

Lerwick Community Council

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2nd February 2026
AT ISLESBURGH COMMUNITY CENTRE, ROOM 11/MS TEAMS AT 6.00PM**

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. A particular welcome was extended to Ian Walterson and Panda Anderson, who were attending their first meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Present

Jim Anderson (Chair)
Shayne McLeod (Vice Chair)
Brian Harris
Andy Carter
Karen Fraser
Cheryl Palmer-Johnson
Brian Smith
Duncan Swainston
Talitha Lee
Ian Walterson
Panda Anderson

In attendance

Dawn Ratter (Clerk)
Steve Mathieson
Shetland Times

Apologies

Graham Nicolson
Scott Nicolson
Michael Duncan

Ex-Officio

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

Due to connection issues at Islesburgh Community Centre, the meeting was unable to access Microsoft Teams. As a result, Amanda Hawick and Cllr Cecil Smith were unable to join the meeting remotely.

3. Declarations of Interest

8 - Cllr A. Wenger

4. Minutes from meeting held for approval

4.1 Monday 12th January 2026

Approved by: AC

Seconded by: BS

JA confirmed that the Community Council is now at full membership, comprising 16 members in total:

APPROVED Minutes – subject to amendments noted at March meeting.

- 10 full members
- 6 co-opted members

5. Actions from last meeting

5.1 Action tracker spreadsheet

Railings

A reply was received from SIC Roads regarding the broken railings. They confirmed that funding has been secured to address the issue and that design options have been identified. As the railings are within the Town Centre Conservation Area, the proposed designs must be submitted to Planning for approval. Once Planning approval is obtained, SIC Roads will confirm the timescales for the works.

Pedestrian Crossing

BH requested an update on the pedestrian crossing outside Sound Service Station.

→ ACTION: Clerk to follow up with SIC Roads to obtain progress information.

Clickimin Sign

JA reported that no firm estimate has yet been provided for reinstating the Clickimin viewpoint sign. It is still to be confirmed whether the proposal will need to be resubmitted to Planning in order to install the sign in its original location using a new stand. The indicative cost is in the region of £1,500, including Perspex, and a full quotation is expected for the next meeting.

Members discussed the proposal. SM felt that the estimated figure appeared high, even allowing for a stainless-steel frame and the necessary concrete work. BS asked when the sign had last been replaced, and JA explained that it had been a new sign which was subsequently vandalised. Initially it had been defaced, and not long after it was removed entirely from the wooden stand, which was also taken. The sign is part of a wider set of information boards installed around Lerwick and Shetland. BS questioned whether the cost of reinstating the sign was justified if vandalism is likely to continue. DW queried whether the sign remained necessary. JA advised that the information boards are well used by visitors and serve as helpful viewpoints, making them valuable resources. Cllr G. Robinson agreed, noting that such signs are generally popular with visitors and that the likelihood of repeat vandalism may be low. It was noted that relocating the sign would probably require a fresh Planning application.

→ ACTION: JA to follow up with Planning and bring a full quotation to the next meeting.

Loot for Lerwick

JA proposed that the Loot for Lerwick be deferred until the end of the year. This would allow LCC to focus its time and resources on the development of a Local Place Plan, which was considered the priority for the coming months.

→ ACTION: Clerk to add to Agenda for September.

6. Correspondence/ Discussion Points

6.1 Anti-social behaviour – Bressay Ferry Terminal

Cllr S. Leask reported concerns from Bressay residents regarding anti-social behaviour in the ferry waiting room, with some users feeling uncomfortable or unsafe. He had forwarded emails and photographs to Bressay Community Council.

Cllr A. Wenger noted that feedback from residents indicated that not all individuals using the space were behaving aggressively. Members acknowledged that while some behaviour was problematic, many young people were simply seeking warmth and shelter due to the lack of suitable alternatives.

Bressay Community Council had circulated the issue more widely but were unsure how best to resolve it. Cllr G. Robinson highlighted that the key challenge was the unsupervised nature of the waiting room. He also noted that Billy Mycock, Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator, had previously been successful in addressing similar issues. The waiting room is owned by LPA and leased by SIC. CCTV was discussed, with suggestions for clearer signage and the potential review of footage to identify those responsible for any damage. Additional low-level deterrents, including background classical music, were also proposed.

Members felt the situation reflected a wider lack of safe, supervised social spaces for young people. The majority of young people were recognised as well behaved, and it was agreed that long-term, constructive solutions were needed rather than simply relocating the issue. It was suggested that senior representatives from Youth Services, OPEN and Shetland Youth Voice be invited to provide an overview of current provision and potential development of a dedicated warm youth space. TL advised that OPEN had already been engaging with young people, including AHS pupils, on this need. Further ideas discussed included indirect approaches such as informal conversations to address behaviour, and the possibility of increased police presence. Members also raised concerns about ensuring that any measures did not disadvantage regular ferry passengers.

It was agreed to invite representatives from Youth Services, Environmental Health, OPEN, Shetland Youth Voice and Bressay Community Council to a future meeting to support a broader discussion and explore sustainable solutions.

Cllr S. Leask supported DS's suggestion that clearer signage could reduce vandalism and disruptive behaviour. DS reiterated that many young people may simply be sheltering and that solutions should balance their needs with those of other users. JA noted that Billy Mycock already worked effectively and discreetly with young people, and that a wider multi-agency discussion would be beneficial.

BH emphasised that any measures taken should not restrict legitimate access for regular users and supported inviting Bressay Community Council members to participate in the discussion.

APPROVED Minutes – subject to amendments noted at March meeting.

→ ACTION: Clerk to contact the various stakeholders and invite them to a future meeting.

6.2 Road Maintenance Concerns – Pothole Reporting [DS]

Members discussed several potholes requiring repair in Lerwick. A pothole was reported at the junction of Burgh Road and St Sunniva Street, with further defects noted on Oversund Road, immediately after the speed hump near the Gospel Hall. A pothole was also reported on the sea road at Tesco.

Members additionally highlighted the need for road markings/yellow lines to be refreshed at the junction of Commercial Street and Harbour Street.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to SIC Roads.

6.3 Community Council Training & Support Needs

JA invited members to consider whether there was anything the Community Council could do collectively that would be beneficial, suggesting that a group session could be arranged if members felt this would be helpful.

As a new member, BS said he would appreciate guidance on the expected depth of discussion at meetings, including how detailed operational or topic-specific conversations should be. Members noted that the Terms of Reference and Constitution provide useful guidance, and BH commented that the introductory training he had received on joining had been very valuable.

BH suggested that further support on what constitutes a material consideration in planning would be helpful. JA added that Planning Aid Scotland had previously delivered training on this topic, covering what does and does not qualify as a material consideration.

DW revisited an earlier idea of holding meetings in different areas of Lerwick—such as Staneyhill Hall—and offering a short community engagement opportunity before each meeting. This could allow residents to raise issues informally, help the Council be more visible in the community, and offer people a chance to see what the Community Council does.

6.4 Digital Connectivity Resilience Enquiry – SIF to give evidence to Scottish Affairs Committee

This item was raised for information purposes. LCC have already made a submission to Ofcom and is currently awaiting a response.

JA noted his understanding that BT Openreach is expected to begin installation of fibre optic infrastructure in Lerwick this year, with all supporting works intended to be completed before the end of the year to enable Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) delivery.

6.5 SSEN Stakeholder Engagement Workshop

DW advised she would be happy to attend the workshop on 26th March.

APPROVED Minutes – subject to amendments noted at March meeting.

→ ACTION: Clerk to circulate the invite.

7. Finance

7.1 Financial Statement

LCC's current available funds are approximately £3,000, which is above the 10% (£2,142.70) that may be retained without justification. Any amount over this threshold will require SIC approval to be carried forward; otherwise, the excess will be deducted from the 2026/27 grant.

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

8.1 Local Place Plans

DS and TL have both registered for the upcoming Local Place Plan training session. The link will be circulated again to all members. The session will take place on Wednesday at 5.30pm, and it would be beneficial if as many members as possible are able to attend.

Diane Cassidy has offered to provide LCC with an additional session to go through the Local Place Plan process in more detail. A slot is available on Thursday at 10.30am, and JA will follow up with her regarding arrangements. Any members wishing to join the session are welcome to dial in.

A suggestion was made to hold a coffee morning in a local hall, with maps available, to gather suggestions on development, industry, and other local priorities. This would help start the dialogue and support the creation of an initial draft.

→ ACTION: Clerk to circulate LPP training link to all members.

8.2 Replacement of 4 windows with uPVC windows

8 Hangcliff Lane, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0EB

Ref. No: 2026/008/PN | Received: Thu 15 Jan 2026 | Validated: Fri 16 Jan 2026 |

Status: Pending Consideration

An objection has been submitted by a statutory consultee due to the property being located within the Lanes Conservation Area.

JA proposed that LCC submit a response in support of the application.

All members present were content with this approach and agreed unanimously.

8.3 Green Ammonia development

Tagdale, Gremista, Lerwick

Ref. No: 2026/007/SCO | Received: Wed 14 Jan 2026 | Validated: Wed 14 Jan 2026 |

Status: Pending Consideration

Members discussed the planning application for the proposed green ammonia facility at Gremista, led by Statkraft. Members noted limited understanding of the technical aspects and expressed concerns around potential environmental and safety impacts.

Key issues raised included:

- **Safety and environmental risks:**

Although considered low risk, members noted that ammonia can create harmful by-products, including chlorine under certain conditions, and could pose a significant impact to Lerwick in the event of an incident.

- **Process and by-products:**

Clarification was sought on the production process. Concerns were raised about the need for large volumes of pure water and the potential discharge of brine or other impurities into the sea.

- **Local impact vs benefit:**

Members questioned what benefits, if any, the development would bring to Shetland, given that the ammonia would be exported in liquid form and not processed locally. Several members expressed that the proposal presents “all the risk but no reward” for the community.

- **Lack of clear information:**

Both SIC Councillors and members noted significant gaps in the information provided, including long-term environmental impacts, by-products, intended end-use of the ammonia, and implications for the local area.

- **Request for expert input:**

Members expressed a desire for expert scientific explanation, and suggested Statkraft be asked to provide a representative who can address these questions directly.

Following discussion, it was agreed that LCC would submit an objection on the basis that insufficient information has been provided to allow an informed decision. LCC will reconsider its position should more comprehensive details be made available.

9. **AOB**

Red Street Lighting

DW suggested exploring the use of red-spectrum street lighting in Lerwick, particularly along the seafront, as this type of lighting is known to reduce disruption to wildlife, including seabirds and insects. JA noted that this idea could be considered as part of the Local Place Plan discussions.

Lanes – Restrictions and Future Energy Considerations

DS raised a wider point regarding development restrictions within the Lanes conservation area. He noted that while certain modern alterations, such as uPVC windows, solar panels, or electric car chargers are currently restricted, this limits residents’ ability to upgrade properties and adopt cleaner energy solutions.

DS queried whether SIC has a stated position on future clean-energy use within conservation areas, and what provisions might be made in future legislation or guidance to support sustainable development in the Lanes.

Waste, Recycling and SIC Financial Pressures

DS noted awareness of ongoing SIC financial pressures and highlighted gaps in current recycling data, expressing concerns about the effectiveness of Shetland’s existing recycling model.

APPROVED Minutes – subject to amendments noted at March meeting.

It was agreed to invite Brydon Gray, Team Leader – Waste Management to a future meeting to give a short presentation on recycling, waste collection, the incinerator and any other relevant matters.

→ ACTION: Clerk to contact Waste Management.

SIC Medium-Term Financial Plan

DS referred members to the SIC Medium-Term Financial Plan and encouraged all to read the summary and share their views. The document is available at:

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/budget-finance/council-budget>

DS expressed concern regarding the structure and clarity of SIC Strategic documents, suggesting that many do not set out clear aims or a meaningful strategy. He noted that the Medium-Term Finance Plan does not explain the purpose or intended use of SIC reserves, nor does it provide a clear indication of available resources.

DS highlighted that elements of the plan appear circular – for example, with initial points stating the need to create a plan, and later points outlining a strategy to develop a strategy. He noted that meaningful long-term planning is difficult without a clear understanding of what resources exist and how they are intended to be allocated.

It was agreed to include this as a future agenda item. JA proposed that the matter also be raised with ASCC for wider discussion.

10. Date of Next Meeting

10.1 The next meeting will be held on Monday 2nd March 2026.