responses in but all felt that a response from the Community Council would hold more weight.

The clerk took notes and will complete a survey response for GQ&C CC when she has checked with every member if they have anything to add – not all members were present and some had written notes on their surveys which they were willing to share after the meeting.

**ACTION:** Clerk to gather responses from all members interested in adding their voice to the joint response and submit a completed survey before the deadline.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

### 1. Shetland Citizen's Advice Outreach and Energy Advisor

The new Community Outreach and Energy Advisor for Shetland CAB has reached out and offered to visit to share information on the work they are doing to help get support to people who might not be aware of what they can access.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact the new CAB staff member to invite them to our next meeting.

### 2. PTSN Update forwarded by Michael Duncan, SIC Community Council Liaison Officer

Information regarding a new date for the PTSN switch off date was received – it has now been put back to 31 January 2027. The additional 13 months is to allow communications providers to safely migrate their vulnerable customers off the analogue landline technology.

### 3. Local Place Plans – Launch Rerun

## DRAFT MINUTES – Subject to approval at the August 2024 meeting

Additional dates for the launch event for Local Place Plans have been added. There was one last night and another on Friday which members have been sent Microsoft Teams Invites for. Phone chats are available for anyone unable to attend these sessions.

### 10. PLANNING

There was only one planning application to consider:

[2024/134/PPF](#) – Erect polycrubb, site north of Roselea, Cunningsburgh  
Members had no objections or comments to return.

One other planning application was on the SIC website for the community council area but did not require members to comment on it:

[2024/092/PPF](#) – Install new patio door & construct decking, Breglascord, Shurton Brae, Gulberwick

An email from the Scottish Government regarding a scoping exercise for the Arven Offshore Wind Farm, planned for 30km east of Shetland, was received. Members were asked to review the scoping report in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment and send any comments in by the end of June. Members welcomed the opportunity to comment but felt the detail and information in the 575 page report was above their level of expertise.

**ACTION:** Clerk to send comment to the SIC planning department in response to the planning application considered.

### 11. AOCB

#### 1. First Aid Training

Mr Clark advised he had been sent details of a first aid course running in Shetland for £70 which members would be able to attend if they wished.

**ACTION:** Anyone interested in attending a first aid course to contact Mr Clark for details.

#### 2. Freight Boat

Mr Coleman asked whether we could do anything about the recent problems with the freight boat as it is having a huge negative impact on local businesses and the day to day lives of many Shetlanders.

**ACTION:** Clerk to write to NorthLink to ask them when the issue is likely to be resolved.

### 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

Meeting Ends – 9.00 pm.

**CHAIR**

### 13. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

March 2024 – Clerk to create a draft application to SCBF for a community event involving food and consultation for future projects for a development group. To look at over summer.