

Association of Shetland Community Councils (ASCC)

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Paper 1

**Minute of the ASCC meeting held on
Tuesday 12 March 2024, 6.00 pm,
Town Hall Chamber, Lerwick and online using Microsoft Teams**

Present

Ian Walterson	Association of Shetland Community Councils (Chair)
Shayne McLeod	Association of Shetland Community Councils (Vice Chair)
Lindsay Tulloch	Bressay Community Council
Alastair Cooper	Delting Community Council
Lucy Cummings	Fetlar Community Council
Ewen McPherson	Gulberwick, Quarff & Cunningsburgh Community Council
Jim Anderson	Lerwick Community Council
Diana Winfield	Lerwick Community Council
Willie Simpson	Nesting and Lunnasting Community Council
Findlay MacBeath	Sandness & Walls Community Council
Osla Jamwal-Fraser	Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council
Bryan Peterson	Sandwick Community Council
Joanne Jamieson	Sandwick Community Council
Mark Burgess	Scalloway Community Council
Paul James	Skerries Community Council
Andrew Archer	Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale Community Council

Officers in Attendance

Vaila Simpson	Executive Manager – Community Planning & Development, SIC
Michael Duncan	Community Council Liaison Officer – Community Planning & Development, SIC
Jan Riise	Executive Manager – Governance & Law, SIC
Peter Mogridge	Planning Officer – Planning Service, SIC
Steve Mathieson	Shetland Development Manager – Visit Scotland
Joanne Fraser	Community involvement and Development officer for Lerwick & Bressay
Frances Browne	Community involvement and Development officer for the North Isles

Officers Observing

Evie Tait (note taker)	Projects Officer - Community Planning & Development, SIC
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Local press

Kevin Craigen	Shetland Times
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1. Introductions

Chair welcomed all present and acknowledged that a few Community Councils were absent.

2. Apologies

Roselyn Fraser

Apologies were received from Burra & Trondra Community Council, Yell Community Council and Roselyn Fraser- Community involvement and Development officer.

There was no contact from Dunrossness Community Council, Northmaven Community Council and Whalsay Community Council.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations.

4. Local Place Plans

Peter Mogridge delivered a short presentation on Local Place Plans (LPP). Peter explained that LPP's are a part of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which is intended to address national issues including housing, health & wellbeing, rural population, discrimination & equality, emissions and biodiversity. LPPs give communities the opportunity to make proposals for development by formally registering their aspirations and needs. The local community must be fully engaged and consulted. The key points are:

- LPPs must be created by communities
- Communities can define the boundaries of the place
- There is no obligation to create an LPP
- LPPs must be registered by the Council and incorporated into the next development plan
- LPPs focus on new housing, foot paths, bus stops, tree planting and valued assets.

Peter explained that Scalloway is currently the only area in Shetland that has created a Local Place Plan and the SIC will shortly be issuing formal invitations to create LPPs. A toolkit is being put into place to help assist communities, along with software and an LPP template.

Bryan Peterson asked if local village size plans will be considered. Peter explained that if they take due regard of policy and demonstrate the necessary engagement, they can't be ignored.

Jan Riise asked what would trigger a formal invite to do an LPP and if they formally invite individual CCs. Peter explained that the Community Councils will be invited but any body that is properly constituted and financially sound could lead on an LPP, including Community Development Companies and Public Halls. Jan made the point that some groups that have formed sometimes don't agree with Community Councils and questioned which would prevail in these circumstances. Peter explained that this is something they can potentially see happening and there can't be more than one LPP per place. They are looking at the option of an independent external reviewer that can work through the LPPs with areas and give opinions and guidance.

Jim Anderson pointed to the LPP being a sizable piece of work that the Community Councils are being asked to produce and asked where they can draw on knowledge, time and resources. Peter explained it is a statutory requirement to invite Community Councils but understands the issues raised. The Council will try to support them and there will be free software packages, training and support meetings. Hopefully a number of communities will do it at the same time so there would be mutual support and Peter pointed to Scalloway's plan as a good example.

Andrew Archer asked what would be regarded as sufficient community validation of a plan. Peter explained it would be the community's views so it wouldn't need to be validated. They are hoping to find more hands on ways of carrying out engagement instead of questionnaires and knocking on doors such as using mobile phone software that is available.

Bryan explained that Sandwick are looking at doing an LPP but, as they are made up of many small villages, they didn't know where to start. There are many local priorities to consider and possible friction with landowners. They are looking forward to having a tool kit. Peter agreed that identifying land is an issue. He also explained that each place plan will be different. Bryan pointed to it being planning in principal and anything they choose to do can affect the value of plots around it. Peter explained that in terms of conflict, if they create a new properly constituted community body by combining bodies, those from larger places can be put in place look at that conflict.

Alastair Cooper questioned how they would do an LPP alongside so many other projects being carried out in Delting. Peter explained that they don't have to do one but they could incorporate these things into an LPP.

Mark Burgess explained that when Scalloway carried out a LPP, they began with community engagement so there was less judgement and differing opinions later on. Money was available for Scalloway to do the LPP and they brought in an external contractor to deliver the consultation with them. They Community Council went door to door with leaflets, had a Facebook page and website and held community events. They also spoke to all the landowners about what had been said in consultation so they could respond.

Ewen McPherson pointed to his area having very different communities with different needs and asked if there could be individual plans created? He also explained that they also have a Settlement Design statement that is supplementary to planning guidance. He asked if those original local plans would have to be incorporated into this because a lot of work has been done in communities in connection with this piece of work and they would have to start again which would mean having to communicate with stakeholders. Peter explained that communities can define their boundaries for LPPs but may need to have separate bodies creating separate plans. Peter will look into this and provide a response after the meeting. Peter suggested they could have an overarching LPP with chapters for each settlement but this might affect the registration. Peter said he would need to check the answer for settlement design statements but the Council would be able to help with stakeholder communication.

Action 1: Peter to provide a response to Ewen McPherson re Settlement Design statement

Paul James asked if it would disadvantage Skerries not to do a LPP. Peter explained that there would be no local registered record of aspirations and thoughts about your place so any decisions would then be based on the MPF4 and the local development plan.

Mark Burgess added that Planning Aid Scotland (PAS) may be able to assist Community Councils going through the community engagement process as they can give guidance on carrying out community engagement. Peter agreed, saying that the Council have been talking to Planning Aid Scotland about an independent group that could look at a plans before they are registered. PAS have also been a source for training and suggestions for the soft wear and are keen to be involved.

Chair, Ian Walterson asked if the existing adopted policies within MPF4 include 20 minute communities. Peter responded explaining that the national planning framework has 20 minute communities as one of the policies. They have tried to move away from 20 minute neighbour hoods as a name and call them 'Living Well Locally' because it doesn't work for Shetland, however having services as close as possible is still a valid approach to planning.

Ian asked that if a local place plan specifically excludes the 20 minute neighbourhoods because they don't want it in their area, would that affect housing applications. Peter responded saying the policy can't be ignored but if there is a local interpretation and a case can be made, it might be fine.

Osla added that the LPP process sounds very expensive and time consuming and Community Councils wouldn't be able to draw in funding for this. Olsa pointed to Local Development companies being a more natural home for this but said this could disadvantage areas without development companies. Olsa also made the point that communities will want to put forward what they don't want to happen just as much as what they do want to happen so if they don't create an LPP, this is just as much of an issue because the community won't have the same sway to express views. Peter agreed with this and said the Council will do the most to help communities because LPPs will be very valuable.

5. Note of the previous meeting held on 7 December 2023 for approval.

Proposed by Jim Anderson
Seconded by Osla Jamwal-Fraser

6. Matters arising from previous minute not on the agenda

North Link Bookings (Transport Scotland)

Lucy Cummings explained that she attended the Inter-Islands Connectivity Consultation, run by Transport Scotland, and read the paper. The only Shetland connection they have is the Northlink collection however, Shetland Islands Council relies on the Scottish Government for the subsidy for the inter-island ferries and will need capitol commitment for replacement ferries. Lucy suggested everybody, especially the island communities, to respond to the consultation paper and try to make this point. Jim Anderson asked if the survey could be circulated. Lucy explained that it was called the Inter Islands Connectivity Consultation and is on the Transport Scotland website. It was thought that Michael Craigie from SIC Transport Planning should also be notified of this and asked to read the document.

Update on Telecoms

Michael Duncan explained that an email had been circulated and there was engagement with telecoms. Lindsay Tulloch asked if it would be possible to have periodic updates and Michael said he would look into this. Paul James expressed concerns that there was still no answer as to how you would call 999 in a power outage, without using a mobile that would need to be charged. It was decided that quarterly updates would be helpful and the association would contact the MP Alistair Carmichael and MSP Beatrice Wishart for regular information.

Action 2: ASCC to contact MP Alistair Carmichael and MSP Beatrice Wishart and request regular updates

7. Shetland Way Hiking Path – Community Council feedback

Ewen McPherson asked Steve Mathieson about the amount of people they expect to have visiting the islands and expressed concerns about the impact 1,500 visitors a week during peak time would have. Steve explained that the figure of 80,000 a year was projected and based on the visitor survey and will not all be new visitors. It was just people who expressed that they walk when on holiday which was only 92% of those asked. Not all of those visitors would walk the whole route. The report says, in terms of new visitors, it's about 12,000 over 10 years so about 1,200 new visitors a year. The 600,000 figure includes people that already come to Shetland on holiday.

Steve then updated everyone on the progress of the Shetland Way. He explained that they have been through the consultation and the feasibility study and design options were given a Gold, Silver and Bronze standard because they are looking at a lot of different aspects, including the possibility of cycling and equestrian usage. Accessibility is also an issue. The Gold, Silver and Bronze standards came to between £3-8m to develop, but it will have probably gone up in cost by now. Steve advised there is a set formula for looking at this and funding isn't easy to secure. Currently the project working group are doing a technical audit to try to join up as many core parts of access routes and rights of way as possible so that these are already in place. The working group are also looking at putting in gates, styles and way markers where appropriate.

8. Community Council Scheme Review – update

Michael Duncan delivered an update on the Community Council Scheme Review. There will be a Special Council meeting on the 26th March to be considered by Elected Members. The report will share feedback from Phase One consultation exercise as well as put forward a proposed draft scheme. Elected Members will be asked permission to take the draft scheme out for community consultation.

The report is currently in the process of being finalised and is scheduled to be published week commencing 18th March. When the report has been cleared for the Special Council meeting, Michael advised that the plan is to prepare a short briefing to be sent to Community Councils to draw attention to any significant proposed changes.

Michael explained there will be quite a lot of papers to go through in the report so he will highlight the proposed material changes and differences in the draft scheme. The Special Council meeting will be held in public so everyone is welcome to watch online and the meeting papers will be available on the Council website. The consultation period for Phase two is scheduled to commence in mid-April and will be open for a 10 week period through to the end of June. Michael advised that staff from Community Planning & Development will be coming to speak to all Community Councils during the consultation period.

9. Items for future meetings

No future agenda items were raised during the meeting. Michael advised that an invitation for agenda items will be issued in the near future to Community Councils. Any suggested agenda topics should be sent to him using the Agenda Request form as normal.

10. Date of Next Meeting

11 June 2024, 6pm
10 September 2024, 6pm

Meeting closed at 20:00

Chairperson

Date