

Unst Community Council

Chair

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Baltasound
Unst
Shetland

Clerk

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th June 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Baltasound School Music Huts

Present

Claire Priest, Chair
Caroline Hunter, Vice Chair
David Cooper
John Peterson
Janice Priest
Hazel Spence
Julie Thomson

Attending:

Frances Browne, Community Involvement and Development Officer
Jane Macaulay, Wild Skies Shetland
Catriona Waddington, Wild Skies Shetland
Josie McMillan, Clerk

01/06/22 Apologies

Patrick Fordyce
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer
Gordon Thomson, Unst Partnership Ltd
Ryan Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)

02/06/22 Declaration of Interest

Julie and Janice declared an interest in 06/06/22 SaxaVord Space Port (SVSP).

03/06/22 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 9th May 2022 were proposed by Caroline and seconded by Julie.

Claire asked Catriona and Jane from Wild Skies Shetland if they wanted to go next, they did.

05/06/22 Wild Skies Shetland Update

Catriona and Jane wanted to update Councillors on what Wild Skies Shetland were doing now and the progress that has been made. WSS became a registered charity two years ago. WSS believe this project is a great opportunity to increase tourism, including the shoulder season from September to March. By attending this meeting and holding a public meeting in the autumn, WSS want to raise awareness. The Sky Trail will be active later this year with 13 stops in total, each with A4 sized plaques with QR codes. All of these are different and relevant to their locations around Unst. There is a bench on Saxavord which has an embedded audio player, which plays harp music composed for WSS and a

reading by Tom Morton about the Mirrie Dancers. The Planetary Trail at Saxavord, which was open last year, had 1800 visitors. The artwork for the planets was designed by members of the community. One of the directors will be giving guided walks along the trail through the summer. As part of the Sky Trail there are two big information signs, one for Toft and another for Gutcher. Catriona explained how difficult it has been to speak to anyone in the Planning Department, as the signs need planning permission. It has been really frustrating trying to find out who owned the land at Toft. Each planning application costs £300, with no guarantee of the application being successful. So, this has not moved forward at all and WSS are debating whether to carry on with these locations for boards. Catriona said that there is a photo display at the Heritage Centre again this year, this was very popular last year. The virtual reality headsets are at there and will be moved to the Leisure Centre once the Heritage Centre closes for the season at the end of September. There will be a Meteorite Hunt set up in July and August, with five meteorites hidden around Unst, with clues to follow to find each location. There will also be "Meteorite visitors" coming to Unst after attending a conference in Glasgow. The short film, which was recorded and produced by Keiba Clubb, will be premiered during UnstFest. WSS are involved in a Solargraph project and have set up pinhole cameras around Unst to record patterns of light. The first of the cameras were put up in November and will remain in place for several months. This project is linked with one in Greenland and was organised by Janette Kerr. Catriona explained that WSS' future plans are to hopefully build a sky viewing shelter at Collaster. Funding is already in place for the design of the shelter but not for the actual building. Plans for the future will hopefully involve employing someone part time. Claire thanked Catriona and Jane for attending.

04/06/22 Matters Arising from last minutes

17/02/22.1 Bottle Banks, at Skibhoul Stores

The Clerk will contact Paula Nicolson, Recycling Dept, SIC again and find out more about the area need for the bottle banks and what turning area do the lorries need. The Clerk will pass the response on to Frances and the hall committee.

06/05/22 Broadband Update - Marvin Smith, Shetland Telecom

Marvin Smith said there was very little happening with the Broadband project at the moment. Members asked if they could get details of the areas and houses which should be connected/not connected with the roll out of the R100 programme. Frances said that she would contact Mr Smith about this.

12/05/22 The Queens Platinum Jubilee Beacons – 2nd June 2022

The Jubilee event went really well, with a good turnout for the bonfire and afterwards for tea/coffee/cake in the Haroldswick Hall. There has been very positive feedback from the Community. There was a short clip of the bonfire lighting on BBC news at 10pm that night. It was agreed to write and thank the Haroldswick Hall committee for all their help.

16/05/22.2 Unst EE 4G Service

There has been no further word from Andy Steven about this. He was waiting on a response from Beatrice Wishart, MSP.

16/05/22.4 ASCC Meeting 14th June 2022

Claire attended this meeting on Tuesday night. She said there was a discussion about SCBF and distribution of funds once the monies increase when the Windfarm is operational. Chris Bunyan is going to attend a meeting in Yell to discuss Community Benefit Funding. Claire said there was also a discussion about sightseer's vehicles blocking roads in the north mainland. They had been told by the Police to take photos of the vehicles, but members thought better signage at sites would work better. There are incidents here of caravanettes/vehicles blocking road. Members thought there would need to be information circulated telling visitors how to drive on single track roads, as many tourists don't

know. Frances said that ASCC were asking about specific areas or hot spots where parking is a problem. There are certainly problem areas in Unst. Claire said there had been a discussion about Core Funding for Community Councils, this hasn't increased for many years. Taking inflation into account this means a decrease in funding in real terms. There was also a discussion about the Community Development Funds and whether Community Councils should need to apply to two separate funds or if the Core Funding Grant and Community Development Grant could be paid together. This was how these grants were paid in the past. Members felt that they should be added together so that Community Council's would just need to apply once. Claire will advise Michael Duncan, ASCC that UCC believe the grants should be paid together.

06/06/22 SaxaVord Space Port (SVSP)

Patrick had contacted Elizabeth to ask for an update for this meeting. She emailed a brief report.

- Strip and Record continuing on site. Haul roads having to be put in place in order to make it safe for the construction vehicles to move through site for the strip and record to continue.
- Road Improvements to the public roads also continuing with Section A (Brookpoint to White Brig) being finalised this weekend with a view to re-opening on 19th June. Section B (White Brig to Haroldswick Hall) will be closed from 20th June and Section C (Haroldswick Hall to Saxa crossroads) continuing in conjunction with Section B.
- Various visitors to site during the last month including HES, SIC and SEPA. All very happy with the strip and record process.
- Two students from West Point in New York have been on site during the last two weeks assisting with various environmental projects.
- Project Freya still on schedule for week commencing 4 July and this is an exercise not a formal launch
- Rocket Factory Augsburg OPs Team visiting in June, also a visit from Lockheed Senior management in June
- HyImpulse Testing gone well and still looking at sub orbital in October with minimal requirement
- Still on track for Licence in October
- ABL Pathfinder still on track for Q1
- Astra still on track for Q1
- Various discussions being undertaken regarding Unst Airport
- Visit expected by senior Civil Servants from Whitehall in July.
- Also visit from US Ambassador expected
- MOD Director of Space and Senior MOD officials visiting in July

It was agreed to ask Mr Strang when he will be available for a face-to-face meeting. Members will compile a list of questions which they would like to ask.

07/06/22 Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)

David said that SCBF has commissioned IBP Strategy and Research "to undertake a programme of community consultation with the communities of Shetland to guide the development of a plan for the use of the Viking Community Fund." There is Briefing and Discussion Session with Community Council representatives which David can attend. The next SCBF meeting has the option of being face to face. David will keep the Community Council up to date with these discussions.

07/06/22.1 Cemetery Benches

David and Patrick met with Kenneth MacKenzie, SIC, to discuss where the benches were to be placed in the cemeteries. Mr MacKenzie said that the benches in the original proposal weren't heavy enough, the company supply benches which are 115kg. These would be heavy enough not to need concrete bases. David has to apply for permission to site each of the 7 benches: the SIC has waived the fees for this. David completed the application forms, but now the bench supplier has come back to say that specifications for the benches have been changed. The new weight for these is 100kg, which means all

the application forms have to be changed. He has now been told there is an additional charge for carriage. Members suggested contacting Shetland Transport who pick up shipments from the Aberdeen docks. David will take this forward between meetings.

08/06/22 Unst Partnership (UP) Update.

Gordon emailed in the UP Report. He said that there were about 20 people who attended the Open Day about the UP Hub project on 21st May. Most agreed with directors that the project was too expensive, even the revised “one shed” option without the Laundry or “Changing Places” toilet, which came out close to £1M. Directors are now looking at existing buildings with services that might work out to be cheaper. The contract for the Hub Development Officer through the Coastal Communities Fund has now finished. Gordon said that the delayed AGM for 2021 was held on Saturday 21st May, just after the Open Day. Directors and post-holders remain as before: Chair, Gordon Thomson; Vice Chair, Sarah McBurnie, Company Secretary, George Rodger. The UP Shop continues to trade well, with sales of £13,570 for the financial year April 2021- March 22 and 4476 customers. This is in line with the target of £1000 per month which allows UP to employ a 15 hour part-time shop manager, cover office costs and still make payments to community groups. Other income sources are the Shetland Times column and the Feed in Tariff from the wind turbine. At present the shop is running a “Root-it-oot” scheme to encourage people to clear out sheds and lofts for donations. There are now 48 annual members for the Skip scheme, almost reaching the target figure of 50. Saxavord Spaceport have agreed to subsidise the project with a £1500 grant which helps to keep the cost relatively affordable. The next skip date is Saturday 20th August. Copies of the 2022 Unst tourist map are now on display in local shops and businesses, Heritage Centre, Boat Haven and Gardiesfauld as well as at Northlink terminal and the Tourist office at Market Cross, Lerwick. Further copies can be obtained from the UP office.

09/06/22 Community Involvement Update

Frances organised a meeting about the Baltasound Marina Pontoon with representatives from local groups and the Council and Community Council. She said this had been a positive meeting. Andrew Inkster, SIC Ports and Harbours, said that quotations for the pontoon are much higher than expected. Mr Inkster has suggested that they prepare a business case and aim to have a scheme in place, ready for installation in the spring of next year, but he cannot guarantee that the Council will approve the increased budget, or if it does, in which year it will come. Frances said that representatives from National Lottery Funding planning to come to Unst had been affected by covid, so all appointments had to be done remotely. Frances said that the groups that attended these sessions had found them very useful.

10/06/22 Ferries

There was a lot of discussion about all the ferry disruptions that have been ongoing now lately. A lot of complaints have been put in from the community. Many people who are travelling to work on or off the island or those who have appointments are having to travel on earlier ferries, hours before they need to but just to make sure they get there. There were examples of people attending hospital appointments/funerals/sports events who have had to go down the night before to make sure they are there on time. Members wondered why the situation had got so much worse now when Covid restrictions have been eased and people aren't testing unless they are unwell. A recent example of the disruption was Saturday night when the last ferry into Unst was 6.30pm and the first ferry out in the morning was 9.45am. There was no emergency cover as none of the services were notified about the ferry stopping. People flying out from Sumburgh on Sunday had to leave on the 9.45am ferry but were still very tight for time getting there. Members asked if there were no other SIC workers who could be drafted in to ease the situation, e.g., members of the tug service at Sullom. The Saturday timetable does not work well for either Unst or Fetlar. And having all bookings suspended just adds to all the other problems. Councillors were told several months ago that there would be a system in place for booking the Saturday timetable when a single vessel was in operation. There was also a discussion

as to why the SIC isn't training up cadets/apprentices for the future. Several people have applied for jobs on the ferries, some of whom have the relevant qualifications, but have not been contacted by the SIC. It was agreed to ask the community on Facebook to share their experiences. The Community Council is keen to be looking for solutions to this problem so that it does not continually happen in the future. The ferries are a lifeline to the North Isles and with all the work going on in Unst at the moment a reliable ferry service is essential. Businesses are already being affected, several tourism businesses have said they are losing customers because they aren't travelling to Unst for fear of not being able to get in or out on the ferries. Another issue which was raised was the poor road marking at Gutcher ferry terminal which totally confuse visitors. Once a vehicle has parked in the lane the numbers are covered. One of the information board could be moved further down the pier so that it can be seen by vehicles in the booked lane. When the ferry goes down to a single vessel and booking are cancelled the booked lanes need to have cones put in them to stop vehicles queuing there. The information boards need to be kept up to date with the changing circumstances. Community Council members were keen to note that ferry crews and the booking office are doing their best in very difficult working conditions. The Community Council has asked for the meeting with Andrew Inskter, Ferries to include Moraig Lyall, Chair, Environment and Transport Committee, Robbie McGregor, Vice-chair, Environment and Transport, John Smith, Executive Manager, Ports and Harbours, Andrea Manson, Convener, Emma MacDonald, SIC Leader, Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive, Ryan Thomson and Duncan Anderson and also the Ferry Route Master. Members would like this meeting to take place before the school holidays.

11/05/22.1 Community Ferry Hires

There has been no reply from Michael Craigie, ZetTrans, to our query about whether the community ferry allocation could be increased to seven as there are several big events in Unst this year e.g., Unst Show, UnstFest, Unst Yoal Regatta etc. The Clerk will email again.

11/06/22 Lund Road

Philip Long, Chief Executive for The National Trust for Scotland emailed to say that he had been unable to discuss this with Clea Warner, General Manager for the Highlands and Islands, as she is on leave. Mr Long said that he knew "this is being considered within the Trust and will make sure to speak to Ms Warner next week and ask her to be in touch with you about this as soon possible thereafter." Patrick had agreed to write to Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive, SIC and Philip Long, Chief Executive, The National Trust for Scotland.

12/06/22 Applications for Planning

Planning Ref:	2022/069/PPF
Proposal:	Erection of 80 self-contained modular units for space port staff accommodation (Temporary 5 year period)
Address:	Former Games Court , South Of Nordabrake, Saxa Vord, Unst
Applicant:	
Date of Consultation:	15 June 2022

There were no objections to this application.

13/06/22 Application for Donations

13/06/22.1 SCBF – Shetland Bus Friendship Society (Scalloway Museum) - £300

It was agreed to approve this application for donation, which had gone to 14 Community Councils.

13/06/22.2 SCBF – Shetland Amenity Trust - £1,000

It was agreed to approve this application for donation, which had gone to 15 Community Councils.

14/06/22 Application for Community Ferry Hires

14/06/22.1 UnstFest Committee – 16th and 17th July 2022 – Shuttle service on Bluemull Sound

These ferries have now been approved by SIC Ferries Department.

15/06/22 Unadopted Road Grants

There were no applications for Unadopted Road Grants.

16/06/22 Correspondence

16/06/22.1 Curious Pilgrims, Project in Unst

This was discussed, it was agreed to email and say that Unst Community Council thought that members of the community would be interested in engaging with this project.

17/06/22 Community Council Finances

The Core Funding Grant and Community Development Grant funding have been received. The accounts for the last financial year are at Voluntary Action Shetland to be audited.

18/06/22 A.O.C.B.

18/06/22.1 Hermaness Information Board

This will be carried forward to the next meeting. Patrick will circulate an update before the next meeting.

18/06/22.2 Dead Birds on Unst

The Clerk contacted SIC Environmental Health about the concerns raised about the quantity of dead bird that were lying on beaches throughout Unst. A team from Environmental Health came up and collected 100 dead birds, 95 of which were gannets. They also put up warning signs on the Skaw, Norwick, Burrafirth, Lund and Easting Beaches.

18/06/22.3 Tingwall Agriculture Museum

It was agreed to write a letter of support for this museum, to help them secure funding.

18/06/22.4 Alistair Carmichael, MP, Tunnel Vision

There was a query about a comment which Alistair Carmichael, MP had made about the need for Fixed Links needing to be Community Led. Members believe that communities have to want fixed links. There is a meeting in August in the Baltasound Hall with Alistair Carmichael, MP, and Beatrice Wishart, MSP. All households received a flyer about this.

19/06/22 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is set for Monday 22nd August 2022

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____