

Lerwick Community Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1 JUNE 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.

2. Apologies for Absence

Present

Jim Anderson (Chair)
Brian Harris
Scott Nicolson
Diana Winfield
Cheryl Palmer-Johnson
Brian Smith
Duncan Swainston
Talitha Lee
Panda Anderson

In attendance

Dawn Ratter (Clerk)
Steve Mathieson
Sonny Thomason
Laurie Clubb
Shetland Times

Apologies

Michael Duncan
Amanda Hawick
Andy Carter
Cllr. Cecil Smith
Shayne McLeod
Karen Fraser
Graham Nicolson
Robert Leask
Police Scotland

Ex-Officio

Cllr. John Fraser
Cllr. Dennis Leask
Cllr. Stephen Leask
Cllr. Gary Robinson
Cllr. Arwed Wenger

3. Declarations of Interest

Item 9 - Cllr. A. Wenger

4. Minutes from meeting held for approval

4.1 Monday 4 May 2026

The minutes were approved.

Approved by: DS

Seconded by: BS

5. Actions from last meeting

5.1 Action tracker spreadsheet

Police Report

Further to the query raised at the previous meeting, Insp. Sam Greshon confirmed that the five fraud cases reported in the February/March Police Report were separate incidents and were not related.

Stone wall, Knab

JA will contact Mangus Malcolmson to arrange a site visit to inspect the wall.

→ ACTION: Chair to contact Magnus Malcolmson.

6. Correspondence/ Discussion Points

6.1 Draft Interim Shetland Living Well Locally Lerwick Plan

DW noted that the draft plan does not sufficiently highlight accessibility and inclusion. She suggested that each section should include a statement identifying accessibility needs, as this should be integral to the plan rather than an add-on. Despite this, the plan was considered to be excellent overall.

JA agreed that it is a good document and noted that it aligns well with the Local Place Plan (LPP) and is timely in that context. JA also commented that many of the issues within the document have been discussed previously by the Community Council, and it is positive to see these reflected in the plan.

BS commented that the document largely reflects known issues, such as lack of spaces and limited activities, but welcomed seeing these formally recognised within a plan.

It was also noted that “Nederdale” is misspelt in the document.

→ ACTION: Clerk to provide feedback to A Place in Childhood.

6.2 Community Views on Forestry in Scotland - <https://forms.gle/QRtg65TCXVW7bzxD7> Noted.

→ ACTION: PA to complete the questionnaire on behalf of LCC.

6.3 Involving Young People in Leadership Positions Noted.

PA suggested inviting a representative from Shetland Youth Voice to attend meetings. It was noted that Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) had attended in the past.

It was agreed the Clerk would contact Anderson High School to seek volunteers interested in attending meetings.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to Anderson High School.

6.4 Community Council Training Programme 2026

JA explained that there is a programme of training being offered by Michael Duncan’s team.

JA advised that if members have suggestions for training topics or sessions that they would find beneficial, these should be forwarded so they can be passed on to Michael Duncan’s team or arranged separately. Members were asked to contact the Clerk with any suggestions.

6.5 Using Data to Strengthen Community Support in Lerwick (June 2026) Noted.

Sonny Thomason, Community Development & Involvement Officer highlighted the extensive data and research underpinning the work, noting that it clearly identifies areas of Lerwick that are performing

better than others. The sessions are intended to be of interest to those working with community groups, volunteers, and partner agencies.

It was noted that a wide range of partners will be attending, including NHS representatives and Councillors. Mr Thomason encouraged members of the Community Council to attend.

6.6 Concerns over Telecommunications Resilience During Power Outages

BS raised concerns following the recent widespread power outage across Shetland, noting that the loss of power resulted in a significant loss of communication, including landlines (due to the digital switchover), mobile signal, and internet access. This was highlighted as a serious risk to public safety, particularly in emergency situations.

It was noted that, historically, traditional PSTN landlines would have remained operational during outages, whereas newer digital systems do not. Members also highlight that telecommunications infrastructure is heavily reliant on mains power, meaning loss of electricity results in loss of service where adequate backup is not in place. While some EE services remained operational, there were reports of a complete loss of communication at the Gilbert Bain Hospital, which resulted in a major incident being declared as staff were unable to contact doctors.

BS advised that the issue had been raised with Alistair Carmichael MP, who contacted Ofcom. Providers have indicated that backup systems are in place; however, concerns remain that these did not function as intended during the outage.

JA echoed these concerns, noting that many people were adversely affected and that there appears to be a lack of resilience within telecommunications systems. It was felt that stronger action is required from Ofcom in holding providers to account.

Cllr. G. Robinson confirmed that the issue has been raised with the Chief Executive and that there is an ongoing investigation by SSE. It was also noted that fail-safes were in place but did not operate as expected, and that the matter may be considered by the Community Safety and Resilience Board.

Members queried whether there are policies in place to regularly check and maintain fail-safe systems. It was generally agreed that the primary concern relates to the lack of effective telecommunications backup rather than the power outage itself.

SN commented that the digital switchover represents a step backwards in resilience. DW noted that providers had previously offered additional backup solutions, often at cost, and suggested that support for vulnerable households should be strengthened, including provision of backup batteries. It was noted that SSEN has begun rolling out UPS backup for priority services.

It was agreed that the Community Council should formally raise concerns regarding the incident and the wider implications for public safety.

→ ACTION: Clerk to write to Ofcom.

6.7 Appeal re: Traffic Calming Measures on Gilbertson Road

It was noted that the traffic calming measures on Gilbertson Road have been approved by the Environment and Transport Committee.

Cllr. A. Wenger queried the process by which some matters are determined by the Environment and Transport Committee rather than being referred to Full Council. Cllr. G. Robinson advised that such matters are delegated to the Committee, as has been the practice for some time. Cllr. S. Leask noted

that previous measures, including the Esplanade speed cushions, were also approved at Committee level without referral to Full Council.

Cllr. G. Robinson further advised that the matter has been referred to the SIC complaints process, and that there is no formal appeal route other than judicial review.

It was noted that Mr Hutcheson attended the previous meeting; however, the proposals for Gilbertson Road were not discussed in detail at that time as approval had already been granted through the Committee process.

It was noted that part of the concern raised in the letter related to the absence of recorded accidents, questioning the need for additional measures. PA commented that there should not be a requirement for accidents to occur before safety improvements such as crossings are introduced. Cllr. D. Leask agreed with this point.

→ ACTION: Clerk to reply to the letter of concern received.

- 6.8 Training Opportunity: [Preparing for elected office in Scottish local government](#)
Noted.

7. ASCC

7.1 ASCC – 02 July 2026

Paper 1 – Shetland Islands Council Strategy Review

Cllr D. Leask encouraged any members interested to attend the ASCC meeting to hear presentations from Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive and Paul Fraser, Executive Manager – Finance.

Paper 2 – Moratorium on Energy developments

Members considered a proposal from TWWCC for ASCC to convene a Shetland-wide event involving Community Councils and elected representatives, to consider whether Shetland should support a call for a pause (moratorium) on further large-scale energy developments pending a more coordinated strategy.

DS commented that, while not disagreeing with the principle of the proposal, it raised questions of whether such matters are more appropriately progressed through existing channels with local councillors.

Cllr G. Robinson advised that, if directed at the Council, the proposal may be aimed at the wrong body. He explained that in relation to large-scale energy developments, the Council acts primarily as a consultee and is bound by the Councillors Code of Conduct, meaning elected members cannot take a predetermined position. He suggested that any lobbying would be more appropriately directed at a national level, via MSPs and MPs.

PA noted that the proposal appears to be aimed more broadly at influencing decision-making at a regional or national level, rather than specifically targeting local councillors.

JA commented that the reference to “elected representatives” within the proposal could be interpreted as including local councillors, contributing to some ambiguity. This interpretation was discussed, with differing views expressed around the table.

Cllr G. Robinson reiterated that elected members must avoid pre-determination and therefore cannot publicly oppose developments in advance of formal consideration. It was noted that the wording of the proposal could benefit from greater clarity.

DS noted that, while the proposal is somewhat detailed, the overall intent appears to be in the right direction. He questioned whether the proposed approach adds an additional layer to the process, and whether there may be more efficient ways of achieving the intended outcome.

Cllr S. Leask advised that the initiative originated from Community Councils working collectively to lobby on energy development issues and is intended as a coordinated approach to influence decision-making.

The proposal was moved by BS and seconded by DW.

- 7.2 ASCC Questionnaire Responses
Noted.

8. Finance

- 8.1 Financial Update
Noted.

Members requested an update on the Clickimin sign. JA advised that there have been difficulties in securing a contractor to undertake the work. JA will liaise with the Roads Services to explore whether they are able to carry out the installation.

→ ACTION: Chair to contact Road Services.

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

- 9.1 Local Place Plans – update from LPP Group

JA provided an update on the recent Local Place Plan event held at Islesburgh Community Centre on Saturday. It was noted that there was a steady flow of attendees throughout the day. JA expressed thanks to TL for supporting participants in completing the surveys during the event.

A total of 219 responses were received from the survey.

JA extended advance thanks to BS for undertaking the work to collate and analyse the data gathered.

- 9.2 **To demolish and rebuild an extension of the existing building on the same footprint**

Scarfataing, 12B Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0AN

Ref. No: [2026/091/LBC](#) | Received: Mon 04 May 2026 | Validated: Mon 04 May 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration
No comments.

- 9.3 **Non-Material Variation to vary permission 2025/132/PPF – To demolish and rebuild existing extension on west elevation**

Scarfataing, 12B Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0AN

Ref. No: [2025/132/NMV](#) | Received: Mon 04 May 2026 | Validated: Mon 04 May 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration
No comments.

9.4 To construct extension to rear elevation, re-render house and new air source heat pump

14 Nederdale, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0SA

Ref. No: [2026/090/PPF](#) | Received: Mon 04 May 2026 | Validated: Mon 11 May 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

9.5 Erection of single storey west side extension of dwellinghouse

48 Robertson Crescent, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0HS

Ref. No: [2026/089/PPF](#) | Received: Fri 01 May 2026 | Validated: Thu 07 May 2026 | Status: Pending Consideration

[No comments.](#)

10. AOB

Staney Hill Development

BS requested an update regarding correspondence with Environmental Health. Nothing further has been received.

JA asked whether any members had taken up Mr Leask's offer of a site visit.

Cllr. D. Leask expressed the view that a site visit may provide reassurance regarding the mitigation measures currently in place. He noted that moisture is being sprayed within the working area for dust suppression purposes, which can sometimes appear similar to dust. It was further noted that vehicle speeds on site are being restricted as part of the mitigation measures.

BS reiterated that the primary concern is not simply whether visible dust is present, but the quality of the air and any potential associated health risks.

→ ACTION: Clerk to contact Mr Leask to arrange a site visit.

11. Date of Next Meeting

11.1 The next meeting will be held on Monday 06 July 2026.

Please note this meeting will be held in Islesburgh Community Centre, Room 12.