

Lerwick Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2nd June 2025
AT TOWN HALL/MS TEAMS AT 6.00PM

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Present

Jim Anderson (Chair)
Brian Harris
Jonathan Duncan
Averil Simpson
James Paton
Stewart Hay
Andy Carter
Karen Fraser
Jonathon Williamson

In attendance

Dawn Ratter (Clerk)
Steve Mathison
*Shetland Times
*Shetland News
Alan Street

Apologies

Amanda Hawick
Robert Leask
Michael Duncan
Cllr Cecil Smith
Cllr John Fraser

Ex-Officio

Cllr Dennis Leask
Cllr Stephen Leask
Cllr Arwed Wenger
Cllr Gary Robinson

* On-line Via MS Teams

3. Declarations of Interest

10 – Cllr A Wenger

4. Minutes from meeting held for approval

4.1 Monday 5th May 2025

Approved by: KF

Seconded by: AS

Omission from Previous Minutes

Cllr A. Wenger raised concerns regarding drainage issues at the back of Clickimin Loch.

5. Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

Attendee: Mr Alan Street, Station Commander, Lerwick Community Fire Station.

Mr Alan Street introduced himself as the Station Commander at Lerwick Fire Station. He works alongside Tony McLaughlin, who also covers Shetland, and Matt Mason, the Shetland Group Commander. Mr Street took up his post in January 2025 and is

responsible for Lerwick Fire Station and the South Mainland area. He attended the meeting to introduce himself to the Community Council, provide an update on his role, and establish contact with members.

Mr Street is currently based in Lerwick. He reported that recent recruitment campaigns have been very successful. Lerwick is staffed by professional firefighters who serve on a part-time, on-call basis. Recruitment remains a key challenge, particularly in maintaining a steady intake of new personnel and guiding them through the three-year training process. However, recent recruitment in Lerwick has gone well, and current numbers are strong.

He also highlighted ongoing community safety initiatives, including home fire safety visits. A new system has been introduced to encourage more online engagement. Peter Stevenson, the Community Safety Engagement Officer, is available to provide advice and support.

The service is also working in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service to deliver CPR training to various community groups.

Mr Street noted that the fire station is available as a community space and encouraged any groups in need of a venue to get in touch.

JW asked about firefighter numbers in Lerwick. Mr Street confirmed there are currently around 18 firefighters on rotation. The required number varies depending on contract types, with a maximum of 24 under a Level 5 contract. Vacancies remain, and Mr Street encouraged anyone interested in joining to get in touch. The recruitment process includes suitability interviews and participation in a drill night (PREP). Information is available online via the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service recruitment portal or directly from Lerwick Fire Station.

KF requested more information on home fire safety visits. Mr Street explained that these are risk assessments tailored to the residents of each property. They include checks on smoke detectors to ensure compliance with legislation and a lifestyle questionnaire to provide personalised advice. The service can also signpost individuals to other relevant organisations.

JA asked how to arrange a home visit. Mr Street advised that bookings can be made via the website or by using QR code cards available at the fire station.

SH asked if members of the public can visit the station to request a home visit. Mr. Street said online requests are preferred, as the station is not always staffed. BH raised concerns about fire access in the narrow lanes of Lerwick. Mr Street acknowledged the challenge and explained that crews use intermediate pumps to

reach difficult areas. The Lerwick team is experienced and familiar with local access issues.

JA asked if Peter Stevenson covers all of Shetland. Mr Street confirmed that he does.

BH asked whether incident numbers in Lerwick differ significantly from other areas. Mr Street noted that while comparisons between rural communities are possible, comparing Lerwick to a city like Glasgow is less meaningful due to population differences. However, current trends do not show any significant increases in incidents.

KF enquired about emergency planning for major incidents, such as fires at the oil tanks or the planned battery storage facility at Gremista. Mr Street explained that planning is handled by the Fire Safety Enforcement department. Once a facility is established, the department liaises with the organisation to assess risks and organise exercises. For example, a multi-agency exercise was held at Sullom Voe in May, and another is planned with HIAL at Sumburgh Airport. These exercises test inter-agency coordination and response, followed by debriefs to identify improvements.

AC asked about recruitment challenges in the outer islands. Mr Street acknowledged the difficulty and explained that isolated location plans are in place. In the event of an incident in an uncovered area, Operations Control in Dundee implements a response plan, which may involve mobilising ferries and resources from other locations.

JA thanked Mr Street for attending and providing a comprehensive and informative update. The Council appreciated the opportunity to engage in discussion and learn more about the work of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in Shetland.

6. Actions from last meeting

6.1 Action tracker spreadsheet

4G Signal

CLlr G Robinson had noticed that other places have advertised EE masts will be upgraded and access will be open to all 4 major network providers.

Wall Armouring

JP has been in contact with Nature Scot to try and obtain some information. A response from Nature Scot has confirmed that as otters have been sighted, an assessment will need to be carried out before the wall armouring can be removed.

Dust Suppression at Staney Hill

CLlr D. Leask informed members that contractors have introduced new equipment on site aimed at improving dust suppression, which is expected to have a positive impact.

JD reported that residents in Norstane have raised concerns, supported by video and photographic evidence. Although rock crushing activities have ceased, there are currently no dust suppression measures in place for the roads. Dust continues to blow into nearby homes due to trucks operating in dry conditions.

A representative from Hjaltland previously attended a meeting and advised that the majority of rock breaking would be completed by April. However, this activity is still ongoing.

JP shared that he was invited to meet with residents at Voderview, where he personally observed the dust issues. One resident presented the original planning application, which includes provisions for dust suppression. JP noted that the absence of these measures constitutes a breach of the agreed plan.

Planning enforcement has visited the site in relation to the crushing activities, which have now ceased. However, rock breaking continues, and recent dry weather has exacerbated the dust problem. The majority of the dust appears to be generated by truck movements on the road.

→ ACTION: Request an update from Hjaltland regarding current and future dust suppression measures.

7. Correspondence/ Discussion Points

7.1 SEPA consultation on a proposed Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme (EPAS)
Noted.

7.2 Greenfield Place/Water Lane Car Park

A walk-through was scheduled for Saturday, 24th May, with all LCC members and North Lerwick Councillors invited. JA and JP confirmed their availability; however, JP felt it was not worthwhile proceeding with only two attendees, resulting in the cancellation of the walk-through. JP suggested rescheduling for a future date.

KF noted that she regularly walks through Water Lane and acknowledged that while improvements could be made, it is challenging to determine specific priorities.

JP expressed disappointment at the lack of engagement from both members and Council officials, highlighting that no response had been received from the Chief Executive. He reiterated his concerns regarding the overall condition of the Greenfield Place and Water Lane estate.

JD reported that the jagged-edge railing had been addressed by the Roads department. JP confirmed the railing had been cut down but pointed out it had not been properly sealed off.

JA added that SIC had responded to several previously raised concerns, including the scarification of slippery flags in Water Lane, and Slurry Sealing of the road at the top of Water Lane.

JP maintained that many issues remain unresolved and that the area continues to pose safety risks. He also noted that several copings on the car park wall are still missing. It was noted that these had been removed for health and safety reasons as they were loose.

Cllr D. Leask advised that he had followed up on these matters two years ago when they were first raised. He explained that the upper car park falls under the Housing budget, which currently has no allocated funds for this area. He added that the service has higher priority projects to address at present.

→ ACTION: Follow up with Chief Executive for a response.

7.3 Burgh Road Parking

LCC received an email from a concerned resident regarding parking along Burgh Road. The road is consistently lined with parked vehicles from end to end, leaving no safe passing places along a significant stretch.

An additional concern was raised about caravans and vans parking on King Hakkon Street, which is causing visibility and access issues for other road users.

AS highlighted safety concerns for children crossing the road on their way to school, noting that many vehicles are parking on double yellow lines.

AC suggested that efforts be made to reinstate the existing double yellow lines, as the paint has faded and worn away over time.

Cllr G. Robinson proposed that double yellow lines be added at the entrance gate to Gilbertson Park, which could serve as a passing point to ease congestion.

All members agreed that the road is heavily congested and supported the suggestion to request a safety audit of the area.

→ ACTION: Write to Roads (Colin Gair) with concerns and ask for a Safety Audit to be carried out.

7.4 Tingwall Agricultural Museum

LCC provided a letter of support to Tingwall Agricultural Museum with a suggestion that they could apply to SCBF or Shetland Amenity Trust for funding.

8. Association of Community Councils

8.1 Meeting papers for Tuesday 10th June 2025 Noted.

9. Finance

9.1 Financial Update
Noted.

9.2 SCBF – CGS Annual Review Survey
Response submitted.

10. Planning (all plans can be viewed at: <https://pa.shetland.gov.uk/online-applications/>)

10.1 Local Place Plans
No update.

10.2 **To demolish existing extension and build new extension on the same footprint. Scarfataing, 12B Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0AN**
Ref. No: 2025/105/LBC | Received: Thu 24 Apr 2025 | Validated: Mon 19 May 2025 |
Status: Pending Consideration
No Comments.

10.3 **To demolish and rebuild existing extension on west elevation. Scarfataing, 12B Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0AN**
Ref. No: 2025/132/PPF | Received: Mon 19 May 2025 | Validated: Mon 19 May 2025 |
Status: Pending Consideration
No Comments.

There was a discussion on why the planning application was advertised in the Edinburgh Gazette. It is a listed building within a conservation area.

11. AOB

Blocked Drains

SM raised concerns about blocked drains affecting a premises along Commercial Street. Despite contacting Scottish Water, no resolution has been achieved. Several companies have been engaged to investigate the issue using high-pressure jetting equipment, reaching up to 20m beyond the affected properties, but the blockage remains unidentified.

SM further report that Scottish Water has acknowledged they do not possess accurate maps of the drain junctions in the area, which is complicating efforts to locate and resolve the issue.

JA declared an interest in this item but also advised that detailed drawings of the services in the area had been supplied to the property.

St Olaf Hall Pavement

BH raised concerns regarding the pavement at the north side of St Olaf Hall. The pavement is between the road and the car park, meaning cars are required to driver over the pavement to access the carpark. The pavement is in a dreadful state, very uneven. It was not designed to have cards driving over it. It should have been designed and constructed for parking, if that was the use of the area.

→ ACTION: JD will speak to Barrie Scobie.

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The next meeting will be held on Monday 7th July 2025.

APPROVED