

Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council

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Minutes of a meeting of Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 8 September 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: J Priest
Mrs J Fraser
J D Garrick
Ex Officio: Cllr L Peterson
Cllr M Robinson
By invitation: Mr Tony McNaughton, Fire & Rescue Service
In attendance: Mrs L Fraser, Clerk

Mr J Priest presiding

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Deyell, Mrs L Johnson, Mr G Morrison and Mrs R Fraser, Community Involvement & Development Worker.

MINUTES & REPORT: The minutes and report of the meeting held on 14 July 2025, having been circulated, were taken as read and were approved. Moved by Mr J D Garrick, seconded by Mrs J Fraser.

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE: The Chairman welcomed Mr Tony McLaughlin, one of the two Station Commanders at Lerwick Fire Station.

Mr McLaughlin thanked the Community Council for the invitation. He said he had started his job in Lerwick more than a year ago and enjoys living in Shetland. He comes from a rural area in Scotland and feels it is important to get out into communities to foster relationships and see how they work. There are 14 Fire Stations throughout Shetland. At present, the Fetlar station is dormant, but it is hoped that a decision will be made following the public consultation period and is expected to be sometime in December 2025. They have comprehensive emergency response plans in place and will continue to educate the community on safety measures that reduce the risk of fires at home and ensure community safety. He also explained that they have had no funding for capital projects for an estimated five-year period.

The Chairman inquired about the current provision on the west side and was informed that Walls Fire Station is presently under review and in a planning stage, with the objective of either upgrading the existing welfare facilities or exploring alternative measures within the area. During this period, crews are training at Bixter Fire Station, with alternative arrangements in place for use at Brae or Lerwick in case of a fire or incident requiring decontamination.

Mr J D Garrick inquired whether they have enough volunteers, and Mr McLaughlin said that the most recent recruitment has been more successful and that he and the team try to

encourage people to recognise the opportunities that exist and are available to anyone wishing to join the SFRS family as a firefighter.

Cllr L Peterson said that it is a big concern in rural communities, especially the islands, such as Papa Stour, and that perhaps some hoses could be supplied.

Mr McLaughlan agreed that equipment can be useful in these areas; however, it is crucial that they prioritise prevention measures and provide education on home fire safety first. Any personnel or members of the public authorised to use such equipment need to be trained in its operation and should only operate it if qualified.

The Chairman thanked Mr McLaughlan for attending our meeting and for providing the interesting information. Mr McLaughlan said that they are trying their best and would continue to do so. He then left.

BUSINESS ARISING: Community Council Scheme of Establishment: The copies signed last meeting are now superseded by a document received from Ms Anne Cogle at Admin. It will be considered later in the meeting.

Road Matters: Skeld Brig: No further information received.

Extra bus shelter near Chapelside, Reawick: Still no reply.

Children at Play sign at Skeld: Mrs J Fraser will attend to this.

Closure of road at Garderhouse: Unfortunately the contractor has not made as much progress as anticipated as they have had to instal gabion baskets. This has led to a three week extension to the road closure being applied which will mean that the closure will be extended to 17th October.

Funding: Funding details have been received from Mr M Duncan and circulated to the members.

R100 Broadband Evaluation: Ducting ongoing.

Viking Community Fund: A message was received from Ms Eleanor Gear, Fund Manager, SCBF, saying they have been reviewing the Viking Community Fund over the summer. She attached the document summarising the review and changes to the Strategic Fund and Community Grant Scheme. She offers Community Councillors and Clerks the opportunity to attend a Zoom session on Monday 22 September to ask any questions they may have about SCBF and the Viking Community Fund.

Community Grant Scheme (CGS) Fund: A message was received from SCBF giving details of the Projects supported during 2024/2025. It also details the amounts in unspent funds from 2024/2025 funds and the amount received for 2025/2026.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME OF ARRANGEMENTS: A message was received from Ms Anne Cogle, Team Leader, Administration, attaching the Community Council Scheme of Arrangements adopted by the Council in March. It includes 6 Schedules and she requests that it be adopted at our meeting and signed by the Chair before being returned to her for their records. Following some discussion, the Chairman signed it and it will be returned to her.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS: Further communication was received from Ms Anne Cogle regarding the upcoming Community Council elections. A publicity campaign is being held and she enclosed some posters for display. Nomination papers will be accepted from 12 September until 16 October with the closing date for ballot papers being Thursday 20 November and the result on Friday 21 November.

SHETLAND'S FIRST FUTURE ENERGY PROJECTS ENGAGEMENT SESSION: The first ever collaborative Future Energy Projects Engagement Session will be held in Mareel on 9 September and anyone interested can drop in between 3pm and 7pm.

STOURA PUBIC EXHIBITION: An invitation was received to a Public Exhibition focused on the onshore elements associated with the Stoura Offshore Wind Farm. It will be held in the Voe Hall on Thursday 11 September between 2 and 7pm.

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT SHETLAND ISLANDS CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU: The 2024-2025 Annual Report was received from Shetland Islands Citizens Advice Bureau. It was agreed that the Bureau is very helpful to many members of the public.

DA VOAR REDD UP: The 2025 Voar Redd Up participation information for our area was received from Ms Shona Fullerton at Shetland Amenity Trust.

CYBERBYTE: Information was received from Sgt A Barry at Lerwick Police Station regarding cyber criminals. He asks that we circulate it in our area in the hope that it can prevent at least one fraud.

DEFIBRILLATOR ISSUES IN SHETLAND: A message was received from Mr Tom Morton, Grampian Training Services, who is looking to improve safety across Scotland. This information will be passed on to the people in this area who are involved with the defibrillators.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLANS: Mrs R Fraser, SIC Community Involvement & Development Officer is to attend our October meeting to discuss Community Resilience Plans.

INFORMATION: Several emails sharing reminders and information with the Community Council were received and noted.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting, which is scheduled for 13 October, will be held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 6 October 2025 at 7.30pm to avoid the October School holidays as some members will not be available at that time.