

# Unst Community Council

## Chair

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Baltasound  
Unst  
Shetland

## Clerk

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## Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Baltasound School Music Huts and by MsTeams

### Present

Claire Priest, Chair  
Caroline Hunter, Vice Chair  
Gary Betney  
David Cooper  
Patrick Fordyce  
John Peterson  
Janice Priest  
Julie Thomson  
Robert Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio) (MsTeams)  
Ryan Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio) (MsTeams)

### Attending:

Alexander Barry, Police Scotland, Lerwick (MsTeams)  
Frances Browne, Community Involvement and Development Officer  
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer  
Gordon Thomson, Unst Partnership Ltd  
Josie McMillan, Clerk

### 01/05/24 Apologies

Hazel Spence  
Duncan Anderson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)  
PC Dana Jamieson

### 02/05/24 Declaration of Interest

Janice, Julie and Frances declared an interest in 07/05/24 SaxaVord Space Port (SAXA).  
Julie and Frances declared an interest in 14/05/24 Application for Community Ferry Hire UnstFest Committee

### 03/05/24 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were proposed by Janice and seconded by Caroline.

### 04/05/24 Matters Arising from last minutes

#### 15/01/24.3 Roads and Baltasound School Sign

The Clerk has emailed Neil Hutcheson, SIC Roads, several times about various road 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 crumbling and full of potholes, 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 still hasn't been put up at the crossroads at Nordalea. The gate beside the cattle grid on the Outer Skaw road has also

been damaged and needs to be replaced. This is further on past the turn off to Lambaness and the Space Centre. There was a discussion about the need for white lines on the road past the Final Checkout to the Setters. Members believe that this will make the road safer for drivers. The Clerk will email Mr Hutcheson about all the issues. The white lines at Belmont ferry terminal need to be refreshed. The Clerk will contact the Ferries Department about this.

#### 13/02/24.3 D-Day 80 – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Gary has booked the Haroldswick Hall for Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June. The posters for this event and the lighting of the beacon on the 6<sup>th</sup> June are up in local shops and the Post Office. Gary said he will be looking for volunteers to help on the night and also with setting up/clearing up. There is another meeting to discuss this on Friday night.

#### **05/05/24 Clea Warner and Sheona Leonard, The National Trust for Scotland (NTS)**

Clea Warner introduced herself, she is the Regional Director for the NTS, Highlands & Islands with a particular focus on Unst. And Sheona Leonard is the Operations Manager for Fair Isles/Shetland. She explained that Ms Leonard was retiring soon so this would be her last work visit to Shetland. Ms Warner gave an update on the NTS properties on Unst. They are hoping to put Houlland and the Laggans on the market by the end of June. The NTS Collections team have been in the houses looking at the contents. There are various agricultural items which they have been in discussions with Shetland Amenity Trust about. NTS is going to dispose of the items that are of no value. The Clerk had sent Ms Warner photos of the blocked brig just above the beach. She said that the problem with drainage will be dealt with soon. Ms Warner said that NTS have been in discussions with Tracy Ann Anderson, SIC Property and Estates Manager, about the Lund Road. They are working on a maintenance agreement. Members said that there had been pieces of work done on the road before but it was not sustained. Ms Warner said that NTS will share details once it has all been agreed. She was asked if the money from the sale of the houses would be reinvested back into Unst: she said it would. She said that the work on the Halligarth graveyard is complete. Unst Partnership will carry on its administration role. The Halligarth Development Officer has 6 month left on his contract, there has been very little update information received from him. Ms Warner was asked if there was going to be landscape work done at Halligarth and would something be done about the sheer quantity of dead wood among the trees. She said that someone with expertise on tree management had been up to look at the trees. She said that they would look at that and the landscape work and a few other jobs that need to be done. They would update the Community Council on progress. Claire thanked them for attending the meeting. Clea Warner and Sheona Leonard left the meeting at 7pm.

#### **06/05/24 Community Council Scheme Review - Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer**

Michael gave a background to the Review Scheme, he said that it was a prescriptive process. The last review was done in the 1990s. It is being done in three phases. The first phase of the consultation ran from October to January, the second phase is from April to June. Phase three will follow the UK election. The aim is to complete the consultation by the end of March 2025 so that the new scheme starts in April 2025, at the beginning of the financial year. Michael went through the ten questions on the survey: –

Question 1 - asks if existing core funding and the Community Development Fund should be merged into one new grant scheme.

Question 2 - states that SIC propose that the new funding scheme formula will be based on a fixed allocation for core costs per Community Council, with the remainder of funding linked to population levels.

Question 3 - proposed that Community Councillors that fail to attend meetings throughout a period of 6 months may have their membership terminated by the Community Council. At the discretion of Community Councils, a period of leave of absence for Community Council members may be granted at any meeting of the Community Council.

Question 4 - SIC proposes to introduce population bands that will guide the minimum and maximum number of Community Councillors each Community Council will have. Michael was asked how many Unst would have under these recommendations: he said 8 Community Councillors. Some Community Council numbers would increase, and some would decrease. He was asked why the numbers for Unst need to change when there are nine people keen to give up their time voluntarily to sit on the Community Council. Michael said that all these

comments should be included on the Phase 2 survey form. Some Community Council have vacancies which have not been filled.

Question 5 - SIC proposes to introduce Community Council Standing Orders, these do not exist at present.

Question 6 - The existing Code of Conduct lacks detail in certain aspects. It is proposed to update this.

Question 7 - SIC proposes to introduce a new Youth Membership category for young people aged between 12-16 years of age. Community Councils may appoint two youth members, from the Community Council area. Youth members would not have voting rights. It was suggested that the two youth members could change regularly.

Question 8 - SIC proposes that any individual who is elected to serve on the Shetland Islands Council, or the Scottish or UK or Youth Parliaments shall be ineligible to stand for election or to be co-opted as a voting member of a Community Council, but will be an ex-officio member.

Question 9 - SIC proposes that a Community Council Chair can serve a maximum of four consecutive years. On serving as Chair for the maximum period, the individual in post must step down and cannot return to the same office for a minimum period of two years. Unless in exceptional circumstances determined by the Community Councils.

Question 10 – This gives the option of providing any other feedback you have on the draft scheme proposals. Michael was told that one of the most frustrating things about being on the Community Council was the inability to get replies, mostly from the SIC. He said that if there are problems getting replies, the correspondence should be copied to Maggie Sandison, SIC Chief Executive. Michael was also asked about the length of term for existing Community Councillors, the additional two years were supposed to finish in November this year. He said that Councillors would be contacted to ask if they wanted to stay on the Community Council for another year. Michael said it was important for people to complete the survey forms and return them by the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

#### **17/05/24 A.O.C.B.**

##### 17/05/24.1 Police Update – Alexander Barry, Police Scotland

Sergeant Barry said that there were no updates for Unst in the Shetland Policing Report. He was asked about the Police involvement with the Space Centre's upcoming launch. He said that they were taking part in consultations with other agencies, this is being done at a higher level at present. Police Scotland have taken part in multi agencies exercises at the Space Port. Sergeant Barry was asked if they were responsible for the Road Management Plans which will be in place on launch days. He said that this is being led by SIC Roads. Police Scotland are informed about traffic orders. Sergeant Barry said that if there were any queries to contact him. Claire thanked him for attending the meeting.

#### **07/05/24 SaxaVord Space Port (SAXA)**

Elizabeth Johnson, External Affairs Manager, emailed on behalf of the Space Port to say there were no major updates. Claire has been invited to the Grand Opening event for SaxaVord UK Spaceport on Wednesday the 29th of May. Members asked if there was a bond in place to put the site back to how it was, if it is no longer being used. Similar to the Viking Energy one. Robert was asked to follow this up. He did and has since replied that "There was no bond as such required in relation to the Saxavord Space Port. However, there was a planning condition requiring reinstatement should the facility no longer be in use."

#### **08/05/24 Unst Partnership (UP) Update.**

Gordon said that UP still plan to go ahead with the community skip scheme but are looking for 40-50 households to sign up by the end of this month to make the scheme viable. If that happens, the first skip day will be on Saturday 1st June. The cost would be the same, £60 for six skip days or £25 for a one-off drop. Shetland Amenity Trust is no longer able to take white goods. UP will arrange white goods removal through the SIC scheme and are asking for £5 per white good item for this. UP have put out a request for a sponsor to cover the shortfall and are waiting to hear about this. Even with 50 members, the scheme still requires a subsidy of about £2000. UP has had no information from SAT about scrap car removal. SAT used to take about a third of car makes from the island plus some that Jim's Garage was unable to remove. After a discussion it was agreed the Community Council will write to Shetland Amenity Trust about this and also the potential loss of two jobs. UP is still waiting to discuss the Air Source Heat Pump project with the new Yell Carbon Neutral

Island's officer Hannah Eynon once she takes up her post. 13 householders in Unst have already expressed an interest. Trade at the UP charity shop has picked up and income has improved over the last three months. The Unst tourist map has now been printed and circulated throughout Shetland. The Belmont sign has now gone up at the ferry terminal thanks to a grant from the Sandison Trust. Art Machine and Sandisons Ltd carried out the work. The old sign and stantions have now been removed. Claire said that the new sign looks really good. She thanked Gordon for all his work arranging the replacement of the sign.

#### **09/05/24 Community Involvement Update**

Frances said that the Uyeasound Winter Pop-in had taken place since the last UCC meeting. She said that 45% of the people that attended had come to speak to the representatives from Citizen's Advice Bureau, Social Security Scotland and John Clarkson, from Home Energy Scotland. Frances said that this shows there is a need for these services which is not being met at present. Michael and Frances had met with the Unst Boating Club and Unst Festival Committee earlier today. The Unst Boating Club project is now finished. Frances has contacted SIC Ferries to arrange a meeting about the Pontoon at Baltasound Pier. She is still trying to organise a meeting about the Emergency Ferry Timetable.

#### **10/05/24 Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)**

David said that there was nothing to report. The AGM is on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024. He said that the director's role would be changing to more strategic planning, they will not be handling donation matters. SCBF will be employing more staff with the skills to handle money. Claire asked about the press release in the media which indicated that the amount of funding Unst would be allocated to approve would be reduced from £10,000 to £6,616. David said that main funds would be available for applications from all over Shetland, although projects do not necessarily need to cover the whole of Shetland. He said there are no new application forms yet. SCBF are hoping to become more proactive in their funding plans.

#### **11/05/24 Ferries/Fixed Links**

There was a discussion about the problems with the ferry service because of the power cut on the night of Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>/early morning Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May. The generator at Belmont wouldn't work, so the ferry couldn't run which meant there was no emergency cover for Unst that night. Members asked when the generator had been tested last, as the SIC usually checks equipment regularly. There was also no way of getting in touch with anyone because there were no phone signals. The Folk Festival event was on in Unst on that Saturday night, they were stuck in Unst without accommodation. There were also people waiting at Gutcher who couldn't get home so had to find accommodation in Yell. There was a discussion about compensation using NorthLink's policy as an example. Robert said he would follow it up. Ryan said that the problem was with the generator and not the linkspan. He also said that there are concerns about the frequency and number of power cuts and what was causing them. Robert was asked about the ferry docking programme and how far ahead vessels were booked in. Having the big ferry off in May and the Bigga off in August/September is not ideal because these are both very busy times. Robert said that he would follow this up. The Unst and Yell Tunnel Action group have been putting in comments on the "Transport Scotland - Island Connectivity Plan (ICP) Strategic Approach – Draft for Public Consultation." There is no mention of Inter Island ferries. The Action Group is suggesting changing the wording, so instead of Ferries it says Transport. Alice has had a meeting with Andrew Hirst, Shetland Times, about their coverage of the campaign. Louise Shearer, SIC Inter-Island Transport Connectivity Project Manager, has said the old data about tunnels is now on the SIC website. Alice is also meeting Lesley Riddoch, broadcaster and journalist, to discuss their fact finding visit to Faroe.

#### **12/05/24 Applications for Planning**

There were no applications for planning.

#### **13/05/24 Application for Donations**

##### **12/03/24.1 Unst Boating and Swimming Club**

After a discussion it was agreed to give a donation of £312 to the Unst Boating and Swimming Club to install a baby changing unit in the fully accessible shower cubicle.

**14/05/24 Application for Community Ferry Hire**

14/05/24.1 UnstFest Committee – Sunday 21st July 2024

It was agreed to approve this Community ferry. The Clerk will book this with SIC Ferries Department.

**15/05/24 Correspondence**

15/05/24.1 SIC - Local Place Plans

The launch of Local Place Plans will start with an online meeting on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May from 10am to 12pm.

15/05/24.2 Public Transport in Unst on Sundays

Ryan said that work is in progress with the North Yell Development Council about providing an electric minibus for use in Unst/Yell/Fetlar. There will be more details coming soon. Michael Craigie, ZetTrans, has still not replied to the letter that was sent in February. Robert will chase this up. He said that the Transport review of the whole system, e.g. ferries, buses etc is being done.

15/05/24.3 Social Housing Meeting

Bryan Leask, Hjaltland Housing Association and Anita Jamieson, SIC Housing, are both available for a face to face meeting in the first two weeks of July. It was agreed to suggest the 8<sup>th</sup> July, or if that isn't suitable the 1<sup>st</sup> July. Robert said that there has to be a demonstration of demand for social housing. Robert forwarded links to Housing Strategies and Plans - Housing Needs and Demand Assessment

[Housing Strategies, Plans and Performance – Shetland Islands Council](#)

and Strategic Housing Investment Plan

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/downloads/file/7321/strategic-housing-investment-plan-ship-2024-25-to-2028-29-part-a>

Frances said that UP had already done some research into the demand for housing.

15/05/24.4 SEPA – Potentially Vulnerable Areas – Public Consultation Survey

This was circulated to all members.

15/05/24.5 Feedback from SIC Councillor

There was a request for more feedback from North Isles Councillors from SIC Meetings. Robert explained that the Housing meeting recently had been a closed meeting, as advised by their legal department. Several meetings are closed when the matters discussed have “sensitive” information. It was agreed to put “SIC North Isles Councillors – Feedback” as an agenda item.

15/05/24.6 ASCC Meeting – 11th June 2024

Claire can attend this meeting.

**16/05/24 Community Council Finances**

16/05/24.1 End of year accounts 2023-2024

The accounts have been prepared and will be audited by Voluntary Action Shetland.

16/05/24.2 Core Funding 2024-2025

The Community Council have been awarded £8,423 for its core costs.

16/05/24.3 Community Development Funding 2024-2025

The funding has been applied for, a total of £3,000. There has been no word as yet whether the grant application has been approved or not.

**17/05/24 A.O.C.B.**

17/05/24.1 Police Update – Alexander Barry, Police Scotland Lerwick

See above

17/05/24.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Shaping our Future Service – Your Say

This consultation document has been circulated; responses have to be in by the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Caroline will email comments to be included in Unst Community Council's response.

17/05/24.3 Claire Priest, Chair, standing down from Community Council

Claire said that she is standing down from the Community Council at the October meeting. It was always her intention to stand down when the extended Community Council term was planned to end after two additional years.

17/05/24.4 Lack of Water Fountain – Unst Leisure Centre

The Clerk will write to Shetland Recreational Trust and ask when the water fountain will be repaired.

**18/05/24 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is set for Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_