

Skerries Community Council (SCC)

Minute of meeting held at 1.45 pm on Friday, 26th January 2024

In Skerries Community Hall

Present:

Paul James – Chair
Bertha Anderson
Marina Anderson - joined at 2.00 pm through Teams link
Jilly Ash
Janice Hughson
Kia James

In attendance:

Violet McQuade - Clerk (notes)
Robert Thomson – SIC Councillor – joined through Teams link
Lynsey Hall – Community Support Worker for Skerries
Lynsey Rendall – Community Support Worker
Lea Smith

1) Apologies

Frances Anderson, Marina Tait and Michael Duncan.

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Declaration of Interest to any agenda Item

Chairperson asked for declaration of interests.

Robert said that if there were any planning issues on the agenda he would have to declare an interest – there were no planning issues on the agenda.

3) Minutes of last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26th October 2023, were approved.

Proposed by Janice Hughson, seconded by Jilly Ash.

4) Matters Arising/Actions from last meeting

All matters arising have been dealt with or on the agenda.

5) Chairman's Report.

The Chairman's Report was circulated last week. There were no queries regarding the report at this point.

6) Filla – Berthing Issues

This is an ongoing issue. A place for the Filla to lie while in Lerwick, and getting goods on board has been an issue since the proprietors of Hay & Co withdrew the facility for letting the ferry lie in at their pier. Paul has been in touch with Dunrossness Community Council, as there are similar issues when the Fair Isle ferry berths in Lerwick.

The problem has made things difficult in Skerries, especially for the shops, when ordering goods that they cannot specify to suppliers exactly where the Filla will be lying while she is in Lerwick. The issue needs to be addressed – this has an operational impact on the ferry crews, and on the shops and residents of Skerries.

A temporary solution has been found. While in Lerwick, the Filla can lie at the Morrison Dock. DITT Management have agreed to deliver DIY freight to the ferry, and will forklift any large items to the side of the boat, the crew will crane the items onboard.

The next step is to write letters to various agencies to take this forward, and find a permanent

solution to the problem. Suggestions included writing to Huws Gray and the MSP. It was also suggested bringing the issue to the attention of the press.

Action: PJ to follow up

7) Repairs to Skerries council houses

A council house was offered to an individual six months ago – they were told it would take a while before the place would be ready, but this offer has now been withdrawn. The reason given for the withdrawal was that the council couldn't get roofing materials. There are two properties that need attention. As it cannot be impossible to source roofing material, it was thought that it may be the cost of getting contractors, and the cost of refurbishment that are the main reasons why the work is not being carried out.

It was noted that there have been other people trying to rent out the council houses in Skerries, without success.

It was agreed that Robert Thomson would write to the Head of the Housing Department to ask what is happening with this.

The individual who had the offer of a council house withdrawn should follow the SIC Complaints Procedure, and submit a complaint.

There was a query about whether the people on the island, who could do the work, would be allowed to carry out the work, or are there restrictions on contractors, such as registration. Robert thought there may be some checks and/or rules; he agreed to find out and feedback to the Community Council.

Action: RT to follow this up

Marina Anderson joined the meeting (through the Teams link). Paul gave Marina an update on what had been discussed so far.

8) Locality Plan

Lynsey Hall passed round copies of the Locality Plan. If everyone is happy with the Locality Plan for Skerries, it can now be signed off. The Locality Plan may be helpful when applying for funding, and should tie in with the Annual Report that Paul has produced.

Lynsey also explained that the Issues Log is the log that goes to the Islands With Small Populations (IWSP) group. She asked if this should also be passed to the SCC, it was decided to leave this until the next IWSP meeting. Let Lynsey know if there is anything on the Locality Plan that should be changed.

9) Funding

Distribution Fund. There is £2,500 still left in the Distribution Fund. The Hall Committee is submitting an application for £2,450. The application is for various items, including a water boiler, web cam conference set, various tools, step ladder, various sporting equipment, First Aid eye bath, new First Aid box, steam cleaner/mops, etc. The hall is being used a lot more now, so these items will be for the benefit of the whole community.

The Clerk will see that all the paperwork for this is in order. All members present agreed to approve the application for funding for the hall, as detailed above.

There was a discussion regarding paying for events in the hall. If funding was needed, it would have to be applied for through the usual channels. Paul agreed to speak to members of the Hall Committee, to find out if any help is required. Lynsey Hall also offered to help.

Action: PJ - communicate with the Hall Committee

10) Bench/trees

SSE had offered the Community Council a bench – this offer was accepted in December 2023. Production of the benches will begin in February. After accepting the bench on behalf of the community, the SSE offered some trees for planting in Skerries. The Clerk asked (on the SDG messenger page) if it was okay to accept the offer of more trees, this was agreed. The clerk has been in touch with the SSE to accept the offer of the trees, and has been in touch with the lead person who will be organising the planting that Shetland Amenity Trust offered – he is happy with accepting more trees. It was agreed to accept the offer – provisionally, as more land would need to be identified if more trees were to be planted. Paul will be follow this up.

11) Correspondence Received

All correspondence has been circulated electronically

12) AOCB

12.1 Card

It was suggested sending a sympathy card to the family of a councillor who had recently passed away. Paul agreed to get a card, and to send it on behalf of the SCC.

12.2 Lights outside public toilets

The lights outside the public toilets are not working. Bertha has reported the issue three times. Robert agreed to follow this up.

Action: RT to contact the relevant department

12.3 Skips

Marina said she had recently been to the skips with some refuse, and found it impossible to get the lid lifted and throw the rubbish in at the same time, one person cannot manage to hold the lid open and put the black bag in the skip – it is crucial that the is dealt with. It is dangerous if the wind caught the lid and it blew back and hit the person operating it. The bins that are in several places in Lerwick would be more suitable – these are on wheels and clip into their space so when in place they cannot move, they have plastic lids, which are easier to lift. There have been several requests to find a solution to this problem, including speaking to the Head of Waste Management at the IWSP event that was held in June 2023. After a short discussion it was agreed that Robert would follow this up.

Action: RT to contact Waste Management

12.4 Pest control

There was a query on whether the pest control material would be harmful to pets and livestock. It was agreed that the Clerk would email Environmental Health to ask the question.

Action: VM to email Environmental Health

12.5 Standing items for the agenda

It was agreed to add two new standing items to the agenda, these are 'Risks' and 'Issues'. An Issues Log will be circulated prior to meetings, to give members a chance to be able to contribute. A Risk Register was circulated in September 2023, but this will need to be updated.

12.6 Islands With Small Populations (IWSP)

Lynsey Hall gave an overview of what the Islands With Small Populations role is, and gave out information on the IWSP Delivery Structure for 2024. Meetings are held quarterly, and deal with issues that small islands have to deal with. Each island has two representatives. In the past IWSP was put on the SCC agenda, so representative/s could provide feedback after meetings. There has not been a meeting for a while, but this will be back on the agenda once meetings take place again. In the future it is planned that once a year a meeting will be held in each of the small islands, therefore it is planned that a meeting will be held annually in Skerries.

Violet is withdrawing from being a representative for Skerries on the IWSP group. It was agreed for Violet to circulate an email asking for a replacement representative.

Action: VM to circulate email asking for a Skerries rep

12.7 Online booking

There was a query regarding getting an online booking service for booking the ferry. This has been brought up several times in the past, without success. It was thought the current online booking system couldn't cope with the intricacies of the Skerries service, which includes passengers having to give some personal details for the longer runs to Lerwick – this would lead to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) issues. It was agreed that Paul would ask for an update.

Action: PJ will write to Ferry Services

12.8 Delivery of grit

It was noted that 4 tons of grit had been delivered to Skerries – for gritting the roads.

12.9 Communication

A discussion was held on communication. One member felt that they were not being told everything that was happening. It was pointed out that if anything significant was going on, it would be communicated to members. Also if a question had to be asked then the chair or clerk would communicate with the members. *(A Messenger Group was set up for that purpose, as well as for discussions on an ad hoc basis)*. It was pointed out that the Community Council has always communicated in the same way. With the previous chair, if he was asked to do something - he would do what was required, then it would be brought to the next meeting to be reported on, or discussed, unless it was something urgent that couldn't wait. If it was something that couldn't wait it would be communicated to members using Messenger or by email.

Date of the next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at 2.00 pm on Friday, 8th March 2024.

The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm

Actions:

- PJ to follow up re Filla berthing problem
- RT to follow up with the SIC re the empty council houses
- PJ - communicate with the Hall Committee
- RT to contact the relevant department re the lights outside public toilet
- RT to contact Waste Management
- VM to email Environmental Health re pest control materials
- VM to circulate email to Skerries people asking for replacement IWSP representative
- PJ will write to Ferry Services re online booking.

Chair Signature

Signed.....