

Unst Community Council

Chair

Claire Priest
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Baltasound
Unst
Shetland

Clerk

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th February 2023 at 6.30 pm in the Baltasound School Music Huts and by WebEx

Present

Claire Priest, Chair
Caroline Hunter, Vice Chair
David Cooper
Patrick Fordyce
John Peterson
Janice Priest (WebEx)
Hazel Spence
Ryan Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio) (WebEx)
Robert Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio) (WebEx)

Attending:

Clea Warner, The National Trust for Scotland (WebEx)
Frances Browne, Community Involvement and Development Officer
Josie McMillan, Clerk

01/02/23 Apologies

Gary Betney
Julie Thomson
Duncan Anderson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer
PC Dana Jamieson
Gordon Thomson, Unst Partnership Ltd

02/02/23 Declaration of Interest

Janice and Frances declared an interest in 05/02/23 SaxaVord Space Port (SVSP). Claire, Caroline and Hazel all declared an interest in 12/02/23 Application for Donations - SCBF – Mid Yell Junior High School Parent Council (on behalf of North Isles Schools.) Robert declared an interest in 11/02/23 applications for Planning.

03/02/23 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 23rd January 2023 were proposed by David and seconded by Caroline.

Claire asked Clea Warner, NTS, if she wanted to go first on the agenda. She agreed.

15/02/23 A.O.C.B.

15/02/23.1 The National Trust for Scotland – Clea Warner, Regional Director, Highlands & Islands

Clea Warner had been in Unst last week, she had also met with Kenneth MacKenzie, SIC Burial Services and his boss, Steven Goodlad, to discuss the Lund Road. Ms Warner said that she knows this has been an issue for a long time, because of all the correspondence NTS has received about it. The Council is also

waiting on the outcome of a report by the Scottish Government Burial Legislation Working Group on access to Burial Grounds. Ms Warner has sent all the information that NTS has about the Lund Road to the SIC. They will take it to their bosses and get back to NTS. Ms Warner believed this had been a positive meeting and is hopeful that there will be a resolution to the issue. Ms Warner was asked if there was any update on the disposal of NTS properties on Unst. She said that there is a process that NTS must follow to make these properties available to sell, it has to be approved by the NTS Board of Trustees. Once they become available, Ms Warner will let the Community Council and Community know. She was asked about progress on the Halligarth Project, she said that this was moving forward. There has been someone identified for the post of Development Officer, this appointment will be confirmed soon. The Development Worker will be introduced to the Community and will talk to organisations locally. NTS has been in discussions with Shetland Amenity Trust.

Claire thanked Clea Warner for attending the meeting and updating the Community Council.

04/02/23 Matters Arising from last minutes

15/01/23.3 Steven Laidlaw, Shetland Recreational Trust Presentation – Unst Holiday Park Study

Mr Laidlaw is off work just now, so the request for an update was sent to Robert Geddes to check what progress had been made with this study. The Clerk will follow this up again.

05/02/23 SaxaVord Space Port (SVSP)

05/02/23.1 Community Councillors Site Visit to Lamba Ness

There was a discussion about this. All Community Councillors at the meeting were keen to go on the visit. The Clerk will email Elizabeth Johnson, Project Manager, and ask what days would be available for the visit.

06/02/23 Unst Partnership (UP) Update.

The UP shop continues to trade Thursdays and Saturdays 2-4pm. Next Skip Day is the 11th March 11-1pm at Baltasound Pierhead. The “Ootnaboot” over 60’s group had a trip to the Uyeasound Galley Shed last week. The group has applied to Voluntary Action Shetland and AGE Scotland to extend activities into the summer months but is still waiting to hear if they have been successful. If anyone is interested in advertising in the new Unst map for 2023, it will be out in May and they should contact UP, by email. Helen Hart is writing the Isles Views column while Gordon is away, until mid-April. She is on helen@hartofshetland.co.uk.

07/02/23 Community Involvement Update

Frances said that she has been working with the Unst Boating Club and Unst Festival Committee. She said that Karen Hannay, Shetland Community Connections, is keen to extend the Volunteer driver scheme to Unst. The volunteers would take people to medical appointments, events etc. Frances was asked who would be organising the scheme as there are a lot of regulations the volunteers would need to meet. Frances said that this would be done by Shetland Community Connections.

08/02/23 Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)

David said that there was nothing new to report. SCBF is keen to get people to complete the review. Members felt that the questionnaire was very wide ranging. David thought that they are waiting for the results of the review before they move on. He believes that with the other proposed windfarms there will be other Community Benefit Funds set up. When the major funding starts coming into SCBF, they will probably have to employ more staff.

09/02/23 Ferries/ Fixed Links

09/02/23.1 Emergency Ferry Timetable Meeting

The meeting which was arranged for last week was postponed as none of the SIC officials could attend and neither could the chair of the Fetlar Community Council. Members will meet before the next meeting

to prepare a list of issues they would like discussed. The rescheduled Ferries meeting will be organised for early March in Fetlar.

09/02/23.2 Ferries Dry Dock Timetable

The docking schedule was discussed again. There has been no further reply from Andrew Inkster, SIC Ferries, about the request from the Community Council not to take the Bigga out of service over the really busy Unst Show weekend. There will be a single vessel on Yell Sound for March and April. The plan is to have two crews, which will mean the ferry will continue running, with a 30 minute turnaround, with some tweaks to the early morning runs. There will be no spare ferries as the Fivla is not available to provide cover. There are issues with the small ferries using the Yell Sound ramps. Robert was asked if this would make the Bluemull Sound Service vulnerable as one of the ferries was taken from there to Whalsay when their ferry broke down. He believes it will not affect the Bluemull Sound service. The Community Council has been asked to contact the Ferries Department and propose a change to the Bluemull Sound timetable during March and April when Yell Sound is operating the single vessel timetable. The suggestion is to change the 12.35 Gutcher to Belmont to 12.45 and the 13.45 Belmont to Gutcher to 13.50. This will protect the 55 minute lunch break but will allow goods vehicles for the Unst shops to travel up from the mainland at 12 noon and not have to wait at Gutcher with perishable goods until after lunchtime. Robert said he had been at a meeting with representatives of Yell Community Council and SIC Ferries at Sellaness earlier. This was requested by the Yell Community Council to discuss the docking schedule. He was asked if there would be minutes from this meeting, he said there would be. Robert said that the responsibility for timetables lies with ZetTrans. There are plans for better communication and consultation with Community Councils about ferry issues e.g. Festive Timetables. It was felt that it is better if Unst, Yell and Fetlar Community Councils get together to discuss timetables and look at different options. Members asked if there had been any progress in identifying replacement ferries as has been discussed at the Ferries Meeting in Unst last year. The Clerk will write to John Smith, SIC, about this.

09/02/23.3 Multi Journey Tickets

There has been a lot of complaints from the Community about the reintroduction of these tickets and the withdrawal of the account cards. Ryan has made a formal request that the SIC halt the reintroduction of multi-journey tickets immediately and have proper discussions with Community Councils, and proper long-term dialogue within the Council including Councillors. There has been no consultation so far. Members wanted to know the justification and reasoning behind this decision, especially in the present cost of living crisis most people will not be able to afford an outlay of £155 to access cheaper travel. Members felt this is an equalities issue as those travellers who would benefit most from cheaper travel will be unable to access it. Robert said that he had met with the Ferries Department, and they are coming up with an interim solution. The new proposals will be sent to Community Councils for consultation. One of the issues Audit Scotland picked up on was the huge amount of ferry travel invoices being issued for less than the agreed SIC minimum limit of £30. There was a discussion as to whether tourists should be charged more. Robert said that the ferries will still accept debit/credit cards, but this would be for the full cost of travel. It was agreed to write about this to the Ferries Department.

10/02/23 Lund Road

This was discussed in agenda item 15/02/23.1, The National Trust for Scotland – Clea Warner.

11/02/23 Applications for Planning

There were no applications for planning.

12/02/23 Application for Donations

12/02/23.1 SCBF – Mid Yell Junior High School Parent Council (on behalf of North Isles Schools) - £3,700

After a discussion it was agreed to approve this donation. Unst pupils have organised fund raising activities for this, including the Uyeasound Up Helly Aa coffee morning held at the school. Members felt that it was good for the pupils to raise funds for the trip as well.

13/02/23 Correspondence

13/02/23.1 Places for Everyone Active Travel Project

Robina Barton, SIC Transport and Projects Officer, emailed to say that she was unable to submit the application by the deadline of 10th January 2023, as she had been ill. She will submit it when the next round of applications opens for bids.

12/02/23.2 Police Report

There were two reports of crimes in Unst in the Police report, these were fraud and extortion.

14/02/23 Community Council Finances

There has been no expenditure since the last meeting.

15/02/23 A.O.C.B.

15/02/23.1 National Trust for Scotland – Clea Warner

This was discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

15/02/23.2 Baltasound SWI (formerly SWRI)

It was agreed to write and thank the Baltasound SWI committee for organising the Christmas bairns party for many, many years. Baltasound SWI have decided to pass this on to another group.

15/02/23.3 King's Coronation

Claire has been approached to see if the Community Council would be interested in organising an event in Unst for the Sunday 7th May, to be filmed by the BBC. There was a discussion about this. It was agreed that Claire would find out more details before committing to this.

15/02/23.4 Emergency Helicopter landing site

There was a discussion about this, as the Coastguard helicopter can no longer land at the airstrip as the ambulance can't access the site as it is locked. There have been discussions between the Space Port and Coastguard. The Coastguard has decided to no longer use the airstrip. It was agreed to write to the Coastguard to ask if there is anything that the Community Council can do to help. There was a discussion about alternative landing sites, one suggestion being at Hagdale near the Industrial Estate.

15/02/23.5 Energy Isles CLG Meeting

There is an online meeting of Energy Isles on the 7th March 2023. The link will be circulated after this meeting.

15/02/23.6 BT Unst Payphones

Gordon wrote to Beatrice Wishart, MSP, about the poor condition of payphones in Unst. She has contacted BT, who have advised that the kiosks at the Setters Hill Estate and the Post Office have had engineers out to repair them, and that replacement doors are now on order.

15/02/23.7 Online Meeting Options

After a discussion it was agreed to use MsTeams for the online option to attend meetings.

16/02/23 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is set for Monday 27th March 2023

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____