

Unst Community Council

Chair

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Baltasound
Unst
Shetland

Clerk

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 25th March 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Baltasound School Music Huts and by MsTeams

Present

Caroline Hunter, Vice Chair, chaired meeting
Gary Betney
David Cooper
Patrick Fordyce
John Peterson
Janice Priest

Attending:

Frances Browne, Community Involvement and Development Officer
Gordon Thomson, Unst Partnership Ltd
Josie McMillan, Clerk

01/03/24 Apologies

Claire Priest, Chair
Hazel Spence
Julie Thomson
Duncan Anderson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)
Robert Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)
Ryan Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer

02/03/24 Declaration of Interest

Janice and Frances declared an interest in 06/03/24 SaxaVord Space Port (SAXA).
Janice declared an interest in 13/03/24.2 Energy Isles – Representation from the Community Council.

03/03/24 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024 were proposed by Janice and seconded by John.

04/03/24 Matters Arising from last minutes

15/10/23.1 Dental Services – Mid Yell

There has been no reply to the letters sent to Antony Visocchi, NHS Shetland Dental Director, in October and January asking for an update on dental services in Yell and Shetland as a whole. It was agreed to write again.

15/01/24.3 Roads and Baltasound School Sign

The Clerk has emailed Neil Hutcheson, SIC Roads, again about these matters. The road in Norwick, from Roadside to the Brig at the bottom of the Strodie is in a really poor condition. The road verges on the left

hand side of the Setters Road are in a really poor condition, with stretches now cordoned off with traffic cones. The brig on the South a Voe road has a missing parapet. The brig at Brondhus, Uyeasound, is also damaged. The brig at Alma, Baliasta, is really old and in poor condition. The car park at Lund would need to be enclosed to keep the sheep out as the carpark is in a mess. The Baltasound School Sign has never been put up at the crossroads at Nordalea. The Clerk has forwarded these emails to John Duncan and Ingram Thomson, SIC Roads.

13/02/24.3 D-Day 80 – 6th June 2024

Gary has booked the Haroldswick Hall for Saturday 8th June. The beacon will be lit in the park at the back of the garage on the 6th June. He has spoken to Paul Thomson, Headmaster, Baltasound Junior High School, about the school bairns taking part. Gary is organising a concert in the Haroldswick Hall. He will give another update at the next meeting.

05/03/24 Wild Skies Shetland (WSS)

Catriona Waddington and Jane Macaulay attend the meeting to give an update on Wild Skies Shetland. The official launch of the Sky Trail was held on Saturday 23rd March in the Haroldswick Hall. This was well attended. Catriona and Jane circulated the new Sky Trail leaflets at the meeting. The Sky Trail has 13 stops, these feature art, music, local dialect, poems and information, and are positioned all over Unst. The Planetary Trail on Saxavord is another popular visitor attraction. The road into the Planetary Trail is in very poor condition. Last year there was a sign up advising vehicles not to use the road. Some vehicles went down the road anyway. Signage advising not to use the road will need to be displayed again this year. In December last year Wild Skies Shetland won the Scottish Regeneration Forum (SURF) Award for Creative Regeneration. This has all brought a lot of positive publicity. WSS have been asked to give a presentation in Glasgow to other groups interested in entering the SURF Awards scheme. Catriona and Jane are doing a pitch to Travel Trade, who organise exclusive tours, to see if Unst could be one of their tours. The aim of WSS is to become sustainable. At present there is one paid part time employee. There was a discussion about UnstFest and if WSS would be doing a tour then. They said that this was definitely a possibility.

Caroline thanked Catriona and Jane for attending the meeting. Catriona left the meeting.

06/03/24 SaxaVord Space Port (SAXA)

There was a discussion about the launch day procedures, including the exclusion zone of 2.4 kilometres, and how long before and after launches this would be in place, and how the exclusion zone would be policed. It was agreed to ask for an updated map showing the exclusion zone in more detail. There has been another Emergency Response exercise, with multi agencies taking part. There has been a meeting with the chartered boat businesses that work around the area covered by the exclusion zone. The plan is to retrieve the rocket parts from the sea after each launch. There was a lot of discussion about the Visitor & Spectator Management Plan. This plan is on the SIC Planning website <https://pa.shetland.gov.uk/online-applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=S9K3FZJA02000> It was prepared by ECS Transport Planning Ltd. Some roads will be closed, others will be designated as one way. There will be buses from the park and ride site to the viewing areas. The Space Port are expecting 600 visitors to watch the launch. Members said they hoped that there were no problems with the ferries on launch days. There were discussions about the road management arrangements and whether this would have to be in place for each launch, which could be up to 30 launches a year. Members queried whether every household within the affected areas had been informed about these arrangements. And whether these plans are displayed in a public place. Frances explained that the document is probably following a statutory consultation process as required by the SIC, and there are processes required by other departments as well as planning. Members believe there should be more time allocated to this consultation as there have been problems accessing the plans. The Clerk will follow this up.

07/03/24 Unst Partnership (UP) Update.

Gordon said that the final Skip Day of the 2023-24 Scheme was on Saturday 16th March. There is some doubt about future Skip days. The cost has gone up so even with 50 members paying £60 a year, it would still require a large subsidy. He said that there is some doubt as to whether Shetland Amenity Trust will continue to support the scheme by taking metal and white goods. The alternative is that residents use the SIC scheme, £40 for 6 items or £20 if you receive benefits. At a recent meeting, the NTS agreed to fund the grass-cutting and property-checking contract at Halligarth for a further year. There is still no word about plans to redevelop the woodland area or on the other properties. The Housing survey sent to businesses confirmed that most of them would like to see some additional housing for incoming workers, either to rent or buy. There has been no further word on the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) Project. Householders who want to take part in this survey will need to have their houses surveyed to check that they are suitable for the scheme. North Yell Development Company are about to appoint a new Carbon Neutral Islands officer, UP will speak with them about a possible project across Unst and Yell. About ten householders in Unst have expressed an interest in the scheme. Gordon said that trade at the UP charity shop has picked up and income has improved over the last two months. Some house/shed clearances have also helped. The Belmont sign is here and will be put up shortly. The new sign was funded by a grant from the Sandison Trust.

08/03/24 Community Involvement Update

Frances said that the Winter Pop-in that was held in the Haroldswick Hall last week had gone well. The next Pop-in will be in the Uyeasound Hall on Wednesday. There will be representatives from Citizen's Advice Bureau, Social Security Scotland and also John Clarkson, from Home Energy Scotland. The Youth Development Worker is moving post and has done great work with young people. The SIC are advertising the post. Frances has been trying to organise a meeting with SIC Ferries, they have been in contact and Frances has shared the May meeting date with them. Frances had attended the Unst History Group EGM. She explained the process they usually advise dormant groups to follow. People who were members of the group previously have to lead the process. They have held an initial public meeting, at which the proposal was to dissolve and undertake their activities (discussing local history) under Unst Heritage Trust. They need to check if Unst Heritage Trust are in agreement. If so, they need to follow the process in the Unst History Group Constitution for dissolving, which will mean posting the proposal publicly, followed by a public meeting to debate and vote on the proposal.

09/03/24 Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)

David said that there was nothing to report, he had been away when the last meeting was held, and the minutes have not been circulated yet. He said that groups could still carry on applying for funds. Information about grant funding from SCBF can be found at the website, scbf.org.uk and also by contacting Frances.

10/03/24 Ferries/Fixed Links

Members believe that the ferries are in a bit of a crisis with the Skerries ferry, Filla, being out of action with "Catastrophic Failure" until June. So, there is no spare ferry. One of the Yell Sound ferries is away at dry dock until the beginning of April, when the other ferry will then go to dry dock. After the last meeting the Clerk wrote to the Ferries Department about ferry cover for the Unst Show day. They have agreed to "implement the same timetable as they did for 2023." There were concerns raised about staffing on the Bluemull Sound ferry. These concerns have been passed to Ryan Thomson, who has discussed it with the Ferries Department and Human Resources. It was agreed to email him again and find out if there has been any further information about this.

09/01/24.2 Ferry Docking Schedule

The Clerk will contact Robert as he agreed to follow up on the Ferry Docking Schedule at the last meeting. He also agreed to follow up about the booking system and voicebank.

11/03/24 Community Council Review Scheme

There was a briefing note circulated from Michael Duncan, ASCC, providing a summary of the proposed material changes which were being presented to a Special Meeting of the SIC on the 26th March 2024. The consensus of opinion after the first round of consultation is to keep the 18 Community Councils. The second phase of the consultation will look at various proposed material changes. These include changing the funding scheme and formula for calculating it. Also introducing "population bands" which will bring an element of consistency to the number of seats (composition) per Community Council. And also revising the code of conduct.

12/03/24 Applications for Planning

12/03/24.1 Proposed Base Station Installation at Cornerstone 11366227, Mid Yell, Shetland, ZE2 9DA

There were no objections to this planning application.

13/03/24 Application for Donations

12/03/24.1 Shetland Gymnastics Club

Caroline explained that the Gymnastics Club needs a base. They had use of the old Anderson High School building which has now been demolished. She said there were a lot of bairns on the waiting list. The Club has difficulty hiring facilities which are suitable. The Clerk will email them a grant application form.

14/03/24 Correspondence

14/03/24.1 Public Transport in Unst on Sundays

There has been no response from Michael Craigie, ZetTrans, to the letter about the tender documents and buses on Unst on Sundays. It was agreed to resend the letter.

14/03/24.2 Shetland Women's Aid in Unst

A representative from Shetland Women's Aid will be at the Baltasound School on Tuesday 16th and 23rd April, delivering educational sessions on domestic abuse and healthy relationships to S1 and S3 pupils. On both days they will have a significant gap between classes (approx. 11am-2.30pm) and they wondered if Shetland Women's Aid could do something for the local community. It was agreed to ask the Unst Health Centre if they could have the use of a room there for meetings.

14/03/24.3 Energy Isles – Representative from Unst Community Council

Gordon emphasised again how important it is to have a representative from Unst Community Council attending these meetings. Decisions will be made about the Community Benefit Fund in the near future, this will involve a lot of funding which will be shared among Yell, Unst and Fetlar. After a discussion it was agreed that a different Community Councillor would attend these meetings. Gary will attend the next meeting.

14/03/24.4 National Trust for Scotland Visit – 5th March 2024

Patrick went to this meeting in the Baltasound Hall with Clea Warner, Sheona Leonard and James Dean from National Trust for Scotland and UP directors. Patrick asked about Stewart Douglas, Project Development Manager for Halligarth and what progress is being made with this project as the Community Council had not heard any updates recently. The NTS Representatives were meeting with Mr Douglas the following day. Patrick asked about the Lund Road. He said there were very positive noises, NTS had recent contact with the SIC and think they have found the person who has authority to do something about the road and is sympathetic and co-operative. NTS Representatives have plans to revisit Unst fairly soon and will try to attend a UCC meeting, dates permitting. The Clerk has emailed them meeting dates.

14/03/24.5 ASCC Meeting – 12th March 2024

Claire was to attend this meeting, but she wasn't sent the link. The minutes from the meeting haven't been circulated yet.

14/03/24.5 Scottish and Southern Electricity Bench Donation

Gardiesfauld Youth Hostel have agreed to take the bench. The Clerk will notify SSE about this.

14/03/24.6 Da Voar Redd Up 20th – 26th April

After a discussion it was agreed to pay out grants to groups completing Da Voar Redd Up this year. The Clerk will send out the letters shortly.

15/03/24 Community Council Finances

The budget has been spent. The Clerk will prepare the accounts for auditing by Voluntary Action Shetland.

16/03/24 A.O.C.B.

13/01/24.1 Housing Questions – SIC/Hjaltland Housing Association

There has been no response to the last set of questions from the SIC. The Clerk will follow this up. It was agreed to email Anita Jamieson, SIC Housing and Bryan Leask, Chief Executive Hjaltland Housing Association to ask them when they would be available to come to Unst for a face-to-face meeting to discuss Housing. This will be a separate meeting from the scheduled UCC Meetings. Once this meeting date has been set, the Community Council will organize a meeting before to finalise the questions they want to ask.

16/03/24.1 Emergency Evacuation by helicopter

A question was asked about the medicines that are available to Doctors in Unst when patients need to be transferred by helicopter to Lerwick with life threatening conditions. There was a discussion about how many drugs are controlled and need to be stored. It was agreed to follow this up with Unst Health Centre. The Coastguard helicopter response times are changing as well.

17/03/24 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is set for Monday 13th May 2024.

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____