

Skerries Community Council (SCC)

Minute of meeting held at 2.00 pm on Friday, 12th July 2024

In Skerries Community Hall

Present:

Paul James – Chair
Bertha Anderson – Vice Chair
Frances Anderson
Marina Anderson
Janice Hughson
Jilly Ash

In attendance:

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

1) Apologies

Duncan Anderson, Michael Duncan, Kia James and Marina Tait.

Paul welcomed everyone, and thanked Robert and Lynsey for attending the meeting.

2) Declaration of Interest to any agenda Item

Chairperson asked for declaration of interests – there were no declarations of interest.

3) Minutes of last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting, held on the 31st May, were approved.
Proposed by Janice Hughson, seconded by Frances Anderson.

4) Matters Arising/Actions from last meeting

4.1 Follow up re disposal of oil

The council can dispose of domestic oil, but not commercial oil from the fishing boats, that has to be done through a waste management company. Paul has been in touch with the Executive Manager (EM) for Waste Disposal; he will be getting back to Paul next week to try and find a solution. *Ongoing*

4.2 Follow up re beacons in the South Mouth

Councillor Thomson has been in contact with Marine Operations about this – they had hoped to get the work done this summer, but it is a difficult place to do work on and the weather has not been suitable. Councillor Thomson has a meeting at Sella Ness next week – he will bring this up again at that meeting. *Ongoing.*

4.3 Follow up on Filla berthing problems

While in Lerwick recently, the Filla has been lying mostly at the Morrison dock (Holmsgarth 4 and 5), this seems to be working well. *This item is now closed.*

4.4 Contact CE of NHS Shetland re nurse's house

Paul has been in touch with the Chief Executive of NHS Shetland, awaiting his reply. *Ongoing.*

4.5 Send a letter to the appropriate departments, re Filla re-fit timetable

Paul sent a letter to the Executive Manager of Ferry Operations. No solution to this problem has been found. The operators say it is because the re-fits must be booked years in advance. Members present found it hard to believe that the schedule could not be altered to give the Filla a slot in the summertime. *Ongoing*

4.6 Approach the Education Department re school key

Currently no one in Skerries has access to a key for the school. When the alarm goes off no one can go and turn it off. Lynsey will contact the Education Department to find a solution, such as getting the code for the key box.

Action: Lynsey to follow up on access to school key

A member of staff from the Education Department will be attending a meeting later in the year – it is hoped that a discussion about the school premises will be held at that meeting. *Ongoing*

4.7 Send update to Scottish Islands Passports regarding their website

This is all in hand, the plaques are now in place and all the information has been passed to the Scottish Islands Passport website. *This item is now closed.*

4.8 Tabletop Exercise

A question was raised regarding the planned tabletop exercise. The Chair was asked to give a description about what a Tabletop Exercise is, and its purpose.

A tabletop exercise is an activity in which key personnel assigned emergency management roles and responsibilities are gathered to discuss various simulated emergency situations, and their roles and responses to a particular emergency situation. It would involve various organisations, including Shetland Islands Council (SIC), Police, Coastguard, Fire and Rescue, and the NHS. A facilitator guides participants through a discussion exploring one or more different scenarios, with the aim of identifying gaps. It is a paper-based exercise that does not involve bringing in machinery, vehicles or helicopters; an inexpensive way of exploring possible emergency situations that may occur. It was noted that circumstances in the other isles can be very different from the situation in Skerries. *This is ongoing.*

5 Community Councillors – Term of Office Extensions

The Clerk has been asked to bring members attention to an email that was recently circulated regarding Community Councillors – Term of Office Extensions. To remind members about the email, the Clerk read out the salient points, which were:

It has been agreed that the current Term of Office for Community Councils will be extended by one year, to November 2025, to allow further time for the Review of the Scheme of Community Councils to be completed. Correspondence has been sent to all voting members, that unless they advise otherwise, their term of office on Skerries Community Council will be confirmed as extended for a further year to 19 November 2025. Community Councillors are not required to formally sign an acceptance, and their membership status will continue for a further one year until 19 November 2025.

If any person does not wish to continue as a voting member for the extended term they are asked to advise Anne Cogle, or the Community Council Clerk, in writing as soon as possible and before 20 November 2024, of their intention not to accept the extended term. In this regard, their term of office will come to an end on 20 November 2024.

6 Ferry Re-fit

Also discussed under 4.5.

Paul has written to the Executive Manager, Ferry Operations. After discussion it was agreed to write to a more senior member of the management team about this issue. It was pointed out that this is a safety / resilience issue. March/April is a bad time for the Filla to go for a re-fit, as the other ferries cannot go in the same weather as the Filla. There were also problems with the Fivla at Easter time, being only able to carry 12 passengers. A resilience report on ferries is due to come out in September – this issue should be included in the report. Paul to keep the pressure on. *This is ongoing.*

7 Risks

A discussion was held on the wording of some of the Risk Log. Paul agreed to simplify the wording.

7.1 Landlines

The risk raised was the situation with the landlines for the telephone network, these are scheduled to be turned off soon. It was noted that this was a horrific situation that could bring serious consequences to residents in remote areas. When the power goes off mobile phones cannot be used, a landline is needed. The situation with losing the landlines has been highlighted to senior management in the SIC. *This is ongoing.*

8 Issues

8.1 Bins

The Clerk said that she had received an anonymous message regarding concerns about dog mess in Skerries. The person had suggested getting dog-mess bins may help the situation. After discussion it was decided that Paul would look into the possibility of getting some dog-mess bins. At the same time he would remind Waste Management that some of the waste bins in Skerries have still not been replaced; the one near the airstrip has disintegrated – this has already been reported some time ago.

Action: Paul to contact Waste Management re bins

8.2 Hogweed

A discussion was held regarding the quantity of hogweed that is in Skerries now. One resident has come out in a severe rash after coming into contact with the plant. This was discussed some time ago, and the Clerk contacted Environmental Health about the matter, she was told that it was not something that Environmental Health would deal with – it is up to the landowner to deal with themselves. After discussion it was agreed that the Paul would contact Environmental Health to seek advice on how best to deal with it.

Action: Paul to contact Environmental Health

Any issues that come up between meetings can be raised straight away.

9 SCC Accounts

The SCC accounts were circulated to all members.

The accounts have been verified by an independent accountant, and need to be approved before they can be sent to the Shetland Islands Council's Community Council Liaison Officer. After discussion the accounts were approved, proposed by Marina Anderson, and seconded by Paul James.

10 Correspondence Received

All correspondence has been circulated electronically.

11 AOCB

10.1 Bins/Skips

The Clerk asked if a skip is needed for Skerries at the moment – there is no requirement for a skip at this time.

Councillor Thomson has been liaising with the Executive Manager for Waste Management regarding the current skips, and problems that residents have lifting the lids. It was noted that the hinges are rusting, making it harder to get them opened. Two options that has been looked at are gas struts and splitting the lids. *This is ongoing.*

10.2 Male toilets – lock/door handle

It was reported that the door handle/lock on the male public toilet has broken again.

Action: Councillor Thomson to follow this up

10.3 Housing maintenance

Councillor Thomson asked if there was any update on council house maintenance – so far nothing has happened with this.

10.5 Salmon farm debris

Councillor Thomson asked if there was any update on what was happening with the salmon debris. There is still a lot of unsightly debris lying about in the West Voe. Lynsey gave an update on what the Crown Estate (CE) had suggested as a resolution to get the area cleaned up. Lynsey will forward the information to Councillor Thomson.

Action: Lynsey to send CE information to Councillor Thomson

10.6 Benches

A discussion was held regarding two benches that are stored in the old factory – One of the benches needs to be painted. It was decided that one of the spare benches should be placed at Longie-ayre.

10.7 Ferry Timetable

A discussion was held regarding the Thursday morning ferry. It was agreed to send a suggestion that the ferry could leave Skerries at 9.30 am on Thursday, instead of 10.00 am. This would get the ferry into Lerwick at a more convenient time to be able get into the Bressay ferry terminal. Currently the Skerries ferry has to lie off for a while on Thursdays, waiting for the Bressay ferry to leave the ramp.

Action: Clerk to write to Ferry Services

10.8 Waiting room

After discussion it was agreed that a timer switch for the waiting room heaters would be the best solution to any problem that may arise with the possibility of heaters being left on during the night.

12 Date of the next meeting 10.8

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday, 23rd August 2024.
The meeting concluded at 3.10 pm

Actions:

Councillor Thomson:

Councillor Thomson to follow up re lock on male toilet
Follow up re beacons in the South Mouth
Follow up on Filla berthing problems

Chair:

Contact Waste Management re bins
Contact Environmental Health re hogweed

Lynsey:

Lynsey to follow up on access to school key
Send Crown Estate information to Councillor Thomson

Clerk:

Write to Ferry Services re the Thursday timetable

Chair Signature

Signed.....