

Skerries Community Council
Minute of meeting held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 18th November 2021.
Meeting held through Web-ex

Members present:

Douglas Anderson (Chair)
Marina Anderson
Janice Hughson
Marina Tait

In attendance:

Violet McQuade, Clerk (notes).
Pat Christie, SIC Community & Development Officer (from 3.00 pm)
Ryan Thomson, North Isles Councillor

1) **Apologies**

Bertha Anderson, Frances Anderson and Michael Duncan.

2) **Declaration of Interest to any Agenda Item**

Chairman asked for declaration of interests - none received.

3) **Minutes of last Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on the 30th September 2021, were approved. Proposed by Marina Anderson, seconded by Janice Hughson.

4) **Matters Arising**

All matters arising to be dealt with on the agenda.

5) **Shetland Community Benefit Fund**

It is hoped that Ken Allan and Pat Christie will be able to visit Skerries, with a view to discussing proposed changes to the area around the fire station. Currently awaiting reply – Pat will follow this up.

It is proposed that the meeting will include discussion on the SCBF. Currently two proposals for applying for funds are:

- Change fire station into Caravan Park.
- Refurbish the old watch hut.

These items are still to be discussed; could be projects for the Skerries Development Group.

6) **Update from Skerries Development Group**

6.1 Waiting Room – Furniture needed for the waiting room. A meeting will be held to decide on what is required, then funding to be applied for. Temporary bench seating could be provided until furniture is bought.

A new sign was purchased; it is now in position on the front of the waiting room. The invoice for the cost of erecting the handrail has been paid. Water is still to be connected. Bottled water could be provided until the water is connected.

6.2 Plants – All the plants and bulbs that were purchased through the SDG were recently planted in various locations around Skerries.

6.3 Fire Station (possible development of site) – Pat following this up.

7) Ferry

7.1 Christmas timetable - The Christmas timetable has not been published yet. It was proposed to ask for additional ferry runs over the festive season, as there would not be any ferry runs on the Mondays. It is thought the last ferry, weather permitting will be on Christmas Eve, and then the next one would be on Wednesday, 29th December. The proposed additional runs would be for Tuesday, 28th December, Thursday, 30th December and Tuesday, 4th January. Details of request to be sent to Transport Planning.

Action: Violet – send formal request to Transport Planning

Ryan thought that the timetable had been drawn up, but could see no reason why request could not be sent in. He asked to be cc'd into request.

7.1 Proposed new timetable - A copy of the proposed timetable was sent to the Executive Manager, Transport Planning the Executive Manager, Ferry Operations.

Douglas read out the email that had come from the Executive Manager, Transport Planning, *'I am in the process of making a case for extra resources in my service to carry out a range of work that we currently don't have people to do. One of the those projects is the business case for the Skerries ferry service. Once we have a clearer idea of progress on this I can programme this work and engage with Skerries Community Council'*.

Transport Planning is currently advertising for a Transport Assistant on the MyJobScotland website, so it is assumed that funding has been approved. Assuming that is linked it is hoped that this will be dealt with in the near future.

8) Update on Community Nurse

8.1 Proposed service - The NHS is now looking towards a Caretaker Scheme. This would involve engaging someone to the post that would not have the higher qualifications, as had been looked for before, but would be a medically qualified person. It is hoped that a couple could be taken on, both medically qualified, as permanent residents, and as go-betweens between patients in the community and the GP/Health Service. Given that recruitment of a nurse with the same qualifications as the previous resident nurse, this seems to be the next best option. This is what the Health Service is currently planning.

8.2 Nurse House - The nurse house needs attention, and brought up to standard. A survey of all similar properties in Shetland is being carried out; Skerries nurse house is on the list for an appraisal.

9) Smoke Alarms

Douglas has been trying to engage a contractor to carry out the work. It is not expected that the work could be done before Christmas. Contractors want to be able to do all the houses in one day. The contractor will provide a quote. It was agreed to send the list of properties to contractors, along with telephone numbers, so contractors can contact customers directly.

Action: Marina/Douglas to send list to contractors

10) Update on Salmon Cages

No update. Keep Pat informed if any more cages move, or any other problems.

11) Update on Waiting Room

Mostly dealt with under Item 6.1

Plumbing work still to be carried out. Problems finding the connection, and the route of the water pipe that went to the old toilet block was situated, near where the waiting room is situated. The water pipe should still be there. Contractors have asked for the ground at the back of the fishermen's store to be cleared so the ground can be dug up and a new pipe laid there. However, it is thought the pipe was situated at the front of the store.

The installation of the water was part of the agreement with Ports and Harbours, who would hold plans showing where the pipe is situated. It was thought that going by the front of the store would be easier

as going by the back of the store. It was agreed that Douglas would contact Andrew Inkster to find out where the pipe is situated, and additional measures regarding water installation.

Action: Douglas to email Andrew Inkster

12) Kirk

Fran Henderson, Minister, Church of Scotland, has told Janice that if the Skerries community have any concerns regarding the kirk they are to contact Fran direct, and not to contact the Church of Scotland. She has said she wants to try to help in any way she can to keep the kirk for the community. She is willing to come to Skerries to speak to people if they have any questions. Next year when the kirk is on the list for sale, the community is '*not to panic*'. It does not mean it will close down.

It was suggested that a meeting should be arranged for the next time that Fran is in Skerries. It was agreed for Janice to find out the date for the next visit from Fran, and to organise a meeting to be held while she is in Skerries, if that is suitable. See if the Church of Scotland would change its mind about selling the kirk – it was pointed out that in Skerries, if you want to go to a kirk service, you cannot jump in a car and head off to another kirk. Apart from the usual kirk services, a kirk is needed for holding services for funerals, weddings and christenings.

Action: Janice to contact Minister re next visit to Skerries

13) Correspondence Received

All correspondence has been circulated. Correspondence noted were:

13.1 Request for funds - A request from the Shetland Cattle Herdbook Society came through asking for money from the SCBF. It was agreed that in this instance the request would not be approved.

13.2 Local Government Housing Strategy - This is regarding the rebuilding programme that will not affect Skerries. It was noted that there are currently two empty council houses in Skerries.

14) AOCB

14.1 Drainage at the road above Vaarheim. There was a discussion about the lack of drainage in this section of road. It was agreed that the next time the road is flooded a photograph would be taken, which will be sent to Roads.

Action: Douglas send photo to Roads

14.2 Bid for funding - Violet and Pat have completed a 'Together for Our Planet - Application form' asking for funding from the Lottery. If the bid is successful, the money is to be used for providing skips for taking away large waste items, and for purchasing plants.

14.3 New Life Church – proposed visit to Skerries - Pat – New Life Church have asked about giving a gift to the community. They would like to come to Skerries to celebrate what the community has done through lockdown, and possibly doing a Christmas service. They want to bring in a singer as well, to sing some Christmas songs. The kirk elder has been approached – he has no objections, but Fran Henderson is still to be contacted. Pat asked if it would be okay to follow this up. It was agreed that Pat is to take this forward. Pat will get in touch with Fran, then get back to the community for an update.

14.4 Christmas day - There is usually a gathering in the kirk on Christmas day. It was agreed that the Community Council would support this.

15) Date of next meeting

It was agreed to contact the Secretary of the Skerries Development Group (SDG) with a view to holding the Community Council meeting after the SDG meeting on the 20th January 2022. Therefore, the next SCC meeting will be held at approximately 3.30 on the 20th January 2022 – time to be confirmed in due course.

Actions

- Violet – send formal request for extra ferry runs over the festive period to Transport Planning
- Marina/Douglas to send list of properties requiring fire alarms to contractors
- Douglas to email Andrew Inkster regarding water pipe in relation to waiting room
- Douglas send photo (of road above Vaarheim) to Roads
- Janice to contact Fran Henderson re next visit to Skerries

Chair Signature

Signed.....