

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2026 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.00PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT Mrs M Davis Mr C Clark Mr E Semple
 Mrs D Smith

EX OFFICIO

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs K Geddes, clerk Alan Street, Station Ian Taylor, SIC
 Mrs A Arnett (from Commander, Lerwick Resilience Advisor
 19:30) Community Fire (until 19:25)
 Station (until 19:45)

CHAIRPERSON Mrs P Christie

APOLOGIES Cllr B Peterson Mr M Duncan Miss K MacKay
 Ms M Gray Mr L Summers Cllr R McGregor

NOT PRESENT Cllr A Armitage Cllr A Duncan

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs D Smith declared an interest in 11b – Correspondence – Closure of SRT Scalloway Pool as she is an employee of SRT. Mrs K Geddes declared an interest in the same item as her husband is also an SRT employee.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6TH JANUARY 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th January were approved on the motion of Mrs D Smith and seconded by Mrs M Davis.

1. MATTERS ARISING

Planned Power Outage in Quarff

Following January’s meeting the clerk was instructed to write with some urgency to SSE asking why a two-day planned power outage had not been cancelled. There was still a lot of snow in the area with many people housebound due to blocked or dangerous roads, and the Cunningsburgh School was also shut. The email had a positive effect and the power outage was cancelled at the last minute.

SIC Resilience Advisor Ian Taylor said he agreed with the decision, and as part of his role had also contacted the local SSE management to express his concern about the plan to continue with the power outage even with the weather causing so many problems.

Members were delighted that the outage was postponed and thanked everyone involved in speaking to SSE.

2. POLICE REPORT

There was no police report available and PS Alan Patrick had been in touch to say that due to staff shortages no officers would be able to attend.

There were no questions for the police from members.

3. EMERGENCY PLANNING – VISIT FROM IAN TAYLOR, SIC RESILIENCE ADVISOR

Mr Taylor attended to support the Community Council in progressing a Community Resilience Plan (CRP), as requested by the SIC. He reminded members that he had previously circulated sample CRPs and apologised for having had to leave the last meeting before delivering his presentation.

He explained that while Shetland-wide emergency plans are in place, they lack detailed local input. The SIC considers Community Councils best placed to capture this, reflecting the unique risks, strengths and vulnerabilities of each area.

The Scottish Government is keen for local authorities to record information on vulnerable people, particularly those not previously identified. Mr Taylor advised that individuals already supported by services such as social work and the NHS would be considered in an emergency through existing processes. The concern is for those who manage day-to-day but may be more at risk during an incident. Members discussed how this information could be recorded sensitively and in line with GDPR, particularly where individuals may be reluctant to ask for help. Mr Taylor said the SIC ICT team have access to mapping tools to plot relevant locations where appropriate, and that AI may be utilised across the larger scale plans to better extrapolate information.

Mr Taylor outlined the roles of agencies involved in emergency planning. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the local authority has responsibility for responding to an incident. The police are usually the lead agency during the incident itself, with the local authority leading the recovery phase.

Communications resilience was highlighted as a concern, with providers only guaranteeing around 90 minutes of mobile and internet connectivity in some circumstances. Climate change, severe weather and disruption to ferry services were also discussed. Mr Taylor noted recent conversations with local shops and suppliers during the latest weather disruption to assess the impact of cancelled sailings on food supplies.

Community Councils can also encourage personal preparedness, including keeping stocks of tinned and frozen food, torches, candles and small gas stoves. The Ready Scotland website (<https://ready.scot>) was noted as a useful source of information for all levels of emergency planning.

Mr Taylor advised that developing a CRP will help identify both community strengths and gaps. Identifying gaps allows them to be addressed, and having a CRP in place strengthens applications for funding for items such as generators and Starlink satellite connections. SSEN funding is expected shortly and a CRP will be required as evidence of need. He recommended including ongoing running costs in any funding applications, noting that Walls Hall had recently been successful in doing so.

The previous chair, George Murray, had prepared a first draft of the GQC CRP. However, no responses have yet been received from local halls or the school to requests to complete their respective sections. It was agreed to email again to ask whether a Community Councillor could attend their next staff, parent council or committee meeting for approximately fifteen minutes to begin completing the document. The opportunity to identify resource gaps and access funding will be reiterated.

Mr Taylor confirmed that he is available to provide ongoing support and would be happy to review any draft documents.

ACTION: Clerk to email the school and hall committees to offer attendance at their next meeting to progress the CRP.

----- 19:25 Mr Taylor leaves -----

4. VISIT FROM ALAN STREET, STATION COMMANDER AT LERWICK COMMUNITY FIRE STATION

Mr Street, Station Commander at Lerwick Community Fire Station, attended to introduce himself and outline current developments within the fire service locally and nationally. He works alongside Tony McLaughlin, both reporting to Matt Mason, Shetland Group Commander. Mr Street took up post in January 2025 and is responsible for Lerwick Community Fire Station and the south mainland stations at Sandwick and Scalloway.

He advised that the stations are in a healthy position. A new trainee from Sandwick is currently undertaking a two-week training course at Portlethen. Overall cover across Shetland is good, although recruitment can be challenging in some areas.

Operational activity in Shetland remains low, which is positive. There has been one accidental fire in the last three quarters. While crews do occasionally deal with serious incidents, these are generally resolved quickly due to the professionalism of the teams.

----- Mrs Arnett arrives 19:30 -----

Multi-agency training exercises take place regularly, often at locations such as Tingwall and Sumburgh Airports, Sullom Voe and SaxaVord Spaceport, in partnership with police, coastguard, the Scottish Ambulance Service and the local authority. Local training also continues at station level, with Sumburgh and Sandwick crews frequently training together. Mr Street reiterated that the south mainland stations are in a strong position and benefiting from ongoing training.

He outlined potential national changes through the Service Delivery Review (SDR) Programme. Historically, stations were located according to industrial risk, particularly in cities. As industry has declined, risk profiles have changed, with increased incidents such as wildfires and flooding now influencing planning.

In Shetland, the SDR is most likely to affect Fetlar Fire Station, which has been dormant for several years due to an inability to recruit personnel who meet fitness requirements. A public consultation has taken place. However, due to the volume of responses and the proximity of the Scottish Elections, no decisions will be announced for some time.

Prevention now forms a significant part of the fire service role. A home fire safety visit programme is available, with residents completing an online questionnaire. Those assessed as high risk receive a home visit from Peter Stevenson, Community Safety Advisor. Those assessed as low or medium risk receive an information pack. Anyone without internet access can contact Lerwick Fire Station for assistance in completing the questionnaire. Mr Street advised that 24 fire safety visits were completed in the last quarter. The questionnaire can be accessed here: [Home fire safety visits | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#)

The offer of CPR training remains open. Mr Street advised this would be best held at Lerwick Fire Station to allow support from both fire and ambulance personnel. Sessions could be held in the afternoon or evening. It was agreed to raise this with the school and hall committees during upcoming visits in relation to the Community Resilience Plans to see if any of them would also like to take part.

Members thanked Mr Street for attending and advised they would be in touch once numbers were confirmed.

ACTION: Gather names and numbers of participants for the CPR Training.

----- Mr Street left 19.45 -----

5. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The bank statement on February 15th read £4,359.57.

There have been no transactions outwith the normal monthly outgoings.

6. GRANT APPLICATIONS – GQC CC & SHETLAND COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND (SCBF)

There were no GQC CC grant applications, as the full grant budget has now been allocated.

There were no applications to the SCBF. Members were encouraged to remind local groups that funding remains available for our area.

Mr Semple agreed to stand as the GQC CC representative on the Shetland Community Benefit Fund, and members were all in agreement with his appointment as Director.

Members thanked Mr Clark for his time as Director and recorded their appreciation for the work he has done in the role.

ACTION: Clerk to inform SCBF of the change in director.

7. ROADS AND PATHS

East Voxter Junction

There is no update at present regarding the pothole and large puddle at this location.

Members described the situation as “terrible”. After heavy rain, the depth of the pothole is not apparent, and in snowy conditions it is completely obscured, presenting a potential hazard to road users.

ACTION: Clerk to email Roads again and Mrs Smith to speak to the neighbouring property owner who is a Roads employee and was planning to do some work to get it fixed.

More Potholes and Puddles

Members reported further potholes and puddles, this time in the junction of the Blett road, on the side road where the Nicolsons have their trucks.

ACTION: Clerk to contact SIC Roads.

Clearing of Snow on Cunningsburgh Paths

A reply to an email from a member of the public asking why the paths in Cunningsburgh have not been cleared was discussed. A Sandwick resident had also complained about the time it took the paths to be cleared in Sandwick and the reply to this complaint was also discussed. Members noted the frustration of the public but recognised that the SIC staff had got to the paths as soon as they could – they had a lot of blocked roads to clear first.

8. CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS

An email from Michael Craigie, SIC Executive Manager of Transport Planning was received on Monday:

"I have commissioned Systra, the consultant who carried out the Cunningsburgh settlement audit in 2021/22, to undertake a refresh of the audit.

"Part of that will be a community event in Cunningsburgh on 4th March, likely to be in Cunningsburgh Hall. It will be along the lines of a drop-in session over the course of the afternoon and evening and maybe a specific workshop-type session in the evening. The detail is currently being worked up with the consultant.

"We'll get clear communications out later this week or early next week so the community is aware in plenty of time."

Members were pleased to hear of progress but worried about the short notice of the date. It was agreed to collate any communications or meeting minutes pertaining to the issue and take it along to the consultation, along with the PlaceCheck information recently gathered.

The clerk is also to email anyone who has been in contact about road safety concerns in Cunningsburgh to share news of the meeting, as well as sharing information on Facebook. It was also agreed to have as many Community Councillors as possible attending the audit meetings.

ACTION: Clerk to share news of the meeting far and wide and collate information prior to the meeting.

9. GQ&C DEVELOPMENT GROUP, LOCAL PLACE PLAN AND RESILIENCE PLAN UPDATES

Local Place Plan

The comments from the PlaceCheck maps have been collated and sorted into appropriate headings. Mr Clark and Mrs Geddes are meeting with Planning Aid Scotland later this week to update them on progress and to seek help if appropriate. Everyone is encouraged to continue to promote the use of the Place Check Maps.

Consultation events for Gulberwick and Quarff are also planned after the successful one in Cunningsburgh and perhaps a visit to a school to capture the views of young people.

Development Group

The information received for the development of a Local Place Plan will also be used by the Development Group to identify projects which the community have communicated as important to them. It was agreed to have another meeting on Tuesday 24th February at 7pm at the clerk's house in Gulberwick. Getting the constitution agreed and adopted would be a priority, as would looking for some quick wins. Further community consultation events for Gulberwick and Quarff would also be looked at.

ACTION: Mr Clark to create an agenda for the meeting. Clerk to email it out with the invitation for the meeting.

Community Resilience Plans

This was discussed during Mr Ian Taylor's visit in agenda item 3.

10. UPDATES FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

Cllr McGregor indicated by email that he had no further updates, other than those already provided. No written updates were received from the other elected members.

Members expressed disappointment that some of our elected representatives are seldom seen at our meetings, while recognising that one councillor has been unwell recently. Cllr McGregor can almost always attend, and members recorded their appreciation of this.

However, as attendance at Community Council meetings is part of the role of local authority councillors, it was agreed to contact the other representatives to ask whether an arrangement could be made to ensure cover if Cllr McGregor is unable to attend.

Members appreciate and welcome the expertise, input and support of elected members in attendance, and would like to ensure that the Community Council can benefit from having at least one councillor present at each meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to contact elected SIC members.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Cunningsburgh Glass Recycling Plant

No recent update on what the SIC is planning to do to clear up the glass recycling plant in Cunningsburgh has been received. A member of the public has expressed concern about the unsightly nature of the place, and more importantly about the health and safety concern he has. Members agreed it was a 'disgrace' especially one member who had done a redd up at the site and had been shocked by the mess left there.

It was agreed to seek an update from the local authority as well as from the building firm who had expressed an interest in using some of the glass.

Members also wondered whether it could be something the Development Group could look at, perhaps purchasing the cleared-up site to use to provide units for local businesses.

ACTION: Clerk to seek an update on the site. Mr Clark to add the glass recycling plant to the list of ideas for the Development Group.

2. Closure of Scalloway Pool

The press releases from Shetland Recreational Trust announcing the planned closure of Scalloway Pool at the end of the financial year were read and noted. It was agreed to keep an eye on the situation, especially on how Scalloway Community Council were responding to it. They had yet not reached out to other Community Councils.

3. Da Voar Redd Up 2026

The redd up is planned for 18th – 24th April this year. Members noted that the Amenity Trust are seeking ideas for new redd up locations, especially for new groups. Anyone with any ideas is to email details to info@shetlandamenity.org using what3words reference points to identify locations.

Members agreed to continue to award any group who completes redd ups in our Community Council area and fills out the required survey. A £50 donation was agreed again.

ACTION: New redd up locations to be emailed to the Amenity Trust by anyone who has an idea.

4. ASCC Meeting

The next Association of Shetland Community Councils meeting is due to be held on 10th March 2026 between 6 and 8pm in the Town Hall. Mrs Christie and Mr Clark indicated they would both be happy to attend on behalf of GQC CC.

ACTION: Clerk to email attendee names to SIC Community Council Liaison Officer Mr Duncan and to send the meeting papers on to Mr Clark and Mrs Christie again.

5. Dog Fouling in Gulberwick

Environmental Health have had complaints of dog fouling in Gulberwick though no reports have come in from the public to members themselves. The increased mess may have been a result of the dog poo bins not being emptied during the prolonged period of snow in January.

Members agreed to indicate that they would support any actions which the Environmental Health team decided to undertake. They also agreed that purchasing three more dog poo bins would be a good idea. Members for each area are to think of locations for 'their' bin for the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to email Environmental Health back with confirmation of the Community Council's support for any actions they take. Community Councillors all to think of possible locations for new dog poo bins in their area. The bins must be along the route of the essay kerts and we will need to check that the bins can be added to the collection routes before proceeding further.

12. PLANNING

Neither of the two planning applications on the planning website required comment from members. They were read and noted. The first application was mistakenly written as 2026/029/PA in the agenda – the correct year has been added to the hyperlink and title below.

[2025/029/PA](#) – Prior approval for Farm-Related Building Works, demolish existing building and erect new agricultural building, Brindister Farm, Brindister, Gulberwick.

[2025/265/PPF](#) - Application for consent, agreement or approval required by planning Condition: 04 (Surface water drainage) Static Caravan. Cunningsburgh, ZE2 9HF

13. AOCB

1. Path Above Gulberwick

It appears that the path previously cleared of weeds by several Community Councillors and members of the public is now being upgraded. This will form a welcome extension to the new path recently installed along the main road.

Members were pleased to see the work underway, but again expressed frustration that no prior information had been provided. This has unfortunately happened on several occasions. Being kept informed would allow the Community Council to share positive updates with the community, rather than being unable to respond when asked about developments.

Members also reiterated their hope that other paths identified by Gulberwick residents as priorities for upgrade will be progressed in due course.

There also appears to be additional works taking place on the main road above Gulberwick, possibly relating to pipe installation. The clerk is to seek more information.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the SIC with comment and to ask for information.

2. Paperwork and Forms to SIC

Members who still have forms to return to the SIC following their appointment to the SIC are encouraged to submit them.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 17th March 2026.

Meeting Ends – 20:48

CHAIR

15. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

February 2025 – Community CPR sessions – interest from community halls being sought.
June 2025 – Plans for tidying up Enviroglass site and perhaps using some of the recycled glass in other projects – no update as yet.
June 2025 – pothole and puddle at East Voxter junction – still needs sorted.