

MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2020

At a meeting of LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL held via video conference at 7.00pm

Members

Mr G Robinson
Mr S Hay
Mrs J Williamson
Mrs A Simpson
Mr A Irvine

Ms K Fraser
Mr A Wenger
Mr A Johnston
Mr A Carter
Mr D Ristori

Ex Officio

Cllr C Smith
Cllr S Flaws
Cllr S Leask

In Attendance

Ms B Wishart, MSP
Mr M Duncan, SIC
Mr S Mathieson, Living Lerwick
Ms F Valente, Clerk

Chairman

Mr J Anderson

11/20/01

Circular

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

11/20/02

Apologies for absence

None received.

11/20/03

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

11/20/04

Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th October 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by Mr Simpson and seconded by Mr Ristori, after a couple of corrections to attendees were made.

11/20/05

Correspondence

Mr Wenger asked if there had been a response regarding the access road over Staney Hill. SIC had responded by pointing out that the road was on private property and that it

was difficult to intervene in the issue about cars using the road. Mr Wenger stressed the need to ensure that vehicles did not use the road as it was too dangerous. The Chairman said he would speak to SIC Roads to see what advice they had to give in relation to contacting the landowner.

Mrs Simpson said she was disappointed in the response from SIC regarding the payment of school meals at the Anderson High School. She could not understand why a card payment system was taking so long, when it was operating in all other schools. Mr Anderson agreed and said that the idea that it would take time to get parents up to speed with the new system didn't make sense as all the feeder schools to the AHS used ParentPay already.

There was a discussion about what the lack of ParentPay meant for pupils buying meals in the canteen and the fact that pupils who received free school meals were easily identified which was unfair and did not help overcome the stigma of poverty. It was pointed out that the take up of free school meals in each council was sometimes used as a measure of need when it came to government funding and therefore any potential failure to take up school meals, perhaps because pupils were too embarrassed, could impact on the budget.

MSP Wishart said she was astonished that this issue had still not been resolved as this had been discussed many times over the years. She offered to write to SIC on behalf of LCC. The clerk was asked to write to all the Highlands & Islands MSPs to highlight concerns. Cllr Smith and Cllr Leask said they would raise the matter with Children's Services.

11/20/06 **Police Report**

There were no comments on the report submitted by email from Police Scotland.

11/20/07 **Core Funding Report – October 2020**

There were no comments on the core funding report.

11/20/08 **Grant Application**

Sandveien Neighbourhood Centre had applied for a grant for new external lighting at the centre to allow outside activities for young people to continue during the winter months. After a discussion about the level of grant funding SNC had received from other organisations it was decided that it would be appropriate to award 50% of the grant, which would amount to £516. This was proposed by Mr Robinson and seconded by Mr Wenger. Ms Fraser said it was a good example of a practical project to help people stay in contact during the winter. Mr Anderson said that the grant should be awarded on the basis that low energy lighting is used.

11/20/09 **Covid 19 – Communities Recovery Grant**

Further crisis grant funding was on offer from the Scottish Government via HIE. The conditions of the grant have been revised since the first offer of a grant. There was a discussion about what kind of projects could be funded through partnership with local community groups. The clerk would write to all local community groups to ask whether there were anything needed to help get their organisations up and running again after the restrictions are lifted. A Facebook post inviting ideas from local groups will be posted.

11/20/10 **Covid 19 – Small grant received from VAS**

A grant for £500 had been obtained from Voluntary Action Shetland to be used to procure food/shopping vouchers to give to people in need. This would only amount to 20 vouchers at £25 each. There was a short discussion on how best to reach out to people in need. It was suggested that the Citizen's Advice Bureau or the Foodbank could be asked to help. The clerk would make arrangements to get the vouchers and sort out the mechanism for getting them to people via a third agency.

11/20/11 **Town Centre Fund Capital Grant**

The projects that had been proposed for Lerwick Town Centre were discussed. This included the proposal to site an electric vehicle/bike charger that LCC had discussed at the October meeting. Living Lerwick had proposed a series of murals for buildings around commercial street and the Esplanade. SIC had submitted a plan to upgrade parking facilities at Church Road which would include better access for disabled drivers. Mr Duncan explained that with £73k to split between Lerwick and Scalloway members had to prioritise which projects should be funded as it would not be possible to carry out all of them.

There was a discussion about the relative merits of the projects and members were asked to vote, putting the projects in order of preference. Overall, the most popular project was LCC's vehicle charging point. In second place was Living Lerwick's mural project and in last place was the Church Road parking project. The clerk was asked to pass on the result of the vote to Mr Duncan as he had to leave the meeting before the end of this item.

11/20/12 **Grieg Seafood Community Fund**

Grieg Seafood had written to LCC to explain its community fund and to invite a representative of the community council to be part of the review process on grant applications from the Shetland community. Ms Fraser volunteered to take part and the clerk was asked to write back to Grieg Seafood to let them know.

11/20/13 **Island Communities Impact Assessment Survey**

There was a short discussion about the Island Communities impact assessment survey which was due at the end of the year. Ms Wishart explained that the results of the survey would be used by the Islands' Minister to help assess the impact of the Islands' Act.

11/20/14 **Pitt Lane Garden**

Following the discussion at the October meeting about the Pitt Lane community garden Mr Gibson had written to the community council to express his concerns about the unofficial community garden that had not been approved by SIC. Mr Gibson gave some background about the historic nature of the Lanes area of Lerwick and stressed that the community garden was not in keeping with the existing housing. He said that housing was still needed in the area. Members were sympathetic to his concerns and appreciated the historic context. It was agreed that the comments should be kept on file for when the planning application for the site was discussed. The clerk was asked to reply to Mr Gibson to thank him for his email and let him know the outcome of the discussion.

11/20/15

Discussion with MSP Beatrice Wishart – Community Response to Covid

Ms Wishart said she was delighted to have a chance to join in with the meeting and to take part in the discussions. She said that this was a “listening exercise” and in particular she was interested in people’s concerns about the current situation and whether there was anything else that the government could be offering to support businesses and the community.

Mr Hay said that he was grateful to Ms Wishart for raising the issue of cabin sharing on the Northlink ferries, which are no longer available leading to much higher fares for anyone wanting a berth. Ms Wishart said she was still trying to progress this issue with the Scottish Government and was waiting for a reply.

Mr Mathieson said he had a few issues to raise with Ms Wishart regarding tourism but as this would take time he would contact her after the meeting.

Mr Anderson said he was concerned about the number of people in Shetland that have been very lonely during the lockdown and even though restrictions are lifting many people are still not able to get out and see their friends and family as many of the normal social activities have been cancelled. Ms Wishart replied that this was a serious health and wellbeing issue. She was also concerned about the young people that appeared to have been left behind, in terms of employment and training opportunities. It was agreed that this issue should be discussed in more detail at the next LCC meeting in December.

There was a discussion about what could be done to alleviate loneliness and to help to make it easier for people to take advantage of some of the few places that remain open where people can meet, ie cafes. It was pointed out that many people are unable to afford to go out for coffee with their friends and family and so this makes it difficult while restrictions on visiting people’s homes are in place. It was suggested that one way round this would be to explore ideas that have been successful in other places such as “suspended” coffees, whereby customers can pay for drinks/food for other people who are less fortunate. Mr Mathieson said this was an interesting idea and something that Living Lerwick would like to be involved with. The clerk was asked to contact Emma Miller to discuss how this might work.

11/20/16

Any other business

- a. Mr Hay asked if there had been any news on the projector project for ET/Taing House that LCC had helped to fund during the summer. The clerk was tasked with asking for a progress report.
- b. Mr Hay commented that the drains appeared to be blocked in the lanes area as during heavy rain the water is not being drained properly and is cascading down the lanes to the street. Cllr Leask said he had observed this too and would raise it with SIC.
- c. Ms Fraser said that due to the crisis the Staney Hill Hall Committee had not been able to spend the Loot for Lerwick grant. She asked whether she could put the £570 grant towards brightening up the Staney Hill area with a Christmas tree and new lights for the hall. Members agreed that this would be a suitable use of the money and would be a cheering sight this winter.
- d. Mr Wenger raised the issue of docking weeds and SIC’s response to previous complaints that there was no resources available to clear the weeds. Mr Wenger offered to do this job himself if SIC would permit this. The clerk was asked to check with SIC.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

Minute ends.

CHAIRMAN
LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Chairman.....

Date.....