

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1st OCTOBER 2024 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.00PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT	Mr P Coleman Mrs M Davis	Mr E MacPherson Mr C Clark	Mrs P Christie
EX OFFICIO	Cllr B Peterson		
IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs K Geddes	Rodney Smith (Chair of Cunningsburgh Community Recreational Facility)	Dr Rebecca Giesler Mrs Tanya Riley (UHI Shetland Marine Scientists)
CHAIRPERSON	Mr G Murray		
APOLOGIES	Mrs A Arnett Cllr R McGregor	Cllr A Duncan Mr M Duncan	Miss E Copland Sgt. Alexander Barry
NOT PRESENT	Cllr A Armitage		

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Christie declared an interest in Item 4 – the naming of the road in Cunningsburgh, as she has family connections to one of the proposed names.

Mr Coleman declared an interest in Item 6 – grant applications, as his children attend the Gulberwick Toddlers.

Cllr Peterson declared an interest in Item 6 – grant applications, as he has been asked to pose as Santa for the Cunningsburgh Under 5s toddler party.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27th AUGUST 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27^h August were approved on the motion of Mr C Clark and seconded by Mrs M Davis.

1. MATTERS ARISING

1. Path Gritting

A reply to a question about whether new paths created would be added to the winter gritting routes was received via email on 10.9.24. It reminded members that the winter maintenance review is still underway, but that it only covers the measures that can be put in place before the onset of winter. One of the options mentioned in the letter to Community Councils was the provision of additional footpath gritters to improve the treatment of footpaths in the major communities in rural areas and the isles – these could also be used to treat paths such as the new one along the A970 at Gulberwick. Smaller footpaths would still be reliant on the hand spreading of salt by Roadworkers or the use of grit bins by residents.

ACTION: Clerk to reply and say that additional footpath gritters would be welcome and would encourage the use of the paths designed for active travel.

2. Dogs in Cunningsburgh Play Park

An email received on 4.9.24 from SIC Leisure Facilities confirmed that a more visible sign should now have been erected at the entrance to the play area. The email explained that it

is not a law or by-law, but the SIC does not allow dogs in their play areas. This is for obvious reasons – hygiene and the fact that not all children and users of our play areas like dogs. There are no penalties if the public ignore this, other than the existing ones around dog fouling.

ACTION: Clerk to email thanks to the Leisure Facilities Service.

2. POLICE REPORT

The police report was received prior to the meeting and distributed with the agenda. There have been five incidents recorded in the Community Council area in June and July, a neighbour dispute and a vandalism (both coming under Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder), a 'concern for person' and a mental health incident in the Protecting Vulnerable People section, and a report of livestock worrying.

The police were in touch to give their apologies due to a fire in another district. Members had no questions or comments to return.

3. MARINE RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Dr Rebecca Giesler and Mrs Tanya Riley from UHI Shetland spoke through the research project they are undertaking. They are aiming to identify and prioritise areas of the sea of the coast which might benefit from restoration, with locally tailored initiatives and actions. This could be things like anti-predator netting around breeding seabird colonies, tackling underwater marine litter or replanting seagrass in places like the Vadills.

They are keen to get the views of people who live in Shetland to ensure that the restoration efforts they identify are relevant, address locally identified concerns and are locally supported. Often planning permission or new developments only go ahead on the understanding that the developers not only make sure their plans do not adversely affect the local area, but that they bring something positive too – even if it is in the form of money towards a separate project identified. At the moment this tends to only happen for land-based developments, but the researchers are keen to get ahead of the curve and ensure there is an action plan in place with spade-ready projects or ideas. It is the first research project of its kind in Scotland.

Members discussed:

- Pollution outfall, in particular the pipe at the Gulberwick septic tanks
- The effect of the coastal corrosion on the Cunningsburgh Meadows now that diggers are being used for ditching instead of hand digging – the ditches are huge.
- Concerns that tankers may start 'laying off' close to the coast again.
- The need for more bins at beaches, talking in particular about the Community Council's idea for a portable orca sculpture/bin for beach bruck.
- Offshore windfarms – both concerns about these as well as the possibility that it could provide an area for fish to recover, protected from fishing boats who won't be able to fish close by.

There is an online survey which members can input extra ideas into and which the public can be directed to.

----- Mrs Riley and Dr Giesler left 7.50pm -----

2. CUNNINGSBURGH MARINA/TOURING PARK ROAD NAMING

Mrs P. Christie left the room.

Rodney Smith, Cunningsburgh Community Recreational Facility Chair gave some details on the background of the marina facilities and development of the touring park. There are now several houses which have been built or are due to be built which use the single track road

to the marina for access, necessitating the need for an official name for the road. As owners of the road the CCRF must apply to the SIC to name the road.

Members were impressed at the work done by Mr Smith to ensure that the naming of the road was done as fairly and impartially as possible. He received two options for names from people within the area and made sure that he had a write up or a case history for each name suggestion. These were then hand delivered to each residence in the area, with a voting pack which included a slip of paper for each option and an envelope to seal the votes in. All residents aged 16 and over were eligible to vote and 22 people had the ability to do so. The two options provided were Adam Christie Gaet and Duncansgaet.

The envelopes were given to the clerk who confirmed they were sealed. She opened and counted the votes. There was only one slip of paper in each envelope and none of the votes were spoiled.

There were 18 votes for Duncansgaet, 0 for Adam Christie Gaet and a surprise four for a new option – Marina Road. It was confirmed that the new name will be Duncansgaet and that a deciding vote by Community Council members is not needed.

Mr Smith will now fill out the road naming form for the SIC.

5. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The bank statement on September 27th reads £12,961.74

The three £50 Voar Redd Up donations were paid out since the last meeting – two to the Quarff Hall and one to Ability Shetland.

The 2023/34 accounts have been independently verified and will be submitted to the SIC now that they have been signed by the chair at tonight's meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to put the signed accounts to the SIC.

6. GRANT APPLICATIONS

Shetland Community Benefit Fund

There were two SCBF applications to consider.

Cunningsburgh Under 5s requested £500 to go towards a cordless vacuum, an electric safe, a key lock box and some STEM toys.

Gulberwick Toddlers requested £500 towards toys, dressing up clothes, books, a train set and some foldable wipe-clean mats.

Both grants were approved.

GQC CC Applications

There were two grant forms to consider.

Cunningsburgh Under 5s and Gulberwick Toddlers both requested £100 to go towards their Christmas parties.

Both grants were approved.

Grants will be considered at the next meeting again. Forms can be found here: [Community Council Documents – Shetland Islands Council](#)

ACTION: Clerk to return the signed paperwork to the SCBF, let the applicants know about the decisions made and transfer the CC grant money. Everyone to share the word about grant applications.

7. ROADS

There has been no update on the road safety issues concerning Cunningsburgh School so the clerk is to contact the SIC.

Clerk to follow up on what has been or can be done about the bins at Shurton Brae.

ACTION: Clerk to email for update about Cunningsburgh School road safety and for update on Shurton Brae bins.

8. GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE

Everyone was in agreement to progress some free community events and it was decided to have a meeting on Thursday night to progress the plans by speaking to venues and starting a grant application to fund it.

ACTION: Clerk, Mr Clark and Mrs Christie to meet on Thursday night to progress plans for events.

9. UPDATES FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

Cllr Peterson was asked about the cancellation of the winter fuel payment for pensioners but explained that as it was a national policy decision, there was very little that the SIC could do about it.

Mr MacPherson also asked for his concerns about the lack of car parking in Lerwick town centre to be noted again, and in particular his worries about the plans to reduce space further at the swimming pool car park. Cllr Peterson explained that a final decision on the swimming pool car park plans had not yet been made and spoke through other issues he had identified in the town in regard to parking.

He said that the evidence shows that there is actually sufficient parking but that the lack of any traffic management could be an issue. It can be quite a simple thing to get cameras up to monitor spaces to feedback to a sign as you drive into town to tell you where spaces are. Other things which could improve the situation are a parking warden, the return of the use of the parking discs and letting folk know when the cruise ships are in to allow them to plan their visits to town.

A lot of parking is not owned by the SIC so each organisation has their own management of their car park to think about and issues to deal with. He described it as a bit of a free for all. The car park at Mareel for example is often used by council workers at 8 North Ness which reduces capacity for their own customers. Clickimin has similar issues with spaces being used by AHS staff and drop offs by parents being done in their car park instead of the designated route near the hostel.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Arven Offshore Windfarm Update

The Licensing and Operations Team Scoping Opinion for this wind farm has been issued. This prompted discussion on the curtailment fees which SSE is getting as a result of the national grid not currently being able to use the energy produced. The comments by the SSES Chief Executive reported in local media following his recent visit to Shetland have been deemed insensitive and have not helped. Cllr Peterson explained that for future projects, the best thing that the SIC has any leverage on is anything that has landfall and

has to go through Shetland – do we host infrastructure on the mainland in return for something?

2. Local Place Plan Launch Events and Thanks

The launch events for the LPP were supported by Planning Aid Scotland and were attended by 36 people. The next steps are to convene an online meeting for the five small islands, hold a final launch event online for anyone who didn't manage to make the in-person events, devise an interim programme of activity for groups who have decided to start creating an LPP and devise further targeted support for those groups unsure whether they wish to start an LPP.

Further details will be released when they are finalised.

Cllr Pearson explained that LPPs could be used by communities to say they do not want something developed in a certain area ie no large scale commercial windfarm developments. Members were interested to hear this but were worried that even if LPPs are supposed to hold more power and are meant to be the voice of the community, the Scottish Government is likely to overturn any objections or conditions from the community.

There was discussion about whether the Development Group Consultation events could be used to speak about Local Place Plans too.

3. RNID Information

The RNID – the national charity for supporting people who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus, have sent information on hearing aid support sessions that are currently running in Shetland. They are also looking for volunteers to help expand their service in Shetland.

4. ASCC Meeting

The next meeting of the Association of Shetland Community Councils is to be held on Wednesday 6th November. A volunteer from GQC CC is requested to attend. Mr MacPherson and Mrs Christie both indicated they would like to attend.

ACTION: Clerk to email Michael Duncan to say who will be attending and to email papers on to Mr MacPherson and Mrs Christie.

11. PLANNING

There was only one planning applications to consider:

- [2024/238/PPF](#) – Erect new single storey dwelling house, Plot 1, Aisterlea, Cunningsburgh

Members had no comments or objections to return.

The following application did not require comment:

- [2024/209/PAN](#) – Proposal of Application Notice, Mossy Hill wind farm

Members were not required to comment on this but had concerns that they weren't completely sure what was happening. They'd like to see artists impressions now that the plans have changed slightly. There have also been reports of a type of hawk which is nesting at the site and had questions about how far around a wind turbine planning restrictions are in place. A request was made for members to be able to see a map to show the location, size of windmills and artists impressions showing the visual impact of the development.

ACTION: Clerk to send comments to the SIC planning department in response to the planning applications considered. Clerk to try to find out details of hawk and where it is

nesting. Clerk to seek a map which shows location , size of windmills and artists impressions of Mossy Hill development.

11. AOCB

1. Reduction in Energy Bills Scheme Suggestion/SSE CE Comments

Mr MacPherson asked whether his idea about a scheme similar tithe Air Discount Scheme but for fuel bills could be looked at again. Although it was knocked back at the beginning of the set-up of the SCBF as it was in the Memorandum of Agreement that the Community Benefit Fund could not be used to reduce bills for locals, he wants to know who it was that made that decision and to try and challenge it, especially in light of the comments made by the SSE Chief Executive on his recent visit to Shetland.

Mr Clark explained that although it was in the original MoA, it is not in the new one, so there may be some opportunity. He said that SCBF have written a letter to SSE challenging some of the comments that the CE said and they await a reply.

ACTION: Mr Clark to feedback if there has been any reply.

2. 2025 Meeting Dates

The school have confirmed that the proposed dates for 2025 do not clash with any of their activities so it was agreed to set the dates for 2025 without any changes.

They are Tuesdays at 7 or 7.30pm:

7th January
11th February
18th March
22nd April
10th June
19th August
7th October
18th November

ACTION: Clerk to inform Michael Duncan of the planned dates.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 19th November 2024.

Meeting Ends – 9.25 pm.

CHAIR

13. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

August 2024 – bench locations to be decided and planning permission sought.