

Unst Community Council

Vice Chair

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Clerk

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Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th December 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Baltasound School Music Huts and by MsTeams

Present

Caroline Hunter, Vice Chair
Gary Betney
David Cooper
Janice Priest
Adam Doull (co-opted at the meeting)
Ingram Thomson (co-opted at the meeting)
Robert Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)(MsTeams)
Ryan Thomson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)(MsTeams)

Attending

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

01/12/24 Apologies

John Peterson
Duncan Anderson, SIC Councillor (ex-officio)
Michael Duncan, Community Council Liaison Officer

02/12/24 Elect Chair

There were no nominations for the position of Chair. It was decided to defer this to January's meeting, it will be discussed in details then. Caroline is happy to carry on being Vice Chair.

03/12/24 Appoint co-opted Community Councillor

Adam Doull and Ingram Thomson were appointed as co-opted Community Councillors at the meeting. Caroline welcomed them to the Community Council. There are still two vacancies, one of which can be filled by another co-opted member.

04/12/24 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

05/12/24 NHS Shetland - Kirsty Brightwell, NHS Shetland Medical Director, Jo Robinson, Director of Health and Social Care, Andrew Mayhew, Ambulance Paramedic Team Leader and Antony McDavitt, Director of Pharmacy - Thrombolytic Drug request.

This agenda item will be carried forward to next year as the NHS representatives sent their apologies for the meeting. There was a discussion about this and the late notification of not being able to attend. Before they attend a meeting next year it was agreed to find out more information about what training and equipment is needed to be able to administer these drugs. The quoted figure for the equipment

needed is between £30,000 and £40,000 and the medicine costs about £700. There is a shortage of the medicine, UK wide. Members believe that with Unst's ageing population and distance from the hospital that it is important to have this drug available in here. Caroline said that there is a new protocol for 999 calls. If someone calls 999 for a medical emergency, this calls out the helicopter or ambulance. The doctor is not notified. Out of hours calls to the Gilbert Bain Hospital reception (01595 743000) are passed to the Unst Doctor on call.

06/12/24 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday 4th November 2024 were proposed by Janice and seconded by David.

07/12/24 Matters Arising from last minutes

07/12/24.1 Social Housing

David explained that both the UK Parliament and Scottish Parliament are discussing housing at present. The Scottish Government's budget will be debated further in February and still needs to be approved. They proposed plans for a "£768m investment in affordable homes and more than 8,000 new social rent, mid-market rent and low-cost ownership properties." The Community Council will write to Maggie Sandison, SIC Chief Executive, and thank her for the reply about housing, saying they note the proposed changes in finances around housing and will be following the outcome of this carefully, with regard to the recently published Scottish Human Rights Report and Impact Assessment.

08/12/24 Ferries/Fixed Links

08/12/24.1 Docking Schedule 2025/26

The docking timetable was discussed. It was noted that the Bigga is off again over the Unst Show weekend. There are two ferries in dry dock from Bluemull Sound the first two weeks of January. The Geira from the 1st to 18th January inclusive and the Fivla from 1st to the 19th January inclusive. The Bigga will operate to a Saturday timetable with bookings available.

08/12/24.2 Shetland Times – Freedom of Information request to SIC Ferries – Out of hours service requests 2022/2023/2024

Andrew Hirst, Shetland Times, had submitted a Freedom Of Information Request to SIC Ferries to see how many out of hours requests for ferry runs the ferry service were receiving. Mr Hirst's idea was that this could highlight the need for fixed links. He asked what the Unst Community Council runs were for. The Clerk replied saying that the Community Council only get 4 Community Hires each financial year. In the years Mr Hirst requested information on, these ferry runs were awarded to community groups for events in Unst e.g. Unst Show, UnstFest, Accordion and Fiddle Festival, Shetland Folk Festival. And also for groups wanting to attend events on Yell.

08/12/24.3 Bluemull Sound Emergency Timetable

Andrew Inkster, Executive Manager, SIC Ferry & Airport Operations & Port Infrastructure, replied to the Fetlar Community Council saying they will review and reply to them about the Emergency Timetable for Bluemull Sound. Frances explained that this is the Emergency timetable that Unst and Fetlar Community Councils had spent a lot of time discussing earlier in the year. There were five different suggested options but the Ferries Department had said none of the options could work. When the ferries go to a single vessel, running to the Saturday timetable with no bookings, this does not work well for either the Unst or Fetlar communities. There is a big gap in the morning with no Unst runs, making it difficult for commuters, businesses and visitors alike. There were concerns raised about how the ferries will cope in the summertime with lashing down vehicles, when there are more motorhomes, camper vans, caravans, buses etc travelling that will cut down even more on capacity. There had been some confusion as to whether vehicles needed 4 of 6 lashing points. There was a discussion about the MCA directive to ferries about lashing down all vehicles over 3.5 tonnes and taking away what used to be a decision made by the

skippers on Bluemull Sound. Robert said that the directive had come from the MCA after what was a serious accident on the Bigga, which could have been fatal. Members said that the vehicle involved in the incident was “unstable” unlike rigid bodies vehicles like lorries, buses, camper vans etc. Robert said that the spring of the year would be the time to look at this again.

09/12/24 SIC North Isles Councillors Update

Robert said that there has been discussions about the potential money from the Scottish Government to improve inter island connectivity which could be used to buy another ferry. He was asked when the SIC will know for definite about this funding, he said that the Scottish budget will first be debated and hopefully approved in February. The Inter Islands Transport Connectivity Survey has gone live today, and is available online for the next 6 weeks. Ryan said that there is a meeting on Wednesday whether to investigate Free Bus travel for everyone. The motion has been put forward by two councillors. The vote is whether to investigate Free Bus travel, if the vote is yes, the report on this will be brought in the February cycle of meetings. Ryan said that there was some money from the Scottish Government towards rural childcare needs, with the North Isles and Westside identified as two areas needing this. Ryan was asked would the SIC consider giving loans to other projects as they had to the Fair Isles Ferry Project. Both Ryan and Robert said they would not think so. Robert said that the SIC is already spending too much each year. They do not want to deplete the reserves. They were both asked if they would vote for providing funding for the artificial pitch in Lerwick. Robert said he voted against it the first time around, Ryan said he would look at the pros and cons before deciding.

10/12/24 Unst Partnership Ltd (UP) Update.

The next UP skip day is on the 25th January. UP is still waiting to hear if a contractor can take metal separately. Douglas Westwater, a Consultant from Community Enterprise (CE) Ltd held two public meetings last week about the Community Action Plan (CAP) for the next few years. Neither was very well attended but over 80 people have completed survey forms. CE Ltd would like to get between 100 and 150 back by the beginning of January, before a return visit with a Draft Plan in late January or early February. Housing, Transport Links and the Cost of Living were some of the main issues so far. UP has now received grant funding from Cooke Scotland and the Sandison Trust for funding support for a Housing Needs Assessment by L & L Fraser (Orkney) in early 2025. The firm are trying to fit this in around the Community Action Plan work as that will help them with their analysis. UP has decided not to apply to Scottish Community Benefit Fund (SCBF) for a Housing Development officer until they see the results of the Housing Study. It may be that a wider role, for a Community Development officer post might be required, depending on the CAP report. There does not appear to have been much interest in the NTS properties at Houlland, Steading and Laggans that were put on the market recently. All three buildings would need considerable work to bring them up to standard. Angus Murray, NTS Services manager, is coming to Unst in January to review property. There is still no word on plans for the house at Halligarth.

11/12/24 Community Involvement Update

Frances said there had been 2 pop in events running at the same time as the community library in Unst. Lesley Spence, Sport and Physical Activity Office, had been at one of these events: there had been 49 people there. Frances had also organised a pop in at Nordalea Care Centre, there were 12 people. The next event is tomorrow night, 10th December in the Baltasound School. There will be representatives from Citizens Advice and Mairi Keith, Graduate Project Officer – Early Learning Co-ordinator, SIC. Frances will be producing a Christmas leaflet to show what activities are available over Christmas. This will be put into shops, online etc. There was a discussion about a Community Resilience Plan and what is involved. Fetlar and Yell have both been working on plans. North Yell Development Group has created a plan for the whole of Yell. Each of the 7 halls have got a generator and VHF radios. There are also sleeping bags and food supplies. Frances explained that there had been SEN funding available for generators. She wasn't sure if this was still available. Frances asked if Community Resilience Plan could be put on the agenda for the meeting in January when it could be discussed in more detail.

12/12/24 Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF)

David said that there is a meeting on Wednesday night.

13/12/24 Community Council Scheme Review Update

13/12/24.1 Phase Three Consultation

The final stage of the Community Council Scheme Review Consultation will run from now until the 31st January 2025. The consultation document is available on the Council website:-

www.shetland.gov.uk/ccschemereview Forms will be available from the clerk and in local shops and Post Office.

14/12/24 Applications for Planning

There were no applications for planning.

15/12/24 Application for Donations

There were no applications for donations.

16/12/24 Correspondence

16/12/24.1 Scottish Water – Unst

Scottish Water has been working in the Baltasound area trying to locate leaks. The water supply had been off for those residents on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 3pm. Several leaks have been identified. Most of the water scheme pipes were laid about 80 years ago. Members decided to ask Scottish Water when they plan to replace the pipes in Unst, because of the age and state of the water pipes. Members would also like to get copies of the maps showing where the pipes are, this would help the community identify if it is a pipe that is leaking or standing water. Water tankers have had to be transporting water into Unst because of the quantity of leaks on the island and the level of Heliers Water. This is very concerning with the quantity of rain it has been lately. The Clerk will write about this.

16/12.24.2 Yell Community Council – Sub Group Minutes – Shared Ownership of Windfarm Development

Gordon said that there is a meeting about this tomorrow night. YCC are keen on the shared ownership option, which involves buying shares in the two wind farms on Yell. Once the wind farm starts making money then you get the money back. This could be a good source of income.

16/12/24.3 SSEN – update about North Shetland Reinforcement Project - 5th December 2024 – Webinar

This was noted.

16/12/24.4 SSEN – Draft Stakeholder Engagement Strategy – closes 18th December 2024

This was noted.

16/12/24.5 Scottish Islands federation – Cross Party Group on Islands – Island Homes - 11/12/24

This was noted.

16/12/24.6 Community Council Webinars

These webinars are aimed at Community Councillors and are still available online.

16/12/24.7 Energy Isles Ltd

Doug Wilson emailed to say there is a meeting of Energy Isles Ltd on Tuesday 10th December 2024.

16/12/24.8 SIC Council Tax Consultation

The SIC has circulated a Council Tax Consultation document which is open until the 5th January 2025. They are consulting on Second/Empty Home Supplement. This survey is for Community Councils only, but there will be a separate survey issued for the public to put in their responses later.

16/12/24.9 NHS Dental Services

The dental service in Mid Yell is still only making appointments for dental emergencies, which are being covered by the Brae Dental Service. They carry out no routine checkups and haven't for the past few years. The Lerwick Dental Practice is discharging 2,000 NHS patients in the beginning of February and possibly the remaining NHS patients at the end of June 2025. There are no other options available for these patients to register with a NHS dentist, except for emergency dental work. It was agreed to write again to Antony M. Visocchi Director of Dentistry to ask if there has been any progress in appointing more dentists and copy in Beatrice Wishart, MSP.

16/12/24.10 R100 Broadband Roll Out

There was a complaint from a member of the public about some of these workmen being "very rude and unhelpful when blocking a single track road." The workmen had dug up their driveway and told the resident they would need to park away from the house until they had finished. The workmen had been really unhelpful during the work and had left a pipe sticking up inside the gate without any explanation as to what it is for. The Clerk will pass this on to Adam Swift, Clerk of Works for the job.

16/12/24.11 Roads

All the roads issues that were emailed about after the last meeting have been sorted. The bus shelter has now been replaced. The Community Council wrote at the beginning of the year about painting white lines on Unst, this has still not been done. This was supposed to be done earlier this year. It was agreed to write about this again.

16/12/24.12 Transport

It was agreed to write to SIC Transport to ask for a timeline for their consultation in relation to free bus travel and to find out what they get in bus fares at present.

17/12/24 Community Council Finances

There has been no expenditure since the last meeting.

18/12/24 A.O.C.B.

There were no A.O.C.B. items.

19/12/24 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 27th January 2025

Chair: _____ Date: _____

Clerk: _____