

Unst Community Council

Chair

Caroline Hunter
Shirva
Uyeasound
Unst
Shetland

Clerk

Lynette Spence
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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th April 2026 at 6.30 pm in Room 2, Baltasound School and by MsTeams

Present

Caroline Hunter, Chair
Adam Doull
John Peterson
Janice Priest
Ingram Thomson
Brydon Johnson
Alec Priest, Ms Teams
Robert Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio) Ms Teams

Attending

Gordon Thomson
Lynette Spence, Clerk

1. Apologies

Frances Browne
Ryan Thomson

2. Declaration of Interest - None

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Proposed – Adam Doull
Seconded – John Peterson

4. Matters Arising from last minutes

Late ferry request for July wedding confirmed.

5. Baltasound Hotel

Gordon provided the report which is to be sent to consultants for bids for a feasibility study concerning a Community purchase of the Baltasound Hotel. The closing dates for bids is 11th May. Once the bids are in the Land Fund will be contacted so ask if they will pay for it. If it goes through, the feasibility study will be taken to the public to see if the community should go any further with it. Paul Harrington from the Land Fund is coming for a meeting on 7th May. Members of UP and the UCC have been for a tour around the property. The study might say it's not feasible due to building work required. Also, the Land Fund will only pay for 80-90% of the value so the rest would have to be fundraised, and the Land Fund won't pay for something if it conflicts with other businesses. All parties can withdraw at any time. It was suggested to contact Business Gateway for advice if required.

6. Statkraft

There will be a meeting with representatives from Unst, Yell and Fetlar to discuss options. The funding is for a rollout in September to discuss options of community benefits and community

ownership. The meeting is planned for 6th May – Alec and Adam will attend for UCC, Gordon will attend for UP.

The current suggestion is £5000 per kw but that is the same rate as 2014 so should be much higher now, especially as Shetland has such high efficiency. The Scottish Government are proposing £6000 per kw minimum. Representatives from the isles feel that £8-9000 per kw should be the minimum. There is a lot of resistance so there has to be a significant community benefit.

7. Local Place Plans

There will be a meeting on 7th May at 1pm with Diane Cassidy from Planning Aid Scotland, which Adam and Gordon will attend.

This will go on the agenda for the next UCC meeting to discuss further.

8. Ferries/Fixed Links

Ferries

Adam has been chasing up more information regarding the ferry lashing situation but hasn't received a response yet. SIC management has been speaking to skippers on the Bluemull Sound so they can write a report to the MCA regarding changes to the current situation of lashing vehicles on the ferry. UCC members feel there has been a lot of mixed messages and are frustrated with the length of time it is taking.

The Giera is due to be back 11th May but it will probably be delayed further due to multiple issues and the supply of parts. There have been some issues with the booking office not knowing what's happening with the ferries, and UCC members are disappointed that yet again the Bigga will be out of action for the Unst Show.

Tunnels

The IITC will be reporting to the SIC at the end of June. There has been a lot of work going on behind the scenes so UCC members are optimistic it will be moving forward.

9. SIC North Isles Councillors Update

No more to add to what has already been discussed.

10. Unst Partnership Ltd (UP) Update.

- The 2025-26 Skip Scheme day has now ended and UP are getting quotes in for the 2026-27 scheme. Assuming we get 50 households signed up and some sponsorship to cover the shortfall, the next Skip day should be sometime in June.
- The Community Development Worker post was advertised, with a closing date for applications by Friday 8th May. Anyone interested in the post should contact the UP office or by email at up@unst.org The post is funded for three years by HIE, either on a Contracted/Self-employed basis or as an Employee with UP responsible for PAYE and pensions.
- Viking longhouse site: Shetland Amenity Trust and UP are in discussions about the purchase of the Viking site at Haroldswick, with lawyers engaged on either side to sort out the details. The intention is that the site will be run by a community group by April 2027.
- Some repairs to the decking and "knees" or brackets on the deck have still to be completed and re-painting of the deck will need to be done soon.
- Halligarth: The National Trust for Scotland representatives met with UP directors on 16th March. They have agreed to look further into the options for re-instating all or part of the building. NTS have to explore with Historic Environment Scotland about permission to demolish some of what is a B listed building. As usual, further discussions have to take place.
- UP still has funding from a local benefactor for a Seniors Citizens event/trip. A suggestion of a trip to Eshaness and the Old Haa is being considered.
- Baltasound hotel Discussions have taken place with the Scottish Land Fund about a possible community purchase of the Hotel. A Brief has been prepared for a Feasibility Study

and is shortly to go out to consultants, who are being asked to return a bid by Monday 11th May. If the successful quote price is agreed to by SLF, the successful bidder would then carry out the Study, which would then be available for public scrutiny before any move to Stage Two, which would be to apply to SLF for funding to purchase the property.

- Unst Map 2026 Advertisers on the Unst tourist map are keen to see a return to a paper copy as well as the online version of last year. A draft has been sent to the printers and 4,000 copied should be back later this month for distribution. There will still be an online version of the new map on the Unst Partnership and “Visit Unst” websites.
- Regarding the “Visit Unst” website, UP now has access to edit the site so any changes or additions can be directed to the UP office or email.

11. Community Involvement Update (From Frances Browne)

- Activities held in the Yell and Unst leisure centres over holidays went well.
- Community Resilience: Frances met with halls and had good discussion regarding costs of generators.
- Frances forwarded on the Skeleton Local Place Plan, that Pete Mogridge worked on. This will be discussed further at the next UCC meeting after councillors have had more time to look over it.

12. Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)

Congratulations to NUPH who received £10,000 as part of the Community Halls Grants Scheme

13. Applications for Planning - N/A

14. Application for Donations - N/A

15. Unadopted Roads - N/A

16. Correspondence

Michael Duncan and Nicole Sim will be attending the next UCC meeting.

17. Community Council Finances

- Printout of updated accounts given out.
- Printing costs – councillors agreed to increase printing subscription. Lynette asked councillors to let her know if there is anything they wish to receive in paper format to save on printing costs.
- Clerks wages – councillors agreed to increase to April 2026 rates.

18. A.O.C.B.

- UCC members have requested an update on when the new police person will arrive in Yell. **Lynette will look into this and invite the police to the next meeting.**
- UCC members want an update on roadworks required around Unst – Lund Road (Burials Dept), North Dale, Skaw Road from grid to Hamer Skaw, Westing Road and the road around the loch in Uyeasound at the bottom of the Minister’s Road. **Lynette will look into this.**
- The toilets at Burrafirth are still closed, and need to be opened for tourists. Also, there is no bin at Hermaness. UCC members would like a general waste bin and a dog poop bin. **Lynette will contact Environmental Health.**

19. Date of next meeting – 1st June 2026

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____