

# Lerwick Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 02 MARCH 2026  
AT LERWICK TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM/MS TEAMS AT 6.00PM

## 1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees, offering a warm welcome to Sonny Thomason, Community Development Link Officer.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

### Present

Jim Anderson (Chair)  
Shayne McLeod (Vice Chair)  
Scott Nicolson  
Andy Carter  
Karen Fraser  
Amanda Hawick  
Diana Winfield  
Robert Leask  
Cheryl Palmer-Johnson  
Brian Smith  
Duncan Swainston  
Graham Nicolson  
Ian Walterson  
Talitha Lee  
Panda Anderson

### In attendance

Dawn Ratter (Clerk)  
Sonny Thomason  
Shetland Times  
Police Scotland

### Apologies

Michael Duncan  
Brian Harris  
Steve Mathieson

### Ex-Officio

Cllr John Fraser  
Cllr Dennis Leask  
Cllr Stephen Leask  
Cllr Neil Pearson  
Cllr Gary Robinson  
\*Cllr Cecil Smith  
Cllr Arwed Wenger

## 3. Declarations of Interest

Item 8 - Cllr A. Wenger and Cllr C. Smith.

## 4. Minutes from meeting held for approval

### 4.1 Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026

The following amendments were agreed:

- Item 2 – It was noted that RL had also attempted to join the February meeting online but was unable to do so due to the connection issues at Islesburgh Community Centre.

The minutes were approved subject to the above amendment.

Approved by: SM

Seconded by: AC

### **Online Access and Technical Issues – February Meeting**

Members discussed the technical difficulties experienced at the February meeting held in Islesburgh Community Centre. AH queried whether the connection had been tested in advance. JA confirmed that no issues had been anticipated as the venue is an SIC building but noted that problems with the LCC laptop may have also contributed; the laptop has since been repaired by GTS.

Members acknowledged that while meetings are primarily held in person, the option to join online remains important for those attending due to work, illness, or other circumstances. The connection problems encountered were out with the Community Council's control.

It was suggested that members intending to join remotely should notify the Clerk in advance so that contact can be attempted in the event of technical difficulties. DW suggested that any questions or comments from members planning to attend online could also be provided ahead of the meeting. JA reiterated apologies to those who were unable to join remotely last month.

### **Bressay Ferry Terminal**

IW added that Lerwick Port Authority have CCTV in the Bressay Ferry Terminal waiting area.

### **Red Street Lighting**

It was highlighted that displaying a red light towards the sea may present issues under the Navigational Act, as showing red light seaward can be illegal due to potential confusion with navigational signals.

### **Green Ammonia development**

Representatives from Statkraft will hopefully attend the June meeting.

## **5. Police Report (taken as an additional item)**

As a Police Scotland officer was present at the meeting, the Chairperson took an additional agenda item to receive a police report. This item did not appear on the published agenda.

The attending officer reported seven recorded crimes for the period. Officers have been carrying out traffic-related patrols, with most offences relating to vehicle conditions rather than driving standards. It was reported that the Black Gaet Junction continues to see a number of accidents, though the layout has improved since the island was removed.

A rise in fraud and scam calls was highlighted, particularly incidents involving callers pretending to be from a person's bank. Members were reminded that banks will never phone

to request personal details, and this message should be promoted. The number of scam calls remains high. Cllr S. Leask asked whether Police Scotland liaise with Trading Standards to share examples of fraud for public awareness; the officer encouraged continued cooperation.

Cllr J. Fraser noted that Telephone Preference Service remains available for people wishing to reduce unsolicited calls. PA also highlighted mobile phone call-screening features, which divert unknown callers to voicemail.

Questions were raised regarding monitoring of 20mph zones, particularly near the bottom of King Harald Street. The officer noted that enforcement is limited by staffing and requires drivers to be caught in the act.

BS commented on roadside speed-awareness signs, such as the smiley-face sign entering Brae, as effective deterrents. Cllr N. Pearson confirmed that similar measures have been discussed at the Safety Resilience Board and may be introduced in Lerwick.

Parking issues were also raised. CPJ noted that some offences relate to limited parking availability. DW reported that vehicles often block kerb drops outside Alex Morrisons, restricting wheelchair access.

## **6. Actions from last meeting**

### **6.1 Action tracker spreadsheet**

#### **Staney Hill Development**

AH raised ongoing concerns regarding the impact of the rock-crushing operations at the Staney Hill development. GN noted that conditions are particularly poor at this time of year, with residents in Goodlad Crescent taking photographs showing dust and debris accumulating on sheds, windows, and outdoor areas.

RL questioned whether crushed material is being taken off site. JA confirmed that planning conditions required material to be reused within the development, and a significant stockpile remains on the hill. RL commented that if material is being used elsewhere in Shetland, it should be sourced from a quarry instead.

Crushing continues six days a week, despite the previously scheduled reduction from 2<sup>nd</sup> December. IW, who lives on North Road, reported needing to wash his windows and car twice a month because of dust. He also described worsening drainage issues affecting North Road and Burgess Street. RL added that drainage concerns have existed since early in the project. JA observed that manholes were seen piled up during a recent visit, with no drainage works visibly in place.

Questions were raised about whether appropriate dust-suppression measures – including spray systems and bowser use – are being applied as previously assured. Members noted that dust appears to be travelling a considerable distance and that mitigation measures may not be effective. BS recalled that water was expected to be used to suppress dust, but this does not appear to be happening.

AH asked whether air quality monitors are available. RL expected conditions to improve this time of year but noted they are actually worse, possibly due to recent southeast winds. GN advised that air quality monitors are used in Shetland and can identify dust levels; he will look into the specific equipment used.

Members agreed that if mitigation measures are not being implemented as planned, this requires further scrutiny. CPJ asked whether a current Health & Safety assessment exists for the site; JA noted that documentation should be available but that such assessments should be ongoing.

It was agreed that a formal letter would be sent to Planning and Environmental Health outlining the Community Council's concerns and requesting clarification on:

- Dust-suppression measures and compliance
- Independent monitoring of dust and air quality
- Permitted operating hours for crushing activities
- Whether crushed material is being removed from the site
- Oversight, enforcement, and any follow-up action required

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to Planning.

#### **Dog Play Area**

AH asked if there was a response from Robert Sinclair regarding the proposed Dog Play Area.

→ ACTION: Clerk to follow up with Robert Sinclair.

#### **Potholes**

BS reported that the pothole on Oversund Road has now been repaired.

#### **Traffic Lights**

PA confirmed that the pedestrian crossing at Sound Service Station has been repaired.

### **6.2 Broadband Service Outages in Shetland – reply from Ofcom**

Members discussed the recent response from Ofcom regarding broadband resilience in Shetland.

BS noted that, according to the reply, BT and its partners are able to build additional resilience into their lines. He asked whether providers such as Vodafone and TalkTalk have built similar resilience into their networks, or whether they are working towards doing so in response to the outages. He also queried whether customers could move to providers offering greater resilience. Cllr G. Robinson advised that mandatory resilience would require legislative change, and that Ofcom can currently offer only guidance.

JA commented that Emergency Planning should be considering the implications for business continuity if both communication routes were to fail simultaneously.

Cllr G. Robinson added his understanding that providers who previously had resilience continues to have it, and those who did not have resilience still have not introduced improvements. SN suggested seeking a list of which providers currently have resilience in place.

CPJ noted that some customers who changed providers during the outages lost entitlement to compensation from their former provider, leaving them financially disadvantaged.

GN reported positive switching experiences: transferring from Vodafone to EE incurred no additional cost, and another customer had reported a switch from TalkTalk to BT included coverage of remaining contract fees.

Members queried which providers presently have resilient routes in Shetland. If Ofcom cannot supply this information, it was suggested that Faroese Telecom may be able to assist.

BS observed that mobile networks quickly became overloaded during the outage due to limited bandwidth. JA noted that decisions to increase capacity remain commercial choices for each company.

→ ACTION: Clerk to reply to Ofcom and request a list of suppliers who presently have resilient routes in Shetland.

## **7. Correspondence/ Discussion Points**

### **7.1 Shetland Climate Conversation Survey 2026**

JA asked members to complete the survey individually.

### **7.2 SIC Strategy Review Proposal [DS]**

DS presented a proposal relating to concerns about SIC's financial position and strategic planning. He explained that his interest in this issue led him to join the Community Council. He noted long-standing concerns about overspending and the costs of maintaining ageing infrastructure and expressed a desire to ensure Shetland remains sustainable for future generations.

DS highlighted that key documents, including the Medium-Term Financial Plan, are outdated, lack a clear underlying strategy, and were written in a context of stricter spending audits. He felt it was difficult to identify meaningful baselines across SIC departments and that the current plans are aspirational rather than strategic. He asked whether LCC would support writing to SIC to seek clearer, modernised strategic planning and improved financial accountability.

CPJ supported the need for greater transparency around spending and waste. BS referred to historic overspends, such as on the new AHS.

DS reiterated his concerns, citing examples such as the Scalloway Pool and the lack of clarity over which services may be at risk if reserves continue to be drawn down.

JA noted that while the letter was lengthy, the core concern related to the ongoing unsustainable draw on reserves and the perceived absence of a clear long-term strategy to address these continued pressures. DS explained that the complexity was necessary to address potential responses referencing existing plans.

AH commended the work DS had undertaken and shared concerns that continued pressure on reserves could lead to job losses and wider economic challenges. Members expressed worries regarding demographic trends, including declining birth rates and reduced numbers entering further education.

BS suggested forming a small group to refine a draft letter.

Cllr G. Robinson commented on the need for a clearer understanding of the purpose and function of each trust and strategic plan, as well as the pressures facing education and social care services. He also noted that a range of external factors continue to influence capital costs. Achieving a balanced budget, he said, remains a long-term aspiration.

Cllr J. Fraser acknowledged the difficulties many people experience when navigating SIC's range of documents. He provided context regarding statutory requirements within education, staffing needs, and the provision of social care, emphasising that reductions in staff have a direct impact on service delivery. He also highlighted the ongoing reductions in Scottish Government funding and stressed the importance of long-term planning for the school estate.

DS stated that both councillors' comments supported the need for clearer strategic direction. He emphasised the importance of long-term planning to address future affordability, particularly if reserves continue to decline.

Cllr S. Leask noted that savings have been embedded into departmental budgets for the coming year and that recent increases in Council Tax have helped reduce the scale of reserve draw-downs.

Further comments were made by RL and DW regarding staffing levels, service impacts, and the need for honesty about unmet need. Cllr D. Leask highlighted the reduced income from Sullom Voe and higher construction costs in Shetland.

JA confirmed that BS and AH were willing to assist DS in revising the letter, with a view to presenting a draft at the next meeting and including the matter on the agenda for the June ASCC meeting.

→ ACTION: Small group to meet and redraft the letter to be presented at the April meeting.

## **8. Finance**

### **8.1 Financial Statement**

JA apologised that he had managed to obtain costs for the Clickimin sign in time for the meeting.

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

### 9.1 Local Place Plans

JA provided an update on progress with the Local Place Plans. Two meetings have been held to date, and a couple of members have volunteered to form a steering group. An initial drop-in event will be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March at Islesburgh Community Centre to gather input from local businesses. It is hoped that a final draft will be completed by July, with submission required by August in line with guidance. JA encouraged members to attend and to promote the event to others.

BS asked if anyone else wished to be involved, noting the value of gathering ideas on maps and through word-of-mouth engagement.

TL reported that some people had experienced technical issues with the online link, with items entered appearing to be removed.

PA queried why she had not been invited to the LPP meeting. JA apologised that she had been missed from the original invite. He explained that the email invitation was sent while the LCC laptop was being repaired by GTS and the recipient list was taken from the members list on Coins but PA's co-opted member form had not been input on the system at the time.

### 9.2 Proposed demolition and replacement of front porch and external cladding to main property (refurbishment)

2 Fogralea Lerwick Shetland ZE1 0SE

Ref. No: 2026/032/PPF | Received: Mon 16 Feb 2026 | Validated: Tue 24 Feb 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

### 9.3 To construct two extensions to existing dwelling house

14 Hayfield Lane Lerwick Shetland ZE1 0QD

Ref. No: 2026/029/PPF | Received: Wed 11 Feb 2026 | Validated: Thu 12 Feb 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

## 10. AOB

### Voar Redd Up

The Voar Redd Up will take place from 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April, with registration closing on 15<sup>th</sup> April. JA invited suggested for areas to cover this year. DW asked whether the chosen location could be somewhere accessible and inclusive so she could participate.

SN suggested an area between AHS and wither Tesco or the Co-op. It was agreed to make enquiries about this option and to add the item to the April agenda.

### SIC Corporate Plan

GN raised concerns regarding the age and applicability of the current SIC corporate plan, noting that it has been in place for many years and that its relevance is unclear. He described his experience inheriting a garage and subsequently approaching the Council about

purchasing the adjacent land at the Garthspool strip of garages. He was advised that the land could not be sold due to restrictions within the corporate plan.

GN queried whether the corporate plan also covers other assets, such as the proposed acquisition of Hays, and why certain decisions—such as the refusal to purchase the piers—had been made. He further noted that an independently reviewed proposal to purchase land at the top end of Freefield Road had also been declined.

GN asked councillors to clarify why the application of the plan appears to have changed over time. Cllr D. Leask agreed to speak with GN, gather further details, and follow up on the matter.

#### **Litter Around Anderson High School**

Concerns were raised regarding litter from school pupils around Anderson High School and along the paths to Tesco and the Co-op. It was agreed to email Robin Calder, Head Teacher, to highlight the issue.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to contact Anderson High School.

#### **Anti-social Behaviour**

IW asked for an update on the follow-up to the anti-social behaviour discussions held in February. It was agreed that stakeholders would be invited to attend the April meeting.

#### **Membership and Legislative Compliance**

James Paton attended the meeting to raise concerns regarding ensuring the Community Council is acting within relevant legislation. He asked whether all members are registered on the Lerwick electoral roll and whether all members were duly proposed and seconded.

JA confirmed that members cannot be co-opted unless they appear on the electoral register, and that the co-option process followed a two-stage procedure, including verification of the electoral roll prior to co-option.

JA advised that if a request is submitted regarding an Associate Member, it can be added to a future agenda.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

11.1 The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026.