

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 24TH AUGUST 2026 AT CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL AT 7.30PM

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING HELD WAS READ.

B. PRESENT	Miss K MacKay	Mr E Semple	Mr C Clark
EX OFFICIO	Cllr R McGregor	Cllr A Armitage	
IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs K Geddes, clerk	Ms A Horne	Mr J Manson, Cunningsburgh resident and parent
CHAIRPERSON	Ms M Gray		
APOLOGIES	Mr L Summers Mrs M Davis	Mrs D Smith Mr M Duncan	Mrs P Christie Cllr B Peterson
NOT PRESENT	Cllr A Duncan		

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R McGregor declared an interest in Item 9 – Planning, as he is Chair of the SIC Planning Committee.

Mrs K Geddes declared an interest in Item 8, specifically the Shetland Islands Citizens Advice Bureau annual report, as she is a SICAB trustee.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH JUNE 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th June were approved on the motion of Mr C Clark and seconded by Mr E Semple.

1. MATTERS ARISING

1. Enviroglass Glass Recycling Centre Clean Up of Site

Discussions are still ongoing regarding what will be done with the materials, though there is a possibility of the crushed glass being used by a local building firm, as well as perhaps for an SIC building project.

2. Community Benches

Cunningsburgh History Group to organise pick-up of bench from outside clerk's house for siting at their History Hut.

3. Dog Poo Bins

Two locations in Cunningsburgh and one in each of the other two communities (Gulberwick and Quarff) have been selected and confirmed as suitable by the SIC. They have already put one bin close to the Cunningsburgh School and the clerk has ordered three more bins which she will pass on to SIC Waste Services for siting when they arrive.

4. CPR Training by Emergency Services

The clerk has asked the fire station staff to choose one date and time which suits them for delivering CPR training to the community. They said they would share a date by the end of August so clerk will update when they get in touch.

5. ROADS AND PATHS – INCLUDING CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS

1. Cunningburgh Road Safety Concerns and School Transport

This item has been moved up the agenda so the member of the public who is in attendance can leave at the earliest opportunity.

The proposal to change the 50mph limit in Cunningburgh to 40mph was discussed - [A970 Cunningburgh 40mph Gord/North Bridge junctions to Mail.](#)

The Community Council noted correspondence received from local residents regarding the proposed 40mph speed limit on the A970 through Cunningburgh. The correspondence broadly welcomed the proposed reduction in speed but raised concerns about the extent of the proposed zone, particularly the omission of the section between the Gord and Aithsetter/Fladdabister junctions.

Key points raised included:

- Several correspondents supported a 40mph limit but asked that it be extended northwards to at least the Aithsetter/Fladdabister junction, and in some cases further north towards Da Moors Café.
- Correspondents highlighted that a number of important community facilities are located north of the proposed limit, including the Cunningburgh Hall, football pitch, gym, history hut, new gymnastics facility and Da Moors Café.
- Concern was expressed about the safety of children and young people travelling on foot or by bicycle, particularly those travelling from Aithsetter and Fladdabister to school and to local facilities.
- Residents noted that the existing arrangement requires children in some circumstances to cross the A970 within a 60mph/national speed limit area, with the absence of a continuous footpath between Aithsetter and Gord increasing the safety concerns.
- There are at least 17 families in Aithsetter and Fladdabister whose children are not eligible for school transport between April and October, meaning that families have to drive children to school or allow them to walk/cycle.
- Concerns were raised about vehicles travelling at high speeds and overtaking near the Aithsetter junction.
- A number of correspondents referred to previous community meetings and consultations, stating that the community had repeatedly requested both a reduced speed limit extending further north and improved pedestrian provision.
- There was a call for a footpath between the Aithsetter and Gord junctions.
- Correspondents also expressed support for a footpath on the east/Showfield side of the A970, which would reduce or eliminate the need for children to cross the road when travelling to school.
- A further suggestion was made for a bus stop layby in connection with the proposed pedestrian route and access to the new gymnastics facility.

- Concerns were also raised regarding the 20mph school zone, including the reliability and visibility of the flashing signs. Suggestions included additional road markings or rumble strips to reinforce the reduced speed at school start and finish times.
- Correspondents expressed frustration that previous representations to the SIC had not, in their view, resulted in action to address these concerns. This proposal was welcomed but had taken far too long to happen and did not go far enough.

Response from SIC Roads: Neil Hutcheson advised that responses to all consultation comments would be provided following the close of the consultation period. He also advised that a path on the east side of the A970 between the Gord and Aithsetter junctions is proposed for inclusion in a programme of active travel improvements, which was being prepared for consideration by ZetTrans and the Council's Environment & Transport Committee in September.

Cllr A Armitage advised that he had met with Mr Hutcheson and emphasised the importance of the community and Community Council continuing to press for the proposed path to be included in the next programme of Active Travel projects.

In response to Cllr Armitage reiterating the community's view that the proposed 40mph speed limit should be extended further north, Mr Hutcheson advised that this was not recommended under current national guidance. He explained that, to achieve the best level of driver compliance, a 40mph limit should be as short and clearly defined as possible.

Mr Hutcheson also advised that the introduction of a reduced speed limit should reflect the surrounding environment and an increased need for the restriction. Factors such as increased pedestrian activity and a more built-up area would provide visual cues to drivers that a lower speed was appropriate. He considered that simply extending the speed limit without a corresponding change in the road environment may not achieve the desired level of driver compliance. He also noted the need to consider consistency with speed limits and signage elsewhere in Shetland.

Mr Hutcheson's view was therefore that the current proposed length of the 40mph restriction was the most appropriate option.

It was noted that, should elected members decide to pursue an alternative option, Mr Hutcheson would undertake a further review, which would likely take approximately a further month.

Cllr Armitage added that research shows vehicle-activated signs and 3, 2, 1 signage can have a significant positive impact on driver behaviour and said he would recommend pushing for these to be considered. He had also calculated that extending the speed limit further north would add only around 33 seconds to a journey, while potentially providing a significant improvement in road safety for all road users.

Mr J Manson said he believed that a forced reduction in speed from 60mph to 40mph would make a significant difference and encourage drivers to be more aware of their speed. As most drivers tend to reduce their speed as they approach a speed limit sign, he felt it was important that the 40mph limit started well before the Aithsetter junction; otherwise, drivers were likely to still be travelling too quickly when reaching the junction.

Mr Manson also reminded members that hire car drivers travelling from the airport may be unfamiliar with the road and unaware of the location of the school. He noted that some vehicles already travel too fast and, with the school-zone flashing signs already only intermittently working during the current term, drivers were technically permitted to travel at 50mph past the school.

Mr Manson reiterated the community's concerns about the safety of children walking and cycling along the road. He said that while families would like to encourage their children to walk and cycle, they did not currently feel it was safe to do so. He also highlighted the impact of large vehicles passing at speed, including downdrafts, and ongoing concerns about vehicles overtaking near the Aithsetter junction as drivers begin to accelerate towards the end of the existing speed restriction.

Cllr McGregor spoke about his own experience of travelling along the road using his mobility scooter and said he did not feel safe even attempting to cross the A970. Having heard further representations from members of the public, he proposed that the speed limit should also be extended further south to include the Mail beach access. He also supported the proposed path behind the crash barrier.

DECISION: All members present agreed that the current proposal should be rejected on the basis that it does not go far enough to address community concerns. The Clerk was asked to respond to the consultation, explaining that both the community and the Community Council welcome the recognition by SIC Roads that a 40mph limit is necessary, but would like the restriction extended further north to encompass the Moors Café, and further south to encompass the Mail beach entrance. The response should also request that vehicle-activated signs and/or 3, 2, 1 signage be considered to improve driver compliance.

It was further agreed that the response should highlight the community's strong support for a path along the Showground side of the A970 and a path along the A970 at Mail beach. These should be identified as priorities when decisions are made regarding the next Active Travel projects to receive funding.

It was also agreed to organise a petition to demonstrate the strength of feeling within the community and to submit a deputation request to SIC. If accepted, this would allow up to three people to attend an Environment and Transport Committee meeting and give a short presentation setting out the community's views. It is hoped that two members of the public will be willing to attend alongside a member of the Community Council.

ACTION: Mr Clark to organise the deputation and petition, with support as required. Clerk to send in response and to share details of the decision, deputation and petition with all interested parties.

2. Abandoned Cars at Pundtsa Place

A member of the public raised concerns about several apparently abandoned vehicles at Pundsta Place, including their impact on available parking. The Clerk contacted Environmental Services, who responded promptly:

- Red Vauxhall: A notice was served at the end of July and a letter sent to the registered keeper. If it has not been moved when the next uplift list is prepared, it will be added for removal.
- Black Renault: The vehicle remains taxed, so Environmental Services cannot currently take action. As it is parked beside the SIC bin store, any obstruction could potentially be reported to Police Scotland.
- Caravan: A seven-day notice has now been served. If it is not removed by the owner, it will be added to the uplift list, although removal may take several weeks.

The Clerk updated the original complainant and advised them to contact the Community Council or Environmental Services if problems remain after a month.

3. Other Abandoned Vehicles

A black van has been abandoned on the opposite side of the A970 at the south Gulberwick junction, and a white BMW has been abandoned at the junction to Tonner's Garage in Quarff.

ACTION: Clerk to see if she can establish who owns the vehicles and contact SIC Environmental Health for assistance.

4. Pot Hole and Puddle at East Voxter Junction

Mrs D Smith gave an update via email on this issue – there is a manhole type cover/drain about half a metre from the verge within a garden that the Roads team are going to make a channel to, to help drain the excess rainwater that ends up forming a huge puddle. Due to the tightness of the left turn, most vehicles or agricultural vehicles with trailers tend to cut the corner and this is why it has created a puddle. Although a large issue when flooded, the Roads department will only be dealing with it between their own scheduled big jobs where possible so no exact timescale for a fix, but it will eventually be fixed.

----- Mr Manson left 20.20 -----

5. Active Travel Paths

Cllr McGregor reported that designs have been prepared for Active Travel paths between the Black Gaet and Westerloch. Further proposed stages would connect the Black Gaet path to the recently completed Gulberwick path, followed by a route from Gulberwick to Quarff.

Previous funding opportunities had been missed because projects were not sufficiently developed to be 'spade-ready'. Having designs prepared should put these projects in a stronger position for future funding.

The Lerwick to Quarff corridor has been identified as a route with the potential to attract a particularly high number of active travel users.

2. POLICE REPORT

The police report covering April and May was read and noted.

There were four incidents recorded in the Community Council area in April and May – a road traffic collision with minor or no injury, a fraud, and two 'concern for person' which come under the heading of Protecting Vulnerable People.

Members had no questions or comments to pass back to the police.

3. FINANCE

The bank statement on August 20th read £11,612.21.

The only out of the ordinary monthly outgoing was the agreed back pay to the clerk and £448.11 for the dog poo bins. Despite the agreed uplifts in pay from January and March, the clerk has only recently changed the standing order for the pay.

The accounts have been completed and are currently with VAS for independent examination.

4. GRANT APPLICATIONS – GQC CC & SHETLAND COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND (SCBF)

There was only one grant application from the SCBF and none to the GQC CC to consider.

Through the SCBF, the Sound School Parent Council requested £300 towards the purchase of outdoor wear for the pupils. They had also requested money from the Lerwick Community Council as the school catchment sits within both CC areas. Members agreed to award the full amount.

ACTION: Clerk to complete the paperwork to send back to the SCBF.

5. ROADS AND PATHS – INCLUDING CUNNINGSBURGH SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS

This item has been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

6. GQ&C DEVELOPMENT GROUP, LOCAL PLACE PLAN AND RESILIENCE PLAN UPDATES

Local Place Plan

All of the comments and data gathered at the three public consultation events has now been analysed and collated in a way suitable for an LPP, thanks to a volunteer from Planning Aid Scotland.

The GQ&C Development Group is now going to create a first draft of the LPP and get it checked by the SIC Planning Department and Planning Aid Scotland before it goes out for consultation in October.

ACTION: Create first draft of LPP.

GQ&C Development Group

The bank account has been set up, a constitution has been adopted and members are working their way through creating policy documents. £50 raised from a raffle at one of the Local Place Plan events is available to put into the bank account.

The current main focus of the group is the creation of the first draft of the Local Place Plan.

ACTION: Create first draft of LPP.

Community Resilience Plan

There has been no change in this since the last meeting. Two of the 'community hubs' are still to share the data on what resources they currently have – and what they may require.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up with the community hubs to try to get the data required.

7. UPDATE FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

Cllr A Armitage said there had only been one full SIC meeting since his last update – it was decided to look into what should be done about the falling rolls at Skeld and Burravoe Schools. It shouldn't have any effect on schools in our area.

The audited accounts were also discussed – as was the issue of whether to dip into council reserves.

Cllr R McGregor indicated that other than what had already been shared, he had no further updates.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Hjaltland Housing Association – 50th AGM

Correspondence regarding Hjaltland Housing Association's 50th AGM, to be held on Thursday 27th August, was received and noted.

2. Potential Shetland Community Energy Network

Information was received about a proposal to establish a Shetland Community Energy Network, bringing together community groups and organisations with an interest in energy. The aim would be to share knowledge, resources and best practice, explore Shetland-wide initiatives and potentially provide communities with a stronger collective voice on energy matters. An online meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 26th August to gauge interest and discuss the proposal further. Mr Clark advised that he plans to attend and will report back.

3. Community Council Energy Convention

Correspondence regarding the Community Council Energy Convention, held at Islesburgh on 22nd August, was read and noted. The event was organised following agreement by the ASCC and gave Community Councils an opportunity to put their views on energy developments directly to Shetland's MP and MSPs.

A statement drafted by Mr Clark on behalf of GQC CC called for a moratorium on further large-scale energy developments until concerns including grid capacity, community access to the grid, cumulative impacts, overhead pylons and community benefit arrangements are addressed.

4. ASCC Update & SIC Medium Term Financial Plan

An update from the latest Association of Shetland Community Councils meeting was received. Matters discussed included the SIC's Medium Term Financial Plan, the proposed moratorium on energy developments, appointments to the Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation and progress towards enabling hybrid Community Council meetings.

Information presented to the ASCC on SIC's Medium Term Financial Plan highlighted the significant financial pressures facing the Council and the need for savings over the coming years. The proposed actions include reviewing income and fees, workforce planning, aligning strategies with budgets and considering demographic impacts, with a £50 million envelope proposed to structure discussions and £43 million of savings identified across the period.

5. Da Voar Redd Up 2026

Information was received on the areas registered for Da Voar Redd Up within the GQC CC area and the groups which confirmed completion through the follow-up survey.

Fourteen locations were registered within the Community Council area, covering areas of Gulberwick, Quarff, Cunningsburgh, Aithsetter and Fladdabister, and four of the groups who 'redd up' these areas completed surveys and indicated they would like Community Council funding. The clerk has contacted them and one has so far replied, indicating they would like their £50 donation to go to the Quarff Public Hall.

6. Tunnel Vision 2026

An invitation to Alistair Carmichael MP's Tunnel Vision 2026 events, held across Shetland from 17th–21st August was discussed. It remained in the agenda after the postponement of the meeting last week in case any members attended and could update. The discussions were to focus on the future of fixed links and inter-island transport, including the development of a long-term route map, how projects might be prioritised and financed, and ensuring individual communities remain involved as proposals progress.

7. 2027 Community Council Meeting Dates

The following dates were proposed for GQC CC meetings in 2027: 5th January, 9th February, 16th March, 20th April, 8th June, 17th August, 5th October and 16th November.

Mr Clark proposed the acceptance of the dates and Ms Gray seconded the motion.

ACTION: Clerk to share the dates with the SIC Community Liaison Officer.

8. Training Costs for Grave Digging and Memorial Fixing Courses

Cllr McGregor passed on emails regarding SIC support for grave-digging and memorial-fixing training. The SIC confirmed that it would meet the expenses, including attendees' time, for Fair Isle residents attending the recent grave-digging course. Interest had also been expressed in memorial-fixing training, which could improve local resilience and reduce the need for SIC to send contractors to the island.

9. Cruise Impact Study

McGregor Solutions has been commissioned to examine the economic and social impact of cruise tourism across Shetland during the 2026 season. The study is seeking views from Community Councils on the benefits, pressures, challenges and opportunities associated with cruise tourism, and researchers offered to attend a future meeting online if this would be useful.

10. Shetland Islands Citizens Advice Bureau Annual Report

Shetland Islands Citizens Advice Bureau's Annual Report for 2025/26 was received. During the year, SICAB supported 1,577 individual clients and dealt with 6,823 issues, securing £1,525,772 in financial gains for 531 clients.

The report also highlighted the contribution of SICAB's volunteers and the range of advice and support provided across Shetland.

11. PLANNING

There were two applications in the Community Council area since the last meeting and members were required to discuss it and send any comments to the SIC planning department.

[2026/144/PPF](#) – Erect new church, create parking, enlarge access, Flanderstown, Cunningsburgh

Members had no objections, however, they wanted to note the concerns raised by members of the public regarding the potential increase in traffic and the possible impact on road safety, particularly in the vicinity of the school.

Members trust that these concerns will be taken into consideration by the Roads Service when responding to the application and that any issues identified can be appropriately addressed.

[2018/208/VCON](#) – Extending peat cutting consent by 10 years for [2013/144/PPF](#), Custerfield C'burgh

Members found some aspects of the application and the information provided confusing and would have welcomed the additional information from the Planning Officer as previously requested, as this may have helped to clarify matters.

Based on the information currently available, members had no objections to the application. However, they agreed they would like to draw attention to the comments and concerns raised by the engineer in their response.

As the engineer is the relevant expert in these matters, members support the points raised in their response and hope that the issues identified are fully addressed before any planning permission is granted.

The following applications did not require comment, so were read and noted.

[2026/129/CCCON](#) Divide existing croft into two crofts – Scarpigarth and Kjodas, Voxter.
[2026/123/PN](#) Prior notification for farm-related building works, Sunshine Cottage, Wester Quarff.
[2026/116/PPF](#) extension to changing facility, Cunningsburgh FC Changing Room, Da Moors

ACTION: Clerk to email comments to SIC planning department.

12. AOCB

Annual Report

The clerk explained that from this year Community Councils are expected to write an annual report. Clerks have been provided with a template and she will start work on it, preparing a draft for the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to prepare a draft annual report for the next community council meeting.

Minimum Income Standard Study Volunteers Needed

SIC Community Development and Engagement Officer Ana Horne explained that a study looking into the Minimum Income Standard for Shetland is looking for volunteers for focus groups. Harry's or Co-Op vouchers are available for anyone who is able to help. If anyone is interested they can contact Ms Horne for more details.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Tuesday 6th October 2026. (Then 17/11)

Meeting Ends – 21:10

CHAIR

14. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- February 2025 – Community CPR sessions – awaiting date from Fire Service.
- June 2025 – Plans for tidying up Enviroglass site and perhaps using some of the recycled glass in other projects – no final plan as yet.
- June 2025 – pothole and puddle at East Voxter junction – still needs sorted.
- March 2025 - Wooden walkway near the Gulberwick Hall – needs replacing and has now been cordoned off.