

Unst Community Council

Chair

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Unst, Shetland

Clerk

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st March 2021 at 6.30 pm using WebEx Phone Conferencing

Present:

Patrick Fordyce, Chair
Claire Priest, Vice Chair
David Cooper
John Peterson
Janice Priest
Hazel Spence
Gordon Thomson
Julie Thomson
Ryan Thomson, North Isles Councillor (ex-officio)

Attending:

Frances Browne, Community Involvement and Development Officer
Josie McMillan, Clerk

01/03/21 Apologies

Caroline Hunter
Duncan Anderson, North Isles Councillor (ex-officio)
Alec Priest, North Isles Councillor (ex-officio)
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer
PC Angela Manson

02/03/21 Minutes from the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 18th January were proposed by Claire and seconded by Hazel.

03/03/21 Declaration of Interest

Claire declared an interest in agenda item 05/03/21 Health Centre G.P. Vacancies. Janice declared an interest in agenda item 06/03/21 Shetland Space Centre, 09/03/21 Application for Planning and 12/03/21.3 Energy Isles. Julie declared an interest in agenda item 06/03/21 Shetland Space Centre. Gordon declared an interest in 11/03/21.1 Unst Junior Football Association.

04/03/21 Matters Arising from last minutes

There were no matters arising.

05/03/21 Health Centre G. P. Vacancies

Michael Dickson, Chief Executive, NHS Shetland answered our email and apologised for not replying to our letters. He said that NHS Shetland's primary focus right now is on rolling out the COVID vaccine to as many people as possible. Mr Dickson said they are absolutely committed to working with the community in Unst to develop a sustainable and resilient model of care that continues to meet the needs of the residents of Unst. He said that it is worth highlighting that COVID has highlighted specific challenges unique to how they deliver healthcare in Shetland and they must consider how to take provision forward

in Unst with this in mind. Mr Dickson explained “that the fact is that it is no longer reasonable for us to expect an individual to remain on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and the new GP contract that is being introduced alters the requirement for the GP to respond to urgent care situations and we have to find solutions to address these challenges. Whilst our focus for the next few months is addressing the very real threat posed by COVID and rapidly deploying the vaccine as quickly as we can, Brian Chittick and Kirsty Brightwell have commenced work on a number of options that will ensure Unst continues to have the same standard of provision moving forward. The aim of this process is to look at how we address the inherent weaknesses of relying on a single person to do everything for an island community and we hope to be able to come back to you with these options in May / June. In the meantime, I can confirm GP cover will continue through the innovative Discover the Joy GP project that allows GPs wishing to experience what it means to deliver healthcare in a positive remote and rural community, and we will shortly be advertising for roles which includes positions in Unst and Yell.” NHS Shetland are refreshing the Clinical Strategy for Shetland: a survey was available online asking for the community’s experience of using their health and wellbeing services, and to identify areas for improvement. This survey finished at the end of February. Community Councillors wanted to minute their appreciation for the Unst Health Centre staff. It has been a very challenging time with Dr Emma Ramsay leaving last year and Dr Ruth Booth retiring at the end of March. The Health Centre staff are working with several different locums and are organising the vaccine rollout for Unst. Everyone recognised how important their service is all to the community of Unst.

06/03/21 Shetland Space Centre and planning applications

Planning Ref: 2021/005/PPF
Proposal: Vertical launch space port including launch pad complex, satellite tracking station, assembly and integration hangar buildings, with associated security fencing, access, servicing and infrastructure.
Address: Land at Lamba Ness, Unst, Shetland
Applicant: Shetland Space Centre Limited
Date of Consultation: 22 January 2021

Planning Ref: 2021/003/PPF
Proposal: Proposed internal and external alterations to redundant brewery building to form a Launch and Range Control Centre for the Shetland Space Centre
Address: Valhalla Brewery, Haroldswick, Unst, Shetland ZE2 9TJ
Applicant: Shetland Space Centre Limited
Date of Consultation: 18 January 2021

Patrick has spoken to the Planning Aid Service about the Space Centre Application. Notes from this meeting have been circulated to all councillors. Patrick also drafted a response to the Shetland Space Centre planning application after the special Community Council meeting held on the 8th February. This document was circulated before tonight’s meeting. There are a lot more comments in now for this application on the SIC Planning website. 67 comments (21 objections, 44 supporting and 2 neutral). A question raised was - would access to Skaw be allowed during the construction phase. A member said that crofters have not been told that they can’t have access to Skaw. There will be times during launches that access will be restricted but not, it was thought, during the construction phase. There was a discussion about how the Community Council could make sure that SSC would be accountable for its planning and community promises. Frank Strang said, before lockdown, that SSC were planning to set up a liaison group, with membership from the Community Council, community representative and crofters. When Patrick spoke to Elizabeth Johnson, she told him that this was one of the things Frank Strang wanted to set up as soon as possible. Members discussed whether this group would have the right powers, i.e. “have teeth”. They asked if it would be possible to check with the Planning Department what the process was to make sure that planning is carried out as per the application. Patrick said that he could contact

the Planning Department and ask about this. He had hoped to get more clarity from Mr Wood, PAS, who still has to get back to him with more information. It was decided that Patrick would strengthen the conclusion of the planning response. This will be circulated within the next few days, and Councillors will have another chance to comment on the amended document before it is submitted to the SIC Planning Department by the 8th March 2021.

07/03/21 Unst Partnership (UP) Update.

Gordon said that the UP shop will reopen on Thursday 4th March. It will be open on Monday nights between 6–8pm to take in donations. The next skip day is the 27th March, with the last skip day being Saturday 24th April. Peter Sandison has been employed as the Recycling Centre Development Officer. He will be sending a mail shot to all households asking what people would like to see in the recycling centre.

08/03/21 Community Involvement Update

Frances said that halls are able to claim funding from the Isles Equivalent Payment Fund provided by the Scottish Government. She has made the halls aware of this and North Unst Public Hall have already received funding.

09/03/21 Applications for Planning

Planning Ref: 2021/071/PPF
Proposal: New dwelling house
Address: Site South Of Roegarth, Baltasound, Unst, Shetland
Applicant: Alec And Helen Priest
Date of Consultation: 25 February 2021

There were no objections to this planning application. Councillors were happy that a family with young children were building a house and making a commitment to the island.

10/03/21 Unadopted Roads

There were no applications for unadopted roads.

11/03/21 Application for Donations

11/01/21.2 Ability Shetland

After getting further information about this application for donation, which was circulated before the meeting, there was another discussion and it was agreed to give a donation of £400 towards this application.

11/03/21.1 Unst Junior Football Association

An application was received from Unst Junior Football Association to buy 2 sets of portable goal posts at a cost to the group of £4,264. The football pitch is owned by the Leisure Centre. Members asked why they weren't paying for the goal posts. Gordon explained that Shetland Recreation Trust (SRT) aren't willing to contribute to the costs of replacing the goal posts. Members felt strongly that SRT should replace the goal posts, SRT are funded by the Charitable Trust. It is a community asset; a football pitch is not much use without goal posts. These also need to be a recognised brand, with the kite mark, so can be covered by insurance. SRT didn't replace the goalposts last time they needed replacing. The football pitch is also in a poor state as well, it hasn't been maintained. Frances said that some pitches are owned by the Council and looked after by them and others are owned by Communities, who used to be awarded funding towards maintaining them. Ryan said that he would follow this up with SRT on behalf of the Community Council. He said that if SRT can't maintain the pitch, it would be better to look at a longer-term solution, maybe either the community adopts the pitch, or the Council do. Ryan will get back to the Community Council after he has spoken to SRT. It was agreed to give a donation of £700 towards the costs of buying new goal posts.

The Community Council still has funds available to spend before the end of the financial year, 31st March 2021. Frances will check with Michael Duncan if Community Development Funding can be carried forward to another year. There is another meeting on Monday 29th March so there might be further applications at that meeting.

12/03/21 Correspondence

12/03/21.1 Scrap/abandoned Cars

Patrick circulated an email outlining the present position about removal of scrap cars. Autogreen, who have the contact for removal of many makes of cars, have not collected any from Unst for the last year or so. Even though there are several which have been registered with them for collection. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

12/03/21.2 Shetland Community Benefit Fund – Revised Grant Scheme

Gordon said that there wasn't much happening with this fund. There would be a letter sent out to Community Councils, outlining the application procedure. Some Community Councils have been concerned with the proposed process for distributing the funds. Gordon said that Chris Bunyan has said that SCBF will keep groups informed about what is happening.

12/03/21.3 Energy Isles

There was a meeting on the 25th January. The Community Council has not yet received the minutes for this meeting.

13/03/21 Community Council Finances

There is still money available in the Community Development Fund for community groups. This has to be allocated by the 31st March 2021.

14/03/21 A.O.C.B.

14/03/21.1 Beatrice Wishart – Petition Air Traffic Control

There was a discussion as to whether the Community Council could complete this online petition as a group. Frances said that she would ask Michael Duncan and get back to us. A lot of members have already completed it as individuals.

14/03/21.2 Snow Clearing

Councillors wanted to minute their thanks to all the road clearing crews for their hard work and time they put in keeping the roads passable in atrocious conditions.

14/03/21,3 Christmas Lights

Another thank you that Councillors wanted to minute was to everyone who took part in putting up extra Christmas Lights over the Festive season. There had been a lot of positive feedback about this.

14/03/21.4 Shetland Space Centre – Community Benefit Fund

There was a question about whether this fund was still going to be set up by SSC. Patrick said that he would find out about this.

Patrick reminded everyone that Citizen's Advice Shetland and Beatrice Wishart, MSP, had expressed an interest in attending a Community Council meeting. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

15/03/21 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is set for Monday 29th March 2021.

Chairman: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____