

Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council

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Minutes of a meeting of Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 9 February 2026 at 7pm.

Present:	John Priest	Kevin Tulloch
	Mrs Sharon Deyell	Duncan Anderson
	Mrs Joanne Fraser	Craig Manson
	George Morrison	
Ex Officio:	Cllr L Peterson	
	Cllr M Robinson	
By invitation:	Ian Taylor, SIC Resilience Advisor	
In attendance:	Mrs L Fraser, Clerk	

Mr J Priest presiding

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Mr E Anderson and Mr M Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer.

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2026, having been circulated, were taken as read and were approved. Moved by Mr D Anderson, seconded by Mrs S Deyell.

S&A DRAFT COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN: Mr Ian Taylor, SIC Resilience Advisor, was welcomed to the meeting. He had been invited to attend to discuss the preparation of a Community Emergency Plan for this area.

Mr I Taylor explained that the Plan has been devised in order to list the various services available in this area should there be an emergency, e.g. loss of power, snow storms or any other kind of disruption. It will give details of who to contact and where and to try to ensure that everyone is looked after and no one is missed. It should give a picture of resilience in this area.

Concern was expressed about the mobile coverage in this area as it has a lot of 'not spots' and the switch off for the Digital Switchover is to take place in January 27. Some people have given up their landlines and rely entirely on their mobiles. Should there be a power cut, mobile provision only has a 2 hour battery back up. It was agreed that pressure must be applied to Ofcom to remedy this situation.

The local halls can be warm spaces/hubs where food can be made available and phones charged. In previous times SSEN has provided generators to the halls for this purpose.

Delivery of medication and patient transport was also discussed.

Already this year, the port of Aberdeen has been affected by the South-easterly gales leading to the port being closed and ferries being cancelled with foodstuff running low in Lerwick.

Mr Taylor feels that the SIC has lots of equipment but sometimes people have volunteered to give assistance during the snowy times but should not put themselves at risk. However,

at that time, they can only be covered by their own insurance and would not be covered by SIC insurance unless they had an agreement with SIC.

Mr Taylor agreed to check with Mr S Semple at SIC about this situation.

The Chairman said that Carers have a difficult time reaching the vulnerable at times and some are even staying overnight.

Mr Taylor said that this plan will give information on who has what and where and who is vulnerable. The Local Authority do not want to make any emergency worse and try to understand who is vulnerable. They have lots of resources, e.g. Schools, Care Centres, etc. Our members are spaced very evenly throughout this area and have a good local knowledge but cannot be sure that they will know who will be vulnerable.

Mr Taylor advised that, if they are worried about a person, they should call his dept as it is better for him to have 2 calls than not at all. If necessary, he can organise a welfare call to check the situation.

Everyone has to try to keep folk safe when the weather is poor.

The members will check with the hall committees in this area to ensure that they are willing to use the halls, if necessary.

Mrs J Fraser agreed to populate the Telephone Tree on Page 8 of the Plan.

All members to consider what should be added to the Plan and it will be discussed at our next meeting.

Mr Taylor said he is happy to attend another meeting, if required, and he is always available at his office at 20 Commercial Street.

The Chairman thanked Mr Taylor for attending our meeting. Mr Taylor then left.

BUSINESS ARISING: **Director for SCBF:** An individual has been approached about being a Director but no decision has yet been taken.

CGS Application: Further information was received from the Toddler Group and, following consultation with the members, the application had been approved.

VCF Community Halls Grant Scheme: Unsure whether any of the halls in this area have applied.

Road Matters: **Thanks:** A reply had been received from the Head of Roads saying he will pass on our thanks to the roadmen for their work during the wintry spell in January.

Clousta Road & Blind spot near Hillcrest, Clousta: A message, with google maps attached, had been forwarded to Mr N Hutcheson regarding both of these areas. No reply yet received.

Extra passing place on Vementry Road: No reply.

Invitation: Mr N Hutcheson, Head of Roads, has been invited to attend our March meeting. He has accepted our invitation.

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

R100 Broadband Evaluation: Ducting ongoing.

Skeld Camping Bod: No date yet agreed with Ms Hazel Sutherland, Chief Executive of Shetland Amenity Trust to attend our meeting.

Data Protection: Certificate received.

Wast Owre Column: It was agreed to send a Report to Ms D Nicolson as we did previously.

Climate Action Ting: Applications close on 11 February 2026.

Finance: **Core Fund:** A number of financial applications were received and considered. The amount of grants requested far outweighed the amount of finance we had available. The application from the Wastside Rebels Football Club was far outwith what we have available and a message will be sent to them suggesting that they try the Shetland Community Benefit Fund to finance their project.

The remaining applications all qualified and it was agreed that the sum available be divided among them all, giving them 80% of their requests.

The following groups will receive grants:-

Aith & Bixter Toddler Group

Skeld Hall

Aith J H School Parent Council
Sandsting History Group
1st Aith Guides
Bixter Hall

Aith Community Association for toilets.

Maintenance grants: Maintenance grants were agreed for the following:-

Bixter, Aith and Skeld Halls

Skeld, Aith & Tresta Piers

Aith & Skeld Public toilets.

LOCAL PLACE PLAN (LPP) TRAINING: Training was held on 4 February 2026 but none of the members had been available to attend.

PLANNING APPLICATION: The following planning application was considered and no objections were raised:-

2026/001/MAR Modification of an existing salmon farm by removing existing black-coloured feed pipes and replacing with white-coloured feed pipes at Easter Score Holm, Scalloway by Helen Fergusson.

RUNIC STONES: A message was received from Mr Paul Moar explaining that Mr Magjus Hutchison from Whalsay had expressed a desire to donate a small number of runic stones to various locations in Shetland and wondered how this could be achieved. Mr Hutchison had contacted Lerwick Community Council as a small “toe in the water” test and was subsequently asked to give a small presentation. Mr Moar had represented Mr Hutchison at the Community Council meeting and had received a very favourable reaction but it had been reported in the Shetland Times that he had contacted all Community Councils which was incorrect. Mr Hutchison’s long term desire is indeed to offer a Runic Stone to each Community Council in Shetland to put on public display but this is something that will take time and be for the future.

The members welcomed this gesture but can see that it will take some time.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY RESILIENCE: Message received from the Scottish Islands Federation regarding the invitation they have received to give oral evidence on digital resilience to the session on Wednesday 25 February in Westminster.

ASSOCIATION: The next meeting of the Association of Shetland Community Councils will be held on 10 March 2026 in Lerwick Town Hall (chamber). None of the members are available to attend. Apologies will be sent.

CC MEMBER & CLERKS TRAINING & SUPPORT: All present were reminded that the forms relating to this opportunity must be returned by 18 February.

DA VOAR REDD UP: A message was received from Mr Rory Tallack at Shetland Amenity Trust saying that this year’s Redd Up will be held between 18-24 April.

COMMUNITY LED HOUSING: A presentation and briefing on Community Led Housing was received from Cllr L Peterson who explained how it is a really good concept.

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

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday March 2026 at 7.30pm..