

GULBERWICK, QUARFF & CUNNINGSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2021 **VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING AT 7.30PM**

A. THE CIRCULAR CALLING THE MEETING WAS HELD AND READ BY THE CLERK.

Nominations for chair were called for but none were forthcoming. Mr C Clark agreed to stand in as interim chairperson for the meeting.

Mrs Pat Christie was in attendance and Mr C Clark proposed her appointment as a Community Council member. Mrs L Johnston seconded the appointment and everyone welcomed Mrs Christie to the Community Council.

ACTION: Clerk to ensure the correct paperwork for Mrs P Christie's appointment is organised and sent to Mr M Duncan.

B. PRESENT	Mrs L Johnston Mr R Skinley	Ms A Garrick-Wright (from 8.14pm)	Mr S Douglas
EX OFFICIO	Mr R McGregor Mr S Flaws	Mr G Smith Mr A Duncan	Mr C Smith
IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs K Geddes	Mrs P Christie	
CHAIRPERSON	Mr C Clark (interim)		
APOLOGIES	Mrs S Wishart Mr M Duncan Mr P Campbell	PC Gordon Mackay Mrs M Davis	Mr E MacPherson Mrs A Arnett
NOT PRESENT	Ms A Hawick		

Information – due to the Covid-19 Virus pandemic meetings are being held online.

C. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As members of the SIC Planning Board, Cllr R McGregor and Cllr C Smith declared an interest in agenda item 9 – Planning Applications.

The clerk, Mrs K Geddes declared an interest in the Gulberwick planning application as it was on neighbouring land to her property.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 November were approved on the motion of Mr R Skinley and seconded by Mrs L Johnston.

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

1. Smoke Alarms

Concerns were raised by members at the November meeting regarding new legislation coming in requiring householders to fit smoke alarms which are connected to each other. Heat sensors also need to be fitted in kitchens and in some properties, carbon monoxide alarms too. Members were worried that many people were unaware of the new legislation, were unaware that if you did not follow it your insurance may be invalid, and that some people would not be able to afford it.

The clerk wrote to Shetland Citizen's Advice Bureau for advice and Bureau Manager Karen Eunson replied with details of local support available. She said:

You will find all the info about this new legislation here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/>

She explained some of the financial support detailed in the guidance and then went on to describe what is available locally:

So there are 2 options for financial support for vulnerable people:

- The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has funding to install the alarms in the homes of people assessed to be "at high risk from fire". They offer a free home fire safety visit service (<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/at-home/home-fire-safety-visit>) and as part of this they would assess if someone was in the "high risk" category.
- "Older and disabled homeowners on low incomes" can contact the One Stop Shop (<https://www.hjaltland.org.uk/one-stop-shop>) which is run by Hjaltland Housing Association and which is Shetland's "Care and Repair service". However I have spoken to Hjaltland who say the One Stop Shop were provided with very limited funds (£5000) to support the installation of alarms and it is already almost fully committed. So "older and disabled homeowners on low incomes" can contact them but it is probably unlikely that they will have funding to pay for the installation of alarms.

The options for financial help are therefore very limited.

There was some discussion around the information supplied and disappointment expressed that more could not be done. It was thought that the supply of the alarms may be an additional problem as so many people were needing to install them and that this may lead to a further postponement of the introduction of the legislation – currently homeowners have until February 1st 2022 to comply.

The cost of the installation was also discussed – some people may not have the skills to fit the alarms themselves and an electrician may be needed. It was also noted that the alarms can be linked using wifi, so the often more costly option of wiring the alarms in is not required.

Cllr A Duncan said that he had recently had the necessary alarms fitted in his house and that the figure of £220 for an average home – quoted in the guidance – was about correct in his experience. He advised homeowners to shop around as prices could vary, and to use a qualified electrician.

ACTION: Clerk to share details on the Facebook page and everyone present to continue to spread the word about the new legislation requirements.

2. Community Defibrillator Repair Costs

The question of who could – or should – pay for the maintenance and upkeep of community defibrillators was discussed at the November meeting. Mrs A Arnett agreed to find out how other communities were paying for things like new batteries and she emailed following the meeting with information.

She said that many of the community defibrillators were originally bought and installed through community effort and fundraising but once in place the host venue often takes it on. Sometimes the host venue can access a financial contribution from their Community Council. For example Bressay Community Council currently pay for anything that is needed; Scottish Fire and Rescue may be able to advise with maintenance of batteries and pads (but not the costs.)

Cunningsburgh Hall have recently paid £70 for a replacement battery for the community

defibrillator at their hall and though they were happy to support this as it is likely to only be every two years, members indicated that they would support a grant application for costs such as this in the future.

3. Grant Application Thanks

Cllr R McGregor expressed his personal gratitude as well as on behalf of the Quarff War Memorial Group for the extreme generosity of the Gulberwick, Quarff and Cunningsburgh Community Council's continuing financial support. The group has a Soup and Sweet Sunday Teas planned in a few weeks time and they are confident that this fundraising should see them over the finish line for the money required for the project.

4. Crashed Vehicle at Roadside in Quarff

A vehicle which crashed near Henry's Loch in Quarff and was 'written-off' before Christmas is still awaiting pick-up by The Amenity Trust. Constituents have contacted Cllr R McGregor expressing concern that wreckage from the car could become a hazard in strong winds and the police and Amenity Trust have both been contacted several times as a result. The vehicle's registered owner has passed it on to the Amenity Trust so the hold-up may be with them.

ACTION: Mr C Clark to contact the Amenity Trust for an update. He did so two days after the meeting to find out that they were awaiting paperwork but the car had been picked up the previous day.

2. POLICE REPORT

The police report for October/November was shared with members prior to the meeting.

There were eighteen incidents recorded for Gulberwick, Cunningsburgh and Quarff which include:

- Two vehicle road traffic collision – serious injuries to 3 persons – One driver charged with dangerous driving
- Two vehicle road traffic collision – No injuries
- Two vehicle road traffic collision – No injuries, one driver charged with careless driving
- Three vehicle road traffic collision – serious injury to 1 person – One driver charged with careless driving
- One report of careless driving – Enquiries ongoing

The other incidents were of a routine/minor nature.

Members also asked for more details about why the speed limits had been introduced at Gulberwick and the Black Gaet – was it to reduce accidents at the Black Gaet? SIC Councillors explained that it was part of a trial to promote active travel and make it safer for walking, running and cycling. It was hoped that less accidents would be a bonus.

Members asked whether the improvement options which were being discussed for the Black Gaet junctions were still happening as nothing had been heard for a while. SIC Councillors said that improvements were still being discussed but that they were maybe seeing if the reduced speed limits make a difference first.

3. FINANCE

The bank statement on January 18th reads £9,273.06.

We have paid the grants agreed at the last meeting – £400 to the Royal Voluntary Service, £74.40 to the churches for the wreaths, £617.25 to Cunningsburgh Football Club, £195 to the Cunningsburgh Christmas Party and £1,000 to the Quarff War Memorial Group. The Gulberwick Christmas Party only required £79.77 of the £100 awarded to them and no

families came forward requesting vouchers to help their child attend the party. All the hot meal invoices are up to date and paid – twelve weeks of meals to both Mackenzie's and the new business The Kitchen Table totalling £2,500.

The £70 paid to VAS for the Independent Examination of the Accounts was the only other spend outwith normal expenses since the last meeting.

Grants Spend

We have only spent £3,048.92 of our grant funds this year so far. Our grants total is usually in the region of £5,000-£6,000 per year. Everyone is to do a big push for grant applications as we only have the next two meetings to consider them and get the last of the money out.

2019-20 Accounts

Our accounts have been independently evaluated by VAS and found to be in good order. We only spent £2,495.37 of our £3,000 CDF Distribution Fund so had to account for the underspend. All £3,000 has to be spent on grants. As it was during Covid lockdown when we were swamped with extra Covid relief money which was being handed out to support many more groups than usual the clerk forgot to keep track of the GQC CC own grant funding. The SIC is happy with the explanation and we have been asked to spend the leftover money by the end of the financial year instead of handing it back. The clerk thanked Michael Duncan for his support and understanding with the oversight.

Covid Relief Fund

We have spent £7,500 of the £8,000 grants we got and eighteen people a week are currently receiving meals. We still have a few grocery vouchers left for Mackenzie's and Sound. We can pay for two more weeks of meals out of the remaining funds so discussions need to be made around whether members want to carry on with the project and how we can secure extra funding to do so.

The clerk explained that there are two funds which we may be able to apply for to keep the project going. The Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund closes this week and we will hear a decision on Monday – if that is not successful then we will need to look at an alternative source of funding to allow us to apply for the Shetland Charitable Trust Small Grants Scheme as that requires match funding. A local group has indicated they may use the GQC CC's own grant form to apply for Community Council money to help keep the project going and this may be an option going forward.

ACTION: Everyone to do a big push to get grant applications in as there are only two more meetings before the money has to be spent. For the Free Hot Meals Project the Clerk is to apply to the Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund this week and the Shetland Charitable Trust the following week if we are successful with the first bid. She will explore options for support from local groups if required.

4. GRANT APPLICATIONS & SHETLAND COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND UPDATE

There were no grant applications – either from the Shetland Community Benefit Fund or to the Community Council to consider.

The SCBF have been in touch to share details of the projects which have been awarded money in the last year and to say they can offer support with advertising the grant scheme if we require it.

Mr C Clark explained that he had been at the latest SCBF meeting and that there was money going out to groups throughout Shetland but he felt that it was disappointing that so few of the projects are addressing poverty and fuel poverty issues..

GQC CC's dog fouling project was still progressing and there is now agreement from SIC officials that the bins would be emptied and bags replaced if they are along the essay kerr

route. The SIC have also agreed to put the bins up. The location of the Gulberwick bin has been chosen but locations for Cunningsburgh, Quarff and Fladdabister need to be decided.

Members agreed that the bins could be ordered and that the Community Council would fund the fourth bin which the grant does not cover.

Plans to build and install an orca-shaped beach sculpture/bin for beach bruck at the Gulberwick beach are ongoing. Mr Clark has met the landowner for a site visit and they are happy with the project. SIC Waste Services have also agreed to empty the bin. The site may need some civil works to flatten the area and it may be an opportunity to look at improving access to the beach at the same time.

It was agreed that Scottish Water should be contacted for an update on the work they are doing near the beach and to see if their plans will have any impact on what can be done.

GQC CC can apply to the SCBF for funds for another project a year after the dog fouling one – this would be on June 14th. It was agreed that Mr Clark would continue with the project, get some more detailed costings and to report back to members before a final decision is made to continue with the project. Mr Clark will also look at organising another meeting of the Steering Group for progressing local projects such as this.

ACTION: Mr Clark to organise a meeting of the Local Projects Steering Group and to continue to get more details on progressing the Orca Beach Sculpture. Members living in Cunningsburgh, Quarff or Fladdabister to let Mr Clark know possible locations for the dog waste bins. Mr Clark to order the bins and pass invoices to the clerk. Clerk to contact Scottish Water for update on Gulberwick works and possible effect on orca sculpture project.

5. ROAD ISSUES/CAMPAIGN FOR REDUCED SPEED LIMITS

Following a serious road accident in Fladdabister in November which police reported was as a result of water on the road, the clerk wrote to SIC Roads to ask them if they were aware of the problem and if so, what was being done about it.

SIC Executive Manager – Roads, Dave Coupe replied:

In responding to your email I would point out for clarity that it is my understanding that the Police officer stated that standing water was likely to have been a contributing factor to the accident.

As per all our main roads, monthly safety inspections are undertaken on the A970 at Fladdabister. Records from these inspections show that a defect was identified on 17th October 2017 when an overgrown ditch caused flooding of the main road near the viewpoint which was repaired the following day.

Following this event to date, the records show that although a number of the inspections were undertaken during periods of rainfall none of them identified defects.

I understand that there was very heavy localised rainfall earlier in the morning on the day of the accident in question. The conclusion we would reach is that any excess water flowing across the road only occurs during or after periods of intense rainfall for a short period of time. Rainfall events of this intensity are infrequent meaning that it is unlikely that any resulting water on the road would be identified during monthly inspections and it may therefore be difficult to find a cause.

I believe that this lack of knowledge of a known problem with surface water also coincides with the understanding of your council members.

However following the raising of our awareness of the possibility of a problem with excess water on the carriageway, we will undertake to investigate this thoroughly to identify any possible problem that we may be able to address or improve.

The continued concerns about the speed of cars through Quarff, Cunningsburgh and Fladdabister and the potential for an accident were discussed again and although SIC officials have explained that the roads do not meet the criteria for reduced speed limits, the public still feel it is required.

There was discussion surrounding Cunningsburgh and that it was unlikely that there were any other similar areas (housing roadside for a mile, streetlights all through, 20mph limit at times due to school) which still had a 50mph limit. Perhaps the criteria had been set to reflect the mainland and more urban areas but Cllr McGregor said he had been told that it takes into account rural areas too.

ACTION: Clerk to thanks Mr Coupe for his reply and ask that the Community Council is kept updated on the investigation, results and subsequent action taken. Clerk to write again to SIC Roads reminding them that reduced speed limits for certain areas within the community are still wanted by the people living there. Cllr McGregor to be copied into the correspondence.

6. SALE OF SCOTTISH WATER'S BURN OF LAXDALE DIR & RWI SITE, CUNNINGSBURGH

Advance notice of the sale of a Scottish Water owned site at the Burn of Laxdale in Cunningsburgh has been received. The letter and map were read and noted and members will look out for further correspondence.

7. THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE – ARE GQC CC PLANNING ANY CELEBRATIONS?

The Lord Lieutenant has written to the Community Council to share details of celebrations being held to mark the occasion of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to ask if the Community Council were planning to hold any or knew of any local celebrations happening.

Members were unaware of any plans but will pass any details on if they do find out any.

8. TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLE INSTALLATION CONSULTATION

Marine Scotland have sent details of a [consultation](#) for members to consider and reply to if they wish. The email and details were read and noted.

ACTION: Any members wishing to reply to the consultation must do so by January 27th.

9. FUEL POVERTY CONCERNS – RESPONSE AND REPORT FROM SIC

Following Mr Clark's further letter expressing concerns about the SIC's plans to help those already experiencing fuel poverty a reply from SIC Director of Infrastructure John Smith was received. He shared a report on Just Transition and Future Energy, as well as a copy of the 'Climate Change and Just Transition' report and appendices – all to be considered at Council meetings next week.

His email was copied to the Chief Executive, and to Clair Ferguson - Climate Change Strategy Team Leader who he said will contact us about someone attending our CC meeting in February or March. They are embarking on an engagement exercise around Climate Change and Net Zero Route Mapping during those months, so they welcome meeting with Mr Clark and other members.

Mr Smith wrote that he hoped we find the report informative, and that there are many overlapping issues here and it clearly will need a lot of joined up activity between all parties over a considerable period of time to find and implement effective actions.

Members welcomed the letter but said they were still frustrated that not much was being done to help people just now. Anecdotal stories were shared that rates had been put up but without telling people what their rates are, meaning they get surprise bills which are horrendous. There was also the feeling that there seems to be a lot of talk about Orion but that no one is being held responsible and asking how they are actually going to do it. The aim

is to eradicate fuel poverty and many members didn't have faith in the current plans to address immediate assistance for those currently in fuel poverty. The idea of an Energy Trust was brought up as a possible route forward.

Cllr McGregor said that it had been discussed in the Council chambers earlier in the day and had a good hearing. He had brought up exactly the same concerns as were being voiced in the meeting tonight and had had backing from Cllr G Smith at the time too. Cllr McGregor said they were all great ideas but they were all long term – he wanted to know how we are going to support those who are less advantaged now. Folk are not going to be able to afford raises in bills from £200 to £700 – especially if they are already struggling. He spoke about VAT cuts, transmission charges, cuts to the Green Levy and said that he recognised that it was not all under the control of the SIC but that they had a role to play just like the Scottish and UK Governments.

Cllr Duncan praised the work of Shetland Citizen's Advice Bureau and urged everyone present to share the word about the fantastic work they do. He explained how they have taken in millions of pounds for the Shetland public and all the figures are there to be seen every year at their AGM. He asked that the personal thanks of the SIC Councillors present be passed back to Shetland CAB in recognition of the work they do.

ACTION: Clerk to accept the offer of a visit from an SIC official to the next meeting. Clerk to send a Shetland CAB referral form to everyone so they can support those needing help – everyone to share details of CAB if they feel it appropriate. Clerk also to pass thanks from SIC Councillors back to CAB for their fantastic work.

10. COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION TIMETABLE

Dates and details of the upcoming Community Council elections have been shared. They are as follows:

Timetable:

Notice of Election

(Advert seeking nominations)

Friday 16 September 2022

Closing date for nominations

Thursday 13 October 2022

Notice of Poll/Uncontested Election

Friday 14 October 2022

Issue of Postal Ballot Papers by

Friday 28 October 2022

Closing Date for return of Ballot Papers

Thursday 24 November 2022

Verification and Counting of Votes

Friday 25 November 2022

Election day is 24 November 2022, and so ALL existing CC Members will continue until midnight on 23 November 2022.

Uncontested members are elected from 11 a.m. on 24 November 2022.

For those subject to a ballot, the results will be declared at the Count on 24 November 2022.

The first meeting of the new Community Council must be held within one month of election day, namely by 24 December 2022.

Associate Members and Ex-officio Members will be confirmed at the first meeting of the CC.

12. AOCB

1. Resignation of Ms Garrick-Wright

The clerk shared the news that Ms Garrick-Wright has handed in her resignation to the Community Council. Members expressed regret that she was leaving and thanked her for her work. Mr Clark said she was a very able chair, did a sterling job and she would be missed.

2. Future Face to Face Meetings

Members asked whether we would be continuing to meet over Zoom for the foreseeable future – there were a few members who do not have the technology to join and as they were valued Community Councillors it would be good to be able to welcome them back to meetings soon.

The clerk explained that she was taking direction from Community Council Liaison Officer Michael Duncan and though he had shared at the last clerk's training that one or two Community Councils were meeting face to face, she is waiting for official communication to say we can meet face-to-face before we can do so.

----Cllr McGregor and Cllr C Smith left at 8.30pm---

11. PLANNING

There were two planning applications to discuss and comment on. Members had no objections or comments to return on either application:

[2021/357/PPF](#) - Erect house with decking, garage and air source heat pump, Plot North of Upper Hillside, Cunningsburgh, Shetland, ZE2 9HB.

[2021/327/PPF](#) - Erect single-storey dwelling-house with integral garage | Site Adjacent Lambeau Gulberwick Shetland ZE2 9TX - Erect single-storey house with integral garage, Site adjacent Lambeau, Gulberwick, Shetland, ZE2 9TX.

ACTION: Clerk to pass on comments to SIC Planning Department.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 15th February 2022.

Meeting Ends – 8.34 pm.

CHAIR

14. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

January 2021 - Torches for school children from Elaine Skinley, SIC Road Safety Officer. To be distributed when the schools open again.

February 2021 – Radicle Road – an SIC Roads engineer is to look at the road to see if any maintenance work can be done to the verges to improve the road for all users.

September 2021 – Heathery Park Path Clearing – a third meet-up to clear the last weeds off the path was unable to be organised. Members to look again in the spring.