

Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council

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Minutes of a meeting of Sandsting & Aithsting Community Council held in the Skeld Hall on Monday 15 June 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present:	John Priest	Kevin Tulloch
	Mrs Sharon Deyell	Mrs Joanne Fraser
	George Morrison	Duncan Anderson
	Ewan Anderson	Craig Manson
Ex-officio:	Cllr L Peterson	
	Cllr M Robinson	
By invitation:	Mrs Hazel Sutherland, Chief Executive, Shetland Amenity Trust	
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 M Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer.

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2026, having been circulated, were taken as read and were approved. Moved by Mrs S Deyell, seconded by Mr G Morrison.

SKELD CAMPIING BOD: The Chairman welcomed Mrs H Sutherland to the meeting. She had come along to discuss the way forward for the Skeld Camping Bod. She said they now have experience of a number of different types of approaches to support community groups to take on the Bods, if they wish to do so, and also with local heritage groups. Her objective is to get the assets back into use and for them to get fresh investment so they can be used again and they don't go aback. Shetland Amenity Trust is not best placed to run tourist accommodation and she is keen that they can find local solutions to each of the bods if they can. Although there had been enquiries from individuals about buying the Skeld building, none of them had gone any further. It was also thought at one time that it could be used by the Skeld Waterfront Trust as an extension to their accommodation at the Marina but that had not happened.

Mrs H Sutherland said that grants are available for community asset purchase through the Community Land Fund (Community Land Scotland – Community Land Scotland represents Scotland's new generation of community land owners). The grants support feasibility studies to see if there is a community need for the facility and to make sure that facility is financially OK and breaks even without subsidy. The idea is that the community asset transfers do not pass on a liability to the community. The local team at HIE Shetland support the process. She gave an example of this type of approach where a newly created Development Group got money to do a Feasibility Study (Condition Study and Business Plan). It was seen to be a viable project and they have now moved onto the second stage of applying for capital funds to buy the building.

Mrs H Sutherland said they can also support a 'try before you buy' arrangement. Groups can take a temporary Occupancy Agreement of the camping bods and run them throughout a season. This allows them to see if there is a demand for this type of accommodation and to check that there are local folk who want to run the bods and that the money that comes in can cover the running costs. A further example shows that, with local funding from the Charitable Trust and local contractors doing the work, the building has been made ready for letting again. They also have to have short term licensing arrangements and Fire Risk Assessments. Once completed, the Bod can be opened with a temporary Occupancy Agreement.

The members agreed that all the suggestions are very interesting and hope that some group in the community may be able to take it on.

The Chairman said that, although it is hoped to set up a Development Group in this area, they are not yet at that stage.

Due to the standards now required for tourist accommodation, a cleaner is likely to be required for the building. It was agreed that whichever group takes it on will have to employ a person to oversee the project.

Mrs H Sutherland said that, although they are keen to see the bod buildings being back in use, they are willing to wait for us to see what can be achieved.

The Chairman thanked Mrs H Sutherland for attending the meeting and said we would keep in touch with her. Mrs Sutherland thanked the Community Council for the invitation. She then left.

BUSINESS ARISING: Police: A message was received from PS Bryan Mulholland saying that he will be unable to attend this meeting in person due to an ever growing workload of paperwork. He asks whether there will be an virtual meeting he can join. A reply will be sent saying that we do not have virtual meetings as we do not have the provision for this.

Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF): Viking Community Fund – Bursary Fund: A message was received from Ms Eleanor Gear, Fund Manager at Shetland Community Benefit Fund, saying that the bursary fund is now open for applications. The fund is available to support young people aged 16-25 who are either Studying full-time at UHI Shetland or Undertaking a local apprenticeship. Further details can be found at Apprenticeships, Bursary & Training Funds.

Road Matters: Corner at Shipping Office at Aith: No reply yet from Mr Neil Hutcheson, Head of Roads, regarding this problem.

Bus shelter requested at the Reawick graveyard: No reply from Mr N Hutcheson. The Clerk will check with him before our next meeting.

Clousta Road & Blind spot near Hillcrest, Clousta: It is hoped that the tarring will be done soon on the Clousta Road from the Greenmeadow to the phone box at Clousta. However, it is thought that the blind spot near Hillcrest may remain as it is for some time.

Extra passing place on Vementry Road: No reply from Mr N Hutcheson.

An email was received expressing concern about some of the children having to walk to school during the summer months on this stretch of road. It states that the road is unsafe to walk on due to the narrow verges or lack of verges, depth of ditches, poor visibility and narrow section of road at Braewick where the road runs between the house and shed. The lack of passing places also means that people have to reverse and on a couple of occasions have gone off the road. The road is also in poor condition in places and starting to sink and crack along the edges. The road has also become busier over the past few years.

The members recognised the danger and feel a safety audit should be carried out, if it has not already been done.

Mr N Hutcheson will be contacted regarding this problem.

Passing place signs: It was brought to the attention of the members that a couple of the passing place signs have not been replaced following the road works near Garderhouse recently. This will be reported to Mr N Hutcheson.

Slow signs on the road at Semblester: No reply yet.

Permanent 'Smiley Face' road signs at Bixter: Signs not yet provided.

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

R100 Broadband Evaluation: Ducting ongoing.

Finance: **Core Fund:** The allocation for this financial year has been lodged in the Community Council's bank account.

Association: A message was received from Mr M Duncan informing the Community Council that the next meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday 2 July in Islesburgh Community Centre (Room 12). He attached the papers relating to the meetings and requests the names, etc of attendees by Wednesday 24 June. None of the members volunteered to attend.

Defibrillators: A list of the sites where the Defibrillators are situated was received. It also showed whether they are available 24/7 or restricted. Thanks to Cllr L Peterson for providing a list for this area only.

Island Digital Connectivity Resilience: A message was received from the Scottish Islands Federation saying that they are hosting a meeting on digital connectivity resilience on Thursday 25 June.

LETTER OF SUPPORT: A message was received from the Chairperson to Aith Charity Shop requesting a Letter of Support as they are in the process of preparing an application to secure funding to buy the building and surrounding land from the SIC through a grant from the Scottish Land Fund. This will be willingly given as the members felt that the charity shop is a very valuable asset in this community.

A request was received from the Table Tennis Association requesting a Letter of Support for their application towards their application for assistance towards the provision of a Table Tennis Development Officer. This application was on a very tight schedule for submission of their documentation and we were unable to provide this in time. However, it can be provided at a later date, if required.

PRE-APPLIC CONSULTATION NOTIFICATION – SSEN TRANSMISSION LT622 –

Northern Shetland 220kV to Kergord 132kV: An email was received from Gordon Bell, Community Liaison Manager for Shetland, attaching a Pre-Application Consultation Notification (PAC Event 2 – Alignment options) which has been submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government.

Drop-in Events: A further message was received saying that SSEN Transmission will be holding a number of events w/b 29 June to provide an update on the various projects in the development process.

DROP-IN EVENTS: An email was received Ms Sita Goudie at the Development Dept giving details of the Drop-in events to promote Business, Community and Voluntary Group Support which are taking place throughout June. One of the events will be held in Aith Hall on Thursday 25th.

CAMPAIGN ON PREPARING TO BE AN ELECTED MEMBER: Mr M Duncan sent a message saying that SIC will be running a campaign later in the year to encourage more people to stand for Council elections next year. Anyone interested can register now. Both Cllrs Peterson and Robinson are available to answer questions if anyone wishes to contact them.

UPDATE ON MOTHBALLED SKELD SCHOOL: Cllr L Peterson informed the members that the Skeld School, which was mothballed in 2024, was again discussed at a SIC meeting earlier in the day. Government guidance is that mothballing should not exceed three years and by the end of the 2026/2027 financial year the Skeld School will have been mothballed for that length of time. In the meantime the longer term future for the school will be considered. The report put forward said one option could be a move towards a statutory consultation on a permanent closure, the status quo or other suggestions. The purpose of the report presented is not to embark on the consultation on a permanent

closure at this time but to explore all the options available. Cllr Peterson had asked whether the proposals could include using the school as a base for children with complex needs or a childcare facility and was informed that it could be used for lots of purposes, not just educational ones.

EARLY YEARS CHILDCARE: Cllr L Peterson informed the members that the "Early Adopter Community" childcare funding, which comes from the Scottish Government, has been continued, despite there being an amount unspent from the previous financial period. This funding is to be spent on childcare projects, including on the West side.

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

NEXT MEETING: Due to some of the Community Council members being unavailable on our normal July date, it was agreed to have our recess in July and that our next meeting will be held in Bixter Community Hall on Monday 10 August 2026 at 7.30pm..