

Lerwick Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1st September 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)
Shayne McLeod (Vice Chair)
Brian Harris
Andy Carter
Averil Simpson
Stewart Hay
Karen Fraser
Diana Winfield
Scott Nicolson

In attendance

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

Apologies

Jonathan Duncan
Amanda Hawick
Michael Duncan
Emma Williamson
Cllr Cecil Smith

Ex-Officio

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

* On-line Via MS Teams

3. Declarations of Interest

10 – Cllr A Wenger
11.9 – Cllr G Robinson

4. Minutes from meeting held for approval

4.1 Monday 7th July 2025

Approved by: AS

Seconded by: KF

5. Actions from last meeting

5.1 Action tracker spreadsheet

5.2 Railings in Lerwick Lanes update

Noted.

6. Correspondence/ Discussion Points

6.1 Stoura Public Exhibition – Thursday 11th September 2025, 2 – 7pm

Noted.

6.2 Shetland’s First Future Energy Projects Engagement Session – Tuesday 9th September 2025, 3-7pm

Noted.

6.3 Scottish Government Consultation: Draft Marine and Coastal Restoration Plan

Noted.

6.4 Da Voar Redd Up 2025

Members noted that the Skipidock area appeared noticeably tidier during this year’s Redd Up compared to its condition when the same area was cleared two years ago.

6.5 LCC 2026 Meeting Dates

Agreed.

→ ACTION: Clerk to check dates and make bookings with the Town Hall.

7. Lerwick CC Scheme of Arrangements

Proposed: AS

Approved: SH

8. Community Council Elections 2025

Nominations open on Friday 12th September and close at 4.00pm on Thursday 16th October.

All existing Community Council members will continue until midnight on Wednesday 19th November 2025.

→ ACTION: Clerk to share promotional materials with KF for posting on the LCC Facebook page and bring printed copies of the Nomination Form to the October meeting.

9. Disabled Parking

9.1 25 Sandveien

No objections.

10. Finance

10.1 Financial Update

Members reviewed the funds allocated for the installation of a community bench. SSE had contacted Community Councils in December 2023 to offer donated benches. As part of a community service initiative, SSE were working with individuals undertaking community service, providing them with meaningful tasks such as constructing benches for each Community Council area.

The bench for LCC is to be sited on the Sea Road, just past the junction leading up between the new Eric Gray and Edward Thomason House.

→ ACTION: Clerk to contact Criminal Justice for an update on installation.

AC queried whether a budget exists for maintaining community benches. Cllr G Robinson responded that responsibility would depend on the origin of the bench – if provided by the Community Council, maintenance falls to the Community Council; if installed by SIC, then SIC would be responsible.

JA noted that the Bridges Project had previously painted and restored several community benches prior to the COVID pandemic.

AC reported that the bench at the Knab is currently in need of repair.

→ ACTION: Clerk to contact Magnus Malcolmson to enquire about responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the bench.

A discussion was held regarding the use of available funds, including the possibility of running the Loot for Lerwick participatory budgeting event again.

JA invited members to share their thoughts. Cllr S Leask felt the previous event had been very successful, with a great atmosphere. Cllr J Fraser acknowledged the value of the event, noting it provided a platform for organisations to showcase their work, collaborate, and share best practices. However, he raised concerns about a fundamental flaw in participatory budgeting – groups that are successful in securing funding tend to be those who are able to mobilise large numbers of supporters, while other equally deserving groups may struggle to gain visibility and votes.

JA agreed, noting that sports groups often have strong support networks, but highlighted that many attendees do engage with a variety of groups during the event, which can help raise awareness and attract additional votes.

SH raised the issue of deteriorating benches and suggested that future funding could be directed toward enhancing public spaces in Lerwick – such as improving pathways, seating and greening – to make the town more visitor-friendly. He proposed inviting individuals, groups and organisations to submit ideas for community improvements, with funding allocated to support these initiatives.

JA noted a challenge from previous events – some proposals came from individuals or informal groups that did not yet exist, making it difficult to allocate funding. SH agreed with Cllr J Fraser's concerns and emphasised that while there are many ideas for improving Lerwick, identifying people or groups to act on them remains a challenge. He also noted that previous systems tended to favour established groups involved in sports or cultural activities.

DW raised concerns about equality and inclusivity in funding allocation. She suggested setting aside a portion of the budget specifically for equality-focused initiatives, to ensure smaller or less mobilised groups are not excluded. She noted that younger groups with large networks often dominate voting and asked whether there could be a mechanism to support smaller groups without requiring a second vote.

→ ACTION: Clerk to add an item to the October agenda to discuss the use of available funding, the potential for a Loot for Lerwick event.

10.2 Viking Community Fund – Annual Review

An opportunity is available for Community Councils and Clerks to attend the Viking Community Fund Annual Review event on Monday 22nd September.

→ ACTION: Clerk to circulate invite to all members and ask for expressions of interest.

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

11.1 Local Place Plans

A Shetland Local Place Plan (LPP) Autumn workshop is scheduled for Tuesday 23rd September, from 10am to 4pm at Islesburgh Community Centre. The event will be hosted by Peter Mogridge, Diane Cassidy and David Wood.

Cllr D Leask asked whether LCC had received the Local Place Plan presentation from SIC. He emphasised the importance of being involved in the LPP process, as these plans will be integral to future planning and funding applications.

JA referred to a previous event at Islesburgh Community Centre, which included a review of the conservation area. He noted that SIC has appointed full-time planning officers for a two-year period, although their remit is currently limited to specific lanes. In the meantime, there is an expectation for community members – without formal planning training – to develop a comprehensive LPP for the whole of Lerwick. JA expressed willingness to contribute but stated he does not have the capacity to lead the process. He cited Scalloway as an example, where a similar plan was developed with the support of a full-time planning officer over a period of 12 to 18 months.

It was confirmed that a meeting SIC had taken place.

DW suggested LCC sign up to Community Map Scotland and Place Link software, noting that registration requires being a recognised community organisation. This will be explored further.

11.2 Proposed Telecommunications Installation at (102825) South Lochside, Sound, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0RA. E: 446745, N: 1140839.

The previously proposed site at the Police Station has been deemed unsuitable.

SN noted that there are ongoing signal issues along Lochside, which this installation aims to address.

JA raised a concern regarding the height of the proposed mast and possible implications for the emergency helicopter, as the aircraft often approaches from that direction. The proposed mast will be 20 metres in height.

It was agreed that the Coastguard should be consulted to ensure they are satisfied with the proposed height of the mast, particularly in relation to helicopter access. The Coastguard will be contacted as a statutory consultee.

11.3 Proposed Removal of Public Payphone

There were no objections to the proposed removal of the payphone at Cairnfield Road, Lerwick. Members expressed interest in obtaining similar usage statistics for all payphones situated within Lerwick.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to BT to request statistics.

11.4 Replacement of all single glazed sash and case windows with slimline double-glazed sash and case windows and replacement of all doors to Annsbrae House and outbuilding.

Annsbrae House, Annsbrae Place, Lerwick, Shetland

Ref. No: [2025/174/LBC](#) | Received: Mon 30 Jun 2025 | Validated: Thu 03 Jul 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.5 Create new door opening in east elevation to form fire escape and construct internal decking and ramp to improve accessibility.

Shetland Museum and Archives, Freefield Road, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0WP

Ref. No: [2025/177/LBC](#) | Received: Thu 01 Jul 2025 | Validated: Fri 04 Jul 2025 |

Status: Grant Subject to Conditions

[No comments.](#)

11.6 One white internally illuminated sign by LEDs measuring 299mm x 599mm by face panel in powder coated PM2418 c Green 3no 5mm Opal acrylic Specsavers logo in green with 20 mm white 'Specsavers' lettering pushed through; hung by steel angles.

108 Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0EX

Ref. No: [2025/179/ADV](#) | Received: Wed 02 Jul 2025 | Validated: Tue 29 July 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.7 Installation of 150mm diameter stainless steel exhaust on west elevation of existing building.

BT Telephone Exchange, Greenfield Place, Lerwick, Shetland

Ref. No: [2025/181/PPF](#) | Received: Fri 04 Jul 2025 | Validated: Wed 30 Jul 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.8 Replacement of existing roof including slates, installation of 3 no. rooflights and replacement rainwater goods (Retrospective)

1 Aitkens Place, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 OJB

Ref. No: [2025/191/LBC](#) | Received: Wed 16 Jul 2025 | Validated: Wed 13 Aug 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.9 Partial replacement cladding to various elevations requiring remedial repairs: recladding and window replacement are proposed. The external blockwork needs to be removed and replaced with a new cladding system in localised areas.

Gilbert Bain Hospital, South Road, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 OTB

Ref. No: [2025/197/PPF](#) | Received: Thu 31 Jul 2025 | Validated: Mon 04 Aug 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.10 Erection of a dormer extension and decking.

10 upper Baila, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 OSF

Ref. No: [2025/203/PPF](#) | Received: Mon 04 Aug 2025 | Validated: Fri 22 Aug 2025 |

Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

11.11 Demolition of roof and first floor of existing extension and construction of new mono-pitch roof to extension. Repair and reinstatement of existing damaged blockwork and external finishes.

81 Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 OAD

Ref. No: [2025/209/LBC](#) & [2025/210/PPF](#) | Received: Wed 13 Aug 2025 | Validated: Fri

22 Aug 2025 | Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

12. AOB

Public Consultation Northern Isles Ferry Services Contract

[Northern Isles Ferry Services 4 contract public consultation | Transport Scotland](#)

Members discussed the ongoing public consultation on the Northern Isles Ferry Services 4 Contract, led by Transport Scotland. It was noted that there would be a consultation event held in Lerwick on 18th September. JA asked whether Lerwick Community Council should submit a collective response.

The discussion highlighted several key concerns. Members noted that bookings for sailings up to 31st December 2026 had opened that day, with a noticeable price increase. There was concern that the current pricing model, particularly during peak periods, penalises local users. Suggestions were made for a more dynamic pricing structure or discounted fare for residents. Comparisons were drawn with the Western Isles, where no peak fares are applied, and with Scotland's rail services, which have recently removed peak pricing. Members stressed that ferry services are a lifeline for islands communities and should be treated with parity and fairness.

Concerns were also raised about capacity issues, with members noting that while it is often difficult to secure a space for a car on passenger ferries, freight vessels are sometimes sailing with significant unused capacity. JA commented that the general public often feels like they are at the bottom of the priority chain, which is frustrating. AC added that although freight vessels have limited passenger cabins, there is potential for better utilisation of these services.

The group acknowledged the excellent service provided by staff both onboard and at the ports in Shetland and Aberdeen. However, they felt that the operational structure behind the service is overly bureaucratic, making it difficult for users to influence outcomes. Cllr G Robinson raised the issue of fairness in transport policy, noting that while buses are free for young and older people, ferry pricing strategies do not reflect the same level of equity. Cllr S Leask echoed this, stating that current policies and principles seem to stop at the water's edge, which undermines the concept of equal access to public transport.

Members also discussed the potential for roll-on/roll-off (RoRo) vessels to access alternative harbour areas, which could help alleviate capacity issues. It was noted that changes in cargo vessel operations may also impact capacity in the future.

It was agreed that a letter should be drafted and submitted to Transport Scotland, focusing on the issue of peak season fares and advocating for a fairer, more accessible pricing structure for islands residents.

Closing date for responses is 13th October 2025.

Broken Railings

It was reported that the railing at the bottom of Charlotte Street, running up the lane, is broken and bent.

The railing at the bottom of Harbour Street, on Commercial Street, was also noted. It was confirmed that the Roads department are already aware of this issue and are addressing it. An update on the progress of this repair was requested.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to Roads.

13. Date of Next Meeting

13.1 The next meeting will be held on Monday 6th October 2025.