

Sandness & Walls Community Council

Chairman:

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Minutes of Hybrid meeting of the Sandness and Walls Community Council held on Tuesday 2nd April 2024 at 7 pm

Present:

I Walterson (Chair)
F MacBeath (Vice Chair)
E Johnston
M Forrest
M Macgregor
J Puckey
J Laing
Cllr L Peterson

In attendance: D Forrest (Clerk), R Smith

1. Chairman's Welcome

I Walterson (Chair) chaired the meeting and welcomed all those present.

2. Apologies

M Duncan, C Venus, S Johnston

3. Declarations of Interest

I Walterson, M Macgregor and F Macbeath declared an interest in item 18 – Unadopted Roads.

4. Co-option of Robert Smith onto the Sandness and Walls Community Council

Robert Smith was co-opted onto the Sandness and Walls Community Council subject to his completion of the requisite form. His nomination was proposed by M Macgregor and seconded J Puckey.

5. Police Report

No police report was available for this meeting.

6. Minutes from 5.3.24

The adoption of the minutes of 5th March 2024 was proposed by M Forrest and seconded by J Laing.

7. Matters Arising

Re: 17.3 of 3/24 Request for a Defibrillator for the Dale of Walls

17.3.1 Dale of Walls Site

M Macgregor stated that she had been in contact with relevant local authority officers and was able to establish that there are no planning barriers to locating a defibrillator at a suitable site in the Dale of Walls.

17.3.2 Defibrillator Maintenance Costs

The Clerk informed the members that he had been in conversation with Mr Bob Hudson who looks after the Walls defibrillator. The Clerk was informed that replacement batteries for Lucky2Bhere defibrillators cost approximately £300 and replacement pads are £100. The life span of batteries is about 5 years whilst it is recommended that the pads be replaced every 2 years. The question was asked about how other Community Councils address this matter. The Chair stated that Michael Duncan had circulated all other Community Councils last year but received a very limited response. It was agreed that a further attempt to find out how other Community Councils are approaching this issue should be made via the ASCC.

17.3.3 Possible Sources of Funding for Defibrillator Parts

A discussion ensued on how to fund the replacement parts for the defibrillators given that the Shetland Community Benefit Fund does not provide grants for recurring costs. Cllr Peterson indicated that she had been in conversation with a community liaison officer from SSE who might be able to help on this matter. Cllr Peterson will supply the Clerk with the liaison officer's contact details.

Actions: 1. Cllr Peterson to forward contact details for the SSE Community Liaison Officer to the Clerk.
2. The Clerk to find out if replacement parts for defibrillators would meet SSE's Community Grants criteria.

Re: 17.2 of 3/24 Electricity Supply for Papa Stour

An email from S Johnston providing dates for public meetings in Sandness (23rd April) and Papa Stour (24th April) with SSEN representatives was read to the members. It was noted that a survey ship is currently collecting data on the seabed between Sandness and Papa Stour and that it is hoped to reconnect the island to mains electricity in September, weather permitting. J Puckey indicated that temporary diesel generators were functioning well on Papa Stour.

8. Housing

It was noted that work is progressing well on the social housing site in central Walls and that the name Forralea was chosen for the development. Cllr Peterson stated that regular meetings with local building contractors' representatives and members of the SIC Development Committee are planned in order to discuss the various housing developments that are due to be constructed.

9. Roads

9.1 Speeding Cars on the A971 Link Road

M Forrest stated that there is a problem with cars travelling at excessive speeds along the A971 Link Road from the end of the 30 mph limit by the Kirkdale turning to the Sandness Junction giving rise to concerns felt by pedestrians using this road. After some discussion, the Clerk was asked to inform the police of this matter.

Action: The Clerk to inform the Police of the concerns raised by pedestrians on the A971 link road.

Re: 4.3 of 3/24 Speeding Trucks

Members noted an increased police presence with speed radar guns on the routes cited regarding the problem of speeding trucks.

10. West Mainland Digital Community Project

M Macgregor stated that no updates were available on this matter at present. She requested that this item be removed from future agendas.

11. Future of Health Service Provision at the Walls Health Centre.

M Macgregor stated that she had been approached by several members of the public seeking clarity regarding the Shetland Health Boards plans for the future of health care provision at the Walls Health Centre. Members who had attended the February meeting with Community Council Members and Health and Social Care representatives expressed their understanding that a similar meeting is intended to take place during April when it is hoped a detailed plan will be available. It was acknowledged that it is the responsibility of the Health Board to keep the public informed regarding health service provision at the Walls Health Centre.

Action: The Clerk to email Michaela Goodlad, Admin Support, Community Health and Social Care to ask when it will be possible to hold the next meeting with the Health and Social Care Department and Members of the Sandness and Walls Community Council.

12. Council Tax on Second Properties

J Puckey expressed the concerns felt by Papa Stour crofters who were being charged with additional council taxes because they have croft houses on the island although they did not live in them. Cllr Peterson indicated that they may be eligible for exemptions. She recommended that the people concerned look on the Council Website for more information.

(<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-exemptions>)

13. Shetland Community Benefit Fund

An email has been circulated from the SCBF outlining the levels of grants applicable to each Community Council when Viking Energy begins to generate electricity. (See SCBF - Viking Community Fund of 28/3/24). It was noted that the grant to be allocated to the Sandness and Walls Community Council is £6515.00 p.a.

14. Review of Community Councils

The Chair indicated that the Phase 1 of the Review of Community Councils has now been completed and the commencement of the community consultation for Phase 2 has been approved by Shetland Islands Council. The Public consultation will take the form of an online and paper survey and close in June of this year. Direct engagement with each Community Council is also planned.

15. ASCC Meeting 12th March 2024

The following items were discussed at the Association of Shetland Community Councils' meeting:

- Shetland Way, Hiking Path,
- Community Council Scheme Review
- Telecoms/Connectivity. (The ASCC has requested updates regarding the ending of copper wire connectivity. The ending of a copper wire system has been postponed for two years and will not be switched off until it has been replaced by an alternative method of connection.)
- Local Place Plans/Shetland Local Development Plan. (A discussion took place concerning this issue and it was acknowledged that considerable work was required to generate such a document. The Clerk was asked to request a copy of the information that had been made available to the ASCC Members and to seek clarification from Mr Peter Mogridge as regards when the toolkit will be available.)

Actions: 1. The Clerk to email Mr M Duncan to request a copy of the document that had been provided to ASCC Members so it can be circulated to S&WCC Members.
2. The Clerk to email Mr Peter Mogridge regarding when the toolkit will be available.

16. Facebook Page for S&WCC

E Johnston stated that the page now has 80 likes and 115 followers. It was suggested he include the information contained in the SSEN PSR Digital Toolkit email of 29/3/24. It was also proposed that this information be posted in the Walls Shop window and publicised in Sandness.

Actions: 1. E Johnston to provide the information contained in the SSEN PSR Digital Toolkit email on the Facebook Page.
2. The Clerk to print a copy of the above information to be displayed in the Walls Shop window.
3. The Clerk to ask S Johnston to display this information in Sandness.

17. Financial Update

The Clerk indicated that this spreadsheet represented that for the end of the financial year 2023/24.

18. Unadopted Roads

(I Walterson, F MacBeath and M Macgregor declared interests in this item.)

After a brief discussion, the Members eligible to vote on this matter agreed unanimously to maintain, at last year's level, the grants being offered for the upkeep of unadopted roads to permanently occupied dwelling houses.

Actions: 1. The Clerk to advertise via posters that applications for Unadopted Roads grants are now open with a closing date of Tuesday 30th April 2024.
2. E Johnston to provide this information on Facebook.

19. Voar Redd-up

After a brief discussion on the provision of Community Council grants to groups and organisations that complete a Voar Redd-up, it was decided to discontinue this practice.

20. Correspondence

No correspondence has been received other than by email.

21. AOCB

21.1 Electric Ferry Trials between West Burrafirth and Papa Stour

Given the recent local media coverage of the proposed sea trials of an electric ferry between West Burrafirth and Papa Stour, J Puckey raised this matter. She described how a landing craft style boat would be totally unsuitable for this crossing due to the type of weather conditions which are often encountered and was concerned about the potential damage to the electrics of vehicles being carried on the craft. It was pointed out that while the trials are being carried out, the current Papa Stour Ferry would be maintaining its schedule.

21.2 Green Refuse Bins at Parking Areas

The question was raised regarding how frequently such bins are emptied. It was indicated that this is carried out fortnightly when the vehicle that collects general household waste does its rounds. Should it become apparent that a bin is overflowing, it was suggested that the Cleansing Department be notified.

21.3 Planning Permission for the Placement of Benches

Following an email from Mr M Duncan regarding the possible need for planning permission to site benches in the community, the Clerk indicated that he was attempting to seek clarification on this matter. He was advised to request to speak to the Duty Officer.

Action: The Clerk to ask the Planning Department in what circumstances would it be necessary to obtain planning consent for a bench.

RE: 19.2 of 1/24 Larger Communal Refuse Bins for Stove Cottages

It was noted that the problem relating to adequate storage of refuse at Stove Cottages in Walls has not yet been addressed. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Cleansing Department to request larger communal bins for Stove Cottages.

(Draft Minutes of the S&WCC April 2024 meeting subject to approval at next meeting)

Action: The Clerk to ask for larger communal bins for Stove Cottages in Walls from the Cleansing Department.

22. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday 7th May 2024 and will be a hybrid meeting.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.