

WHALSAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes subject to approval at next Community Council meeting

Minute of the Whalsay Community Council (CC) meeting. Held on Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 7.00 pm
at Whalsay Heritage Centre

PRESENT:	APOLOGIES
Cllr Jackie Leslie (JL) – Chair	Dana Jamieson - Police Scotland
Cllr William Polson (WP) –Vice Chair	Michael Duncan - Community Council Liaison Officer (MD)
Cllr Margaret Hughson (MH)	Roselyn Fraser – Community Involvement & Development Officer (RF)
Cllr Caroline Watts (CW) via Teams	Duncan Anderson - North Isles Cllr (DA)
Robert Thomson – North Isles Cllr (RTH) via Teams	Andrew Inkster - Executive Manager Marine & Air Operations SIC(AI)
James Milne – Deputy Harbour Master SIC (JM) via Teams	Neil Hutchinson – SIC Roads
Billy Mycock – Environmental SIC (BM) via Teams	Ryan Thomson – North Isles Cllr (RT)
	Duncan Anderson – North Isles Cllr (DA)

MINUTE TAKER: Gina Irvine – WCC Clerk (GI)

WELCOME: JL chaired meeting and welcomed all. Introduced Caroline Watts as new community councillor

APOLOGIES: Apologies noted

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: JL declared a conflict of interest for the Voar Redd Application.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: JL asked if all were happy with minutes. MH approved; JL seconded.

FINANCE REPORT:

Current account was shared with members by clerk. JL elaborated on the details of the new grant funding application and details was shared with members.

ACTIONS: Ongoing

1. DOG FOULING – HOULL

JL introduced Billy Mycock (BM), who discussed potential solutions for obtaining dog waste bins on the island. BM informed all, Shetland Islands Council's low prioritization of dog fouling issues. BM identified funding opportunities and other available supports, such as signage and educational initiatives involving local schools. BM proposed a competition to create new dog fouling signage, which would help address the problem and engage local residents. MH put forward a request for 4 dog waste bins to be located and erected within isle and all discussed various locations.

ACTIONS: Clerk asked to follow up on costs and funding sources with BM

2. SYMBISTER PIER

JM joined meeting and updated on progress of works

- Proposed Works for Pier and Condition:

JM provided an update regarding the scheduled resurfacing works for the harbour area, which are set to commence in July. JM shared boundaries responsibilities around the Old Harbour, all discussed the deteriorated condition of the Old Harbour, emphasizing that it has been neglected for years and requires immediate attention and ongoing safety concerns needed addressing as matter of priority. JM recommended contact Shetland Amenity Trust for assistance. JL asked clerk to invite Hazel Sutherland to next meeting. The WCC explored various approaches to address the neglect of Old Harbour, including engaging local schools to raise awareness about potential hazards and considering the use of social media.

Action: Clerk to follow up and organise meeting

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- **Abandoned Cars:**

JM informed all that SIC were not able to remove abandoned cars. All discussed alternatives

Action: Ongoing

- **Pier Cleaning Programme:**

JM provided an update that cleaning had commenced but has been postponed for 4 weeks. JM will provide a further update in due course. JM also informed everyone that appropriate notifications will be issued for the removal of any cars or objects that may obstruct the cleaning progress.

Action: Ongoing

Parking Improvements:

RTH provided an update and informed everyone that discussions are ongoing with SIC regarding improvements for the next dry dock. All noted that there is still a need for a ferry service; however, with the increase in vehicles, adequate parking at both Laxo and Vidlin is imperative, and necessary changes needed be made.

Action: RTH to follow up

- **CCTV Installation:**

JM informed WCC that this is being implemented but was not able to share date.

Action: Clerk to follow up.

- **Grass Cutting**

JL raised the possibility of including the surrounding area of the waiting room in the regular grass-cutting schedule when other locations within the harbour are maintained. This area has been kept tidy in the past using WCC's own funding, ensuring it remained presentable for visitors and residents alike. WCC highlighted the importance of maintaining this area consistently, as it significantly enhances the harbour's appeal and accessibility for both tourists and locals. Ensuring that the surroundings of the waiting room are incorporated into the regular grass-cutting schedule would also create a welcoming environment for visitors arriving by ferry or exploring the harbour. Regular maintenance in this area would foster a sense of pride among local residents. RTH and JM agreed to investigate the feasibility of including the area in the schedule and to report back with their findings.

Action: Clerk to follow up

3. Waiting Room and Toilets

RTH provided an update on the proposed improvements to the waiting room facilities, noting that flattening the area and introducing new infrastructure may not be feasible due to current financial constraints. As an alternative, RTH suggested utilizing modular units similar to the existing temporary disabled toilets, which could serve as a cost-effective and practical solution for the immediate needs of the community. WCC emphasized the importance of ensuring that accessible and adequate facilities are provided to meet the requirements of all residents and visitors. All agreed to explore options that ensure the area remains functional and accessible.

Actions: RTH to look into the project further as revert back.

4. Fire Hydrant at New Park

Clerk asked to follow up.

5. FERRIES

- **Computer Issues with Booking System**

RTH provided an update indicating that the system is still under review, and no implementation dates have been announced at this time.

Actions: RTH to provide updates on progress

Parking Issues During Dry Dock Period

RTH provided WCC with an update concerning ongoing concerns about parking issues, particularly during dry dock periods. The challenges at Vidlin, including the single-track road that must accommodate both incoming and outgoing ferry traffic simultaneously, were highlighted as a significant issue requiring attention and resolution. WCC reiterated the importance of improving accessibility and traffic flow at Vidlin to prevent congestion and ensure

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safety for all users. To address these issues, WCC proposed the potential use of the local minibus, which SIC could hire out during dry dock periods. This arrangement could serve as a practical solution for ferry users by facilitating transportation between Vidlin and Laxo terminals during these times. RTH would be exploring them, in coordination with these suggestions with SIC.

Actions: RTH to coordinate with SIC to review and propose bus/parking solutions for future dry dock periods.

- **Wi-Fi Connectivity at Terminals**

RTH informed WCC that he had received confirmation that fibre infrastructure is in place at both Laxo and Vidlin. He is currently investigating the ongoing issues further. All parties reiterated that inadequate connectivity at both piers poses a risk to local residents, this matter be escalated to the appropriate parties to ensure a more effective solution.

Actions: RTH to escalate the issue of Wi-Fi connectivity further and revert back.

6. POLICE MATTERS

No update

ACTION: No action

7. ROADS, FENCE AT DUMP, STREETLIGHTS CYCLE & WALKING PATHS

No updates was shared and JL asked clerk to follow up

ACTION: Clerk to follow up

8. Whalsay Tunnel Action Group

RTH shared proposal to acquire another ferry as interim whilst Tunnel discussion and funding are being sourced.

ACTIONS: Ongoing

9. DENTIST

No update and all discussed the need to continue with request

ACTIONS: Clerk to follow up

10. MAP/NEWSLETTER

The WCC reviewed the project and has requested that additional community engagement be conducted to gather more information and photographs.

ACTION Clerk tasked with actions

11. SKIPS

JL asked clerk to gather costs for June/July Saturday skip hire and revert back

ACTIONS: Clerk to follow up

12. BUS SHELTER

No update, Clerk to follow up

ACTIONS: Clerk to follow up

13. PARTICIPATORY BUDGET EVENT

All discussed the event and noted the remarkable community turn out and involvement. Clerk confirmed that all groups that submitted applications received funding.

14. HARSDALE RENOVATION

Clerk shared information with WCC regarding Harsdale renovation. WCC reviewed and requested more details about the works. RTH offered support to assist with inquiries.

ACTIONS: Clerk asked to follow up

15. FERRY ALLOCATION

WCC inquired about the possibility of providing additional community ferries. RTH will investigate this request and respond accordingly. WCC also approved the new allocations for weddings.

ACTIONS: Clerk asked to follow up

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16. VOAR REDD UP

WP and MH approved funding request

ACTION: Clerk to settle

17. JL Thanked all for attending and hopes that issues discussed can be raised with appropriate parties to achieve a more effective and efficient outcomes.

Meeting closed at 8.46 pm Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 2nd September 2025 @ 7pm, at Heritage Centre for locals and Teams for others considering joining.