

MONDAY 8 JANUARY 2018

At a meeting of LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL held in the Town Hall, Lerwick, at 7.00pm

Members

Mrs A Simpson	Ms K Fraser
Mr A Johnston	Mr E Knight
Mr D Ristori	Mr B Johnston
Mr A Carter	Mr J Fraser
Mrs M Hall	

Ex-Officio Councillors

Cllr M Bell
Cllr P Campbell
Cllr S Leask
Cllr A Westlake
Cllr B Wishart

Additional Co-opted Members

Mr A Wishart
Mr G Robinson
Miss L Cluness
Mr P Jones

In Attendance

Mr I Malcolmson, Malcolmsons Architects
Mrs C Carroll, Living Lerwick
Ms F Valente, Clerk to the Council

Chairman

Mrs A Simpson, Vice Chair, presided.

01/18/01

Circular

Mrs Simpson welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year. She introduced Iain Malcolmson to the meeting and said that the agenda had been revised to allow for discussion on the North Stoney Hill Masterplan. She thanked Mr Robinson for requesting this addition.

01/18/02

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Anderson, Cllr C Smith, Mr S Hay, Mr A Wenger, Mr M Peterson, Mrs P Christie, and Mr W Spence.

01/18/03

Minutes of the last meeting

The minute of the meeting on 4th December 2017 was approved by Mr A Carter and seconded by Mr A Johnston. Mr Fraser said that his name had been omitted from the attendees and also a comment he had made under AOB about Radio Shetland not announcing the meeting on the radio.

01/18/04 **Business Arising from the Minutes**

Mrs Simpson said that a reply had been received from SIC regarding the replanting of trees that had been removed from the old campsite to make way for the school. With the help of the woodland staff from Shetland Amenity Trust, all the trees that were suitable had been replanted around the new school.

Mrs Simpson read the reply from SIC regarding the broken wall up at the Knab. SIC were aware of the problem and were trying to find a contractor to repair the wall for a reasonable price, but will continue to work on this problem. Mr Knight, who had raised the issue in December, said that he had referred to another part of the wall, closer to the skate park which needed repairing. The clerk would respond accordingly to SIC. **Action: Clerk**

01/18/05 **Police Scotland Monthly Report**

Representatives from Police Scotland were not in attendance.

01/18/06 **North Staney Hill Masterplan**

Iain Malcolmson gave an overview of the Masterplan and explained that when Hjaltland Housing Association had purchased the land from Shetland Leasing and Property one of the planning conditions was to provide a Masterplan which would be adopted into the Council's development plan. He pointed out that the masterplan was a guide to the development, an assurance of the overall quality, to ensure that each phase of development worked together in harmony. He pointed out that the document was huge and went into great detail. There were many restrictions on the site, which included the rocky, steep and boggy terrain, as well as the proximity to the historic broch which meant that the skyline view from the broch should not be spoiled by the impact of a new housing scheme. In effect, 60% of the land was not available for building. However, Mr Malcolmson pointed out that this was not a problem as it meant that the green open space would be retained as a valuable amenity.

Mr Wishart asked what the timescale was for development. Mr Malcolmson replied that the Masterplan would be going to the Council Committee in March. Hjaltland Housing Association would go out to tender on the first phase of the scheme which would be the start of an estimated two year design and building warrant process. The Scottish Government would provide funding for the new road layout. The overall masterplan would take around 10 years to achieve, and the phases of the scheme would be adapted to suit differing housing needs as necessary. Mr Wishart asked about the heating for the development and whether the District Heating scheme would be extended. Mr Malcolmson replied that the most energy efficient and cheapest heat sources would be installed, but at this stage nothing was finalised. Mr Wishart declared an interest in this issue.

Cllr Malcolm Bell declared an interest as Chair of the Planning Committee for this issue and for the planning applications later on the agenda.

Mr Robinson commented on the unusual design of the 2/3 storey buildings in the masterplan which is a diversion from the SIC's Housing Design Guidance. He suggested that single storey plots would have meant that more of the land might have been usable as the lower profile housing would not have impacted so much on the ridgeline. Mr Malcolmson replied that 60% of the accommodation requirement was for 1 bed units. The most cost effective way to provide this would be through 2/3 storey blocks of flats. The higher buildings would also cause windbreaks against the prevailing winds and would allow residents to make greater use of the open spaces. Mr Robinson added that he had not found much consideration for existing properties in terms of blocking their light. In winter some houses were in the shadow of the hill all day and the new development would only make this worse. Mr Malcolmson replied that he was aware that there were concerns about connectivity between the new and old. The masterplan was trying to expand amenities for all residents in the area.

Mr Fraser commented on the well-received presentation at Stoney Hill Hall and commended Iain Malcolmson and Hjalmland Housing Association for the project to create much needed housing. He said there was a strong argument for providing 2/3 bed housing for young people who would in all likelihood start families and provide a more stable turnover of properties. He added that he would like to see more play facilities in the plan. Mr Malcolmson said that there are public spaces that are yet to be designed. The whole area would be a 20mph zone and in effect the whole area was a playground. There was a difficulty with providing children's play areas as neither SIC or HHA were in a position to maintain them, so safety inevitably becomes a factor.

Cllr Westlake commented that the masterplan was very good and asked how the demand for housing had been taken into account. She had been contacted by many constituents who were struggling to find larger accommodation for their families. In addition to this SIC had a policy of trying to increase inward migration to Shetland and if successful the population would grow even more. Cllr Campbell added that with the potential closure of care homes, the impact of which would be that families might have elderly relatives living with them, there would be an increased need for larger housing units. Mr Malcolmson replied that the current housing need was primarily for smaller units, although the scheme would include a small number of larger houses, with up to 5 bedrooms. He pointed out that the individual phases of the scheme could be revised to accommodate changing housing needs, including homes for larger families and that that creating dementia-friendly areas was also a possibility.

Mr Knight said he appreciate the emphasis on preserving green spaces for the public but queried whether the onus would be on the tenants to maintain them as 20-somethings were not known for their interest in green spaces. Mr Malcolmson said that an element of the rent would cover the maintenance of the green spaces although tenants would be encouraged to maintain the garden areas too. Mrs Hall agreed with Mr Knight that she did not think the target tenant groups would use the spaces. Mr Malcolmson referred to a 1960s study that showed that the design of access to a housing area can create the means for better socialisation and interaction between neighbours, and that good design came from listening to people and finding solutions to problems.

Mrs Carroll (Living Lerwick) argued against the development as the existing infrastructure would not be able to cope. She pointed out that the scheme was being shoehorned into an area that wasn't suitable for building which would lead to

excessive costs. She added that it would be better if housing was developed outside of the town and said that there was a need for housing in other areas of Shetland too. Mr Fraser agreed that the infrastructure needed improving and this included schools and the health centres.

Mr Malcolmson replied that it was recognised that there was demand for housing in other areas and Hjaltland Housing Association would continue to build in areas where there is demand. However, employment diversification would be needed to reverse the demand for housing in the town. Lerwick was where the primary demand for housing exists because of the availability of work. Not everyone wanted, or was able, to endure a long commute to work.

Ms Fraser pointed out that this development was not about an explosion of population. This was about people in Lerwick wanting to stay in the town and need affordable accommodation. She liked what was proposed, and was particularly happy with the efforts to preserve the view points and the historic sites. She commented that the new infrastructure of paths would make it more accessible for walking and cycling around the area.

Cllr Leask highlighted that the masterplan was not about centralisation. He pointed out that there were 600 people on the waiting list for homes in Shetland, 400 of whom wanted a home in Lerwick, and 100 of those on the waiting list for a home in the town were in temporary accommodation. He said there was clearly a demand for the homes, in the size composition set out in the masterplan. The houses were aimed at people that were already here and therefore the impact on schools would not be too onerous. Cllr Westlake disagreed that schools would not be impacted as she believed there were families with children currently living in other parts of Shetland who were keen to move back to the town at the first opportunity. She added that the health centres would also struggle to cope with additional demand.

Mrs Hall commented that residents in the area had only just recovered from the building of the new school and the return of jack-hammers was not welcome and asked whether an alternative site had been considered. Mr Malcolmson replied that there were no other areas available at the moment for HHA to purchase.

Mrs Simpson asked about the network of footpaths and whether they would be paved. Mr Malcolmson said that the intention was to allow paths to develop naturally by people using the routes they desired instead of the ones the developers had created. Mrs Simpson referred to the lack of garages and asked whether lock-up garages could be made available to tenants. Mr Malcolmson replied that the use of cars by HHA tenants was lower than average and that it was not the current policy to provide garages, however, parking spaces would be available.

Mr Malcolmson said that he welcomed the opportunity to discuss the masterplan and that any further comments were welcome. Mrs Simpson thanked him for coming and that the Community Council would put a response back to SIC before the deadline on 19th January. **Action: Clerk**

01/18/07

Correspondence

The reply from SIC Roads in relation to a query regarding the use of yellow lines to reduce parking at the junction at Ladies Drive was noted. SIC would be monitoring the situation and would reconsider its policy if required.

Mrs Simpson read the reply from Julie Halcrow regarding the Community Payback scheme. It was agreed that park benches that required painting would be identified and that the Community Council would obtain quotes for the paint and would provide this for the participants of the Community payback scheme. It was anticipated that the repainting of benches would be carried out when the weather permitted.

01/18/08 **Finance – Core Funding Report as at 28 December 2017**

Mrs Simpson asked for any comments on the current financial report. Mr Fraser asked whether any of the surplus funds could be used to support the unsuccessful bids from the Participatory Budget completion held in November. Mr Wishart pointed out that this would mean that point of the competition would have been lost if this happened and that the unsuccessful teams had been given a steer in where they might have applied for other funding.

Mrs Simpson said that some consideration had been given to closing the office at Stouts Court to release money for projects. The office currently cost around £3600 to maintain. She asked for thoughts on this proposal. There was a discussion about whether a point of contact was needed and whether the grant would be cut if the Community Council closed the office. It was decided that the money could be better spent if there were no pressing reasons to keep the office. The clerk would investigate how to relinquish the lease and what the implications would be.

01/18/09 **Planning Application 2017/383/PPF – 72 North Road**

There was a discussion about the need for parking places in the area. It was thought that the parking survey had been carried out at the wrong times as it commenced at 8.00am and ended at 6pm. There were residents who worked at SVT who regularly left earlier than that in the morning and returned late in the evening and found it difficult to park. This development would share parking with another new proposal to create four flats at Grantfield, and this did not appear to have been considered. There were concerns that the fire service would struggle to get close enough to the flats if there was an emergency. In addition to this the access and egress to the flats at the busy roundabout and did not appear to include any improvements to the dropped kerb which would improve safety for pedestrians in the area. Overall, Members agreed that the development would provide much needed housing but the concerns over parking and access would be highlighted in the response to Planning. Mr Fraser noted that the statutory response time had not taken into account the Christmas holidays and that some constituents had raised this with him. It was suggested that Mr Fraser contact the Planning Service in his role as a Councillor to raise this as this was not a matter for the Community Council to deal with.

01/18/10 **Planning Application 2017/245/ADV – Lerwick Tourist Office, Revised Drawing**

The revised signage at the Tourist Office was discussed and approved.

01/18/11 **Planning Application – 2017 2017/384/ADV – Co-op Ltd**

The planning application to install new signage for the Co-operative Supermarket was discussed and approved.

Funding Opportunity – Grow Wild UK

It was proposed to apply for a grant for the planting project at the Clickimin site which had been discussed in previous meetings. The Grow Wild UK scheme was funded by the National Lottery and Kew Gardens, to promote create use of green spaces and wild flowers. The clerk would make the application and identify a project Mentor. It was hoped that Jon Dunn would be able to help with this. The closing date was 15th January 2018. **Action: Clerk**

01/18/12 **A.O.B.**

- a. Mr Wishart announced that as he was about to move out of Lerwick he would not be eligible to attend that meetings from now on and regretfully tendered his resignation. Mrs Simpson replied that she was very sorry to hear that and thanked him for his valuable contribution over the years.
- b. Mrs Hall asked whether there were plans to finish the road at the new Observatory housing scheme as it was very hard to see at night where the road was. The Clerk was asked to investigate. **Action: Clerk**
- c. Mr Knight commented that he was concerned about how many people walked around at night in very dark clothing which made it difficult for car drivers to see them. He wondered whether the Lerwick Community Council could campaign on this issue. Mr Carter added that perhaps the money saved on the Community Council office could be used on buying reflective badges or some other reflective device, especially for children. Ms Fraser said that RoSPA had worked with schools before to provide reflective disks and maybe this scheme needed to be repeated.

There being no further competent business the meeting concluded at 8.40 pm.

Minute ends.

MR J ANDERSON
CHAIRMAN
LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Chairman.....

Date.....