

Skerries Community Council (SCC)
Minute of meeting held at 2.00 pm on Friday, 22nd November 2024
In Skerries Community Hall

Present:

Paul James (Chair)
Bertha Anderson
Frances Anderson
Marina Anderson
Janice Hughson
Jilly Ash

In attendance:

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

1) Apologies

Michael Duncan, Kia James and Marina Tait

Paul welcomed everyone to 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 4th October 2024, were approved.
Proposed by Marina Anderson, seconded by Janice Hughson.

4) Matters Arising/Actions from last meeting

All actions from the previous meeting have been dealt with.

5) Council Houses - Update

Workmen were due to come in to do some work on the houses on the 18th October. Workmen were in Skerries on that day, doing some work on the roof of the houses. They were only there for half a day, and have not been back again.

Councillor Thomson agreed to follow this up, to find out what the plan is.

Action: Councillor Thomson to get in touch with Housing

6) Risks

Paul has updated the Risks Log, which was circulated prior to the meeting. The main points noted were:

6.1 Not enough people or skills to carry out work.

This is going to be an ongoing risk which will require monitoring

6.2 Insufficient Budget for projects.

Chair is now a director of Shetland Community Benefit Fund.

Options for exploring fresh funding opportunities will continue, on a project specific basis.

6.3 Succession planning for Island Infrastructure

This will remain an outstanding issue which will need careful addressing.

After discussion it was agreed to approach some of the younger people to determine whether they may be interested in attending Community Council meetings, with a hope that they may eventually join the SCC.

6.4 Inadequate Emergency Service Provision

Current work has included work to address issues of deficiencies across NHS estate regarding provision of essential supplies of therapeutic oxygen to remote locations.

NHS Shetland in association with Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) initiating CPR training.

Work to address provision of primary care services to island population given the demographics and vulnerabilities has been raised at NHS chief executive level, and is ongoing.

Community Safety Officer has circulated communication leaflets.

Work is underway with SIC Resilience, SFRS, Police and Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), to develop the plan for Skerries with the Islands with Small Populations

6.5 Relationship with external stakeholders

Work progresses to build and maintain good working relationships with local councillors, MSP, SIC and other stakeholders.

6.6 Across the board risks to Basic Infrastructure Services linked with Risk 6.1

Progress is being made with addressing the risks around provision of basic lifeline necessities.

Of significant impact is British Telecom's plan to remove existing hardwired exchange based 999 service and replace it with a mobile based digital service. This has been raised as a serious risk at UK national level and being treated as a national risk and work is underway at a national level. If the power went off in Skerries there would be no 999 service available.

EE 4G mast is operational and stable. It is hoped that Vodafone may provide service provision.

6.7 SCC Organisationanaal infrastructure, Capability and Capacity

This will be a standing risk. Work has been carried out to streamline the way the CC works. With the support of the SIC Community Development Officer this work will continue.

7) **Issues**

7.1 Waiting room in Whalsay for Skerries community

Work on the existing waiting room has been completed. *Remove from log.*

7.2 Skerries Marine Debris

Currently there is an offer to remove the debris free of charge. This is awaiting agreement from the landowner.

7.3 Resilience in emergencies: unsure who is responsible, and lines of communication

Lack of fire cover on Skerries. This is on the Skerries Risk Register

Work is underway with SIC Resilience, SFRS, Police and MCA to develop the plan for Skerries along with the other Islands with Small Populations. CPR training is being offered by SFRS in association with the British Heart Foundation and NHS. Volunteers to undergo training to be sought.

Community Safety leaflets were delivered and distributed.

It was noted that with the recent emergencies and other healthcare/resilience issues in Skerries, the Chief Nurse has been extremely good at addressing concerns and issues that have arisen. All communication with the Chief Nurse has been dealt with quickly and efficiently.

7.4 Improved communication around Health and Care services, such as vaccinations
Meeting being arranged with Chief Nurse to discuss issues around wider healthcare provision.

7.5 Poor internet in nurses house
NHS IT staff have been to Skerries and connectivity issues have been resolved. Outstanding issue remains re printer connection. Remove from log once printer issue is completed.

7.6 No generator back up at nurse's house
To be discussed with Chief Nurse.

7.7 School issues -
New Executive Manager of Education has visited Skerries and indicated a willingness to discuss limited community use of the school premises.

Jilly asked about the possibility of getting the use of one room in the school for education purposes. It was noted that any such request would initially have to come from the child's parent or parents. It was agreed that the member who raised the question would take this forward with the parent/s.

Action: Jilly to arrange letter to send to Education Services

Ongoing negotiations re alarms and maintenance.

7.8 Filla Ferry Berthing Arrangements – Loss of Hays Dock
Negotiations have been taking place looking for a long-term solution.

Temporary arrangements are in place with the Filla berthing at Morrison's Dock on an ad hoc basis.

7.9 Water Treatment plant issues
There have been problems with the micro filters. It is hoped that this can be resolved.

It was noted that should a person fall into the reservoir, there is no means of escape, This requires rectification. Paul agreed to draw this to the attention of Scottish Water to request that a ladder be placed inside the dam.

Action: Chair to write to Scottish Water.

7.10 Waste Management – new skips have extremely heavy lids and pose a risk of serious injury to elderly residents
Executive Manager, Waste Management, has been looking into solutions for skips, but at the moment it does not look that a satisfactory solution is going to be found any time soon. People struggle to open the lids of the skips, as the lids are very heavy, and could cause injury. This is an outstanding issue, which has been discussed on numerous occasions. Liaison with SIC Waste management team is ongoing with support from Councillor Thompson.

Also, the public concrete roadside bins are deteriorating badly. One has collapsed.

7.11 Local Place Plans
A discussion was held on what value developing such a plan would have for Skerries given the potential commercial and social developments that are possible. It was agreed that drawing up a place plan could be beneficial to the community in the long run.

Paul advised members to read the information that is on the Local Place Plan website.

7.12 Inter-Island Transport Connectivity Consultation and ongoing programme

There is an ongoing consultation contracted to Stantec to deliver a consultation on Inter-Islands Transport Connectivity with a view to ultimately delivering a full business case for a preferred option as to how the Shetland Islands are connected up from a transport perspective.

Stantec will be coming out to visit Skerries to hear concerns and views from local residents.

8) Chairman's Report

A discussion was held on what the members would like to see in the Chairman's Report. The Report was carried forward to the next meeting. In the meantime members to contact Paul with ideas for the report.

9) Funding

The funding that was approved to be granted to the hall, for them to be able to purchase a new cooker, has been transferred into the hall's bank account.

The Clerk reminded everyone that there is still £1,000 left in the Distribution Fund, which has to be used by the end of March 2025. Notices have been put in the shops informing everyone of this, along with information on how to go about applying for the funding,

10) Correspondence Received

All correspondence has been circulated electronically.

11) AOCB

11.1 Attracting new members/getting more attendees

After discussion it was agreed to send out a letter to residents as well as the wider community to encourage more people to take part in the Community Council. It was not clear how many Associate Members are allowed to join SCC – the Clerk will find out and feedback to members.

11.2 2025 Meeting dates

The Clerk recently circulated the proposed SCC meeting dates for 2025, as detailed below, and asked if these could be approved.

Skerries Community Council - Proposed 2025 meeting dates		
Date	Day	Time
17 January 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
28 February 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
11 April 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
23 May 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
04 July 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
15 August 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
26 September 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
07 November 2025	Friday	2.00 pm
12 December 2025	Friday	2.00 pm

It was agreed to approve the meeting dates for 2025. The clerk will inform the Community Council Liaison Officer as well as the Chief Nurse.

11.3 Communication Issues

One member voiced concerns over using Messenger as a means of communicating and making decisions. It was agreed that, as long as there is a quorum and a decision needs to be made as soon as possible, then Messenger is a tool that can be used. It was also pointed out that for any information that needed to be imparted quickly Messenger was the most effective tool for that purpose – some people do not check emails as readily as they would check Messenger. It was noted that members were to be mindful of what information they put on to Messenger.

12) Date of the next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at 2.00 pm on Friday, 17th January 2025.

The meeting concluded at 3.35 pm

Actions:

- Councillor Thomson to get in touch with Housing Services, re work needed on council houses
- Jilly to liaise with parents and arrange a letter to be sent to Education Services
- Paul to write to Scottish Water, regarding possible ladder for inside the dam

Chair Signature

Signed.....