

MONDAY 14 April 2008

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

Members

Mr J Anderson
Mrs A Simpson
Mr D Ristori
Mr L Angus
Mr R Leith
Mr W Stove

Mr E Knight
Mr W Spence
Mrs K Fraser
Mr A Johnson
Mrs M Robertson

Ex-Officio Councilors

Cllr J Henry
Cllr J Wills

Cllr C Miller

In Attendance

PS G McCarthy, Northern Constabulary
Mr Craig Nicolson, Capital Projects Manager, Shetland Islands Council
Mrs Helen Budge, Head of Schools, Shetland Islands Council
Mr John Robertson, Shetland Times Reporter
Mrs K Semple, Clerk to the Council

Chairman

Mr J Anderson, Chairman to the council presided.

08/04/01

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

08/04/02

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Wishart, Cllr C Smith, Mr A Goudie, Mrs K Greaves and Mr M Peterson

08/04/03

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2008 were approved by Mr W Stove and seconded by Mrs A Simpson.

08/04/04

Business Arising from the Minutes

Town Hall Anniversary and Booklet

Mrs A Simpson stated provisional arrangements were underway to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Town Hall.

Proposed events include a Buffet to be held in the evening of Monday 28 July, musical event in both the afternoon and evening of Tuesday 30 July and Dinner Dance in the evening of 30 July.

Mrs A Simpson also stated she had received a draft of the New Town Hall booklet, and it was currently undergoing some small revisions.

Mr M Peterson – Comments on March Meeting

Mr M Peterson who was unable to attend the April meeting of Lerwick Community Council had written some comments to be read out in his absence.

Mr L Angus stated this practice was out of order and the comments should be raised by Mr M Peterson himself at the next meeting of Lerwick Community Council.

The Chairman agreed with Mr L Angus's statement and asked the Clerk of the Council to include Mr M Peterson's letter in the next agenda.

08/04/05

Police Report

PS G McCarthy provided the following details of offences compared to those of the same time last year.

Crimes against the person - down from 33 to 15, of which 14 were detected
Crimes involving indecency – down from 24 to 20, of which 18 were detected
Crimes of dishonesty – down from 269 to 266, of which 183 were detected
Crimes of vandalism – up from 247 to 255, of which 122 were detected
Miscellaneous crimes – down from 804 to 777, with 753 detections
Traffic Offences - down from 700 to 689, all detected

PS G McCarthy reported an overall detection rate of 88%, a 3.1% decrease in crimes compared to that of last year.

He stated that the force had had a successful year regarding policing, resulting in 24 less victims of crime in Shetland compared to those of last year.

Mr B Stove asked the PS G McCarthy for the definition of 'Indecency'.

The Sergeant replied the term 'Indecency' covered sexual offences and other offences involving indecency to the person.

Cllr C Miller noted Police Officers seemed quite proactive in stopping cars from driving through Commercial Street and asked if any drivers had been charged.

PS G McCarthy stated a number of motorists had been given fixed penalty fines of £30 for driving illegally on the Street. He noted however that some motorists, including the disabled were still permitted to drive through Commercial Street.

Cllr J Henry asked the Sergeant if he was concerned by any of the crime figures stated in his report.

The Sergeant replied the main thing was there was a downward slope, but they could not afford to be complacent. He noted Police Officers remained high profile in areas which had a history of crime and the public were actively encouraged to report crimes they had witnessed.

Mr L Angus thanked PS G McCarthy for his attendances at Lerwick Community Council meetings. He noted Shetlanders were lucky to live in a largely law abiding area and was glad to see that Police presence was impacting on crime.

He stated road traffic crimes and drugs offences were a particular area of concern and noted that vandalism seemed to be a growth industry.

Mr L Angus reported the lighting at Clickimin Broch had been vandalised and would have to be repaired at substantial cost to Lerwick Community Council. He stated he had spoken to authorities in other areas and they had reported similar problems.

Cllr J Wills stated there was a problem with 'boy racers' speeding along the Esplanade between the Lifeboat Station and Harbour House. He asked if traffic calming measures could be put in place, like speed bumps, before a serious accident is caused.

PS G McCarthy replied these type of traffic calming measures could only be implemented if speeding was consistently logged in the area.

Cllr J Wills asked if an automatic speed camera could be installed.

PS G McCarthy stated Roads, Shetland Islands Council, had used an automatic speed camera in some areas and the Police had received feedback. He noted the majority of the reports revealed the problem was not as bad as perceived.

Cllr J Wills suggested a sign which logs and displays motorists speed should be erected in problem areas on a permanent basis as an attempt to discourage speeders.

PS G McCarthy disagreed stating impact is lost when intelligent road signs are permanently placed.

Mr W Stove noted these types of signs were often used by 'boy racers' to log their speed and could not be relied upon to be a deterrent. He also stated road bumps on the Esplanade would not be a good idea.

The Chairman stated Mr I Halcrow, Head of Roads, Shetland Islands Council would be attending the next meeting of Lerwick Community Council. He said he would contact Mr I Halcrow and ask him to bring any relevant information to the meeting regarding speeding issues.

The Chairman asked PS G McCarthy if the crimes of vandalism were general and how the force was tackling these crimes.

The Sergeant stated certain individuals and areas were targeted and they had been able to tie much of the crimes to a certain individual.

PS G McCarthy expressed his desire to reduce the figures of vandalism over the next year.

The Chairman thanked PS G McCarthy for his report.

PS G McCarthy left the meeting at 7.20pm.

08/04/06

Mr Craig Nicolson, Capital Projects Manager, Shetland Islands Council – Proposed New Anderson High School

Mr C Nicolson, Capital Projects Manager, Shetland Islands Council stated protective walls would be built around areas of the proposed New Anderson High which, together with greenery, would form windbreaks.

An outside large courtyard is planned, also protected by windbreaks and received good feedback from pupils.

He stated subtle low level lighting would be used around the school in order to impose as little as possible on surrounding properties.

He explained Lovers Loan would be closed off to school traffic and instead, traffic for the school would go up Knab Road, down Gressay Loan and back the same way. Rather than a design requirement, this was a requirement by Roads, Shetland Islands Council who insisted traffic was taken away from the old graveyard.

He also stated Knab Road would be realigned into the golf course offering a safe drop off point for buses and parents dropping off pupils.

Mrs M Robertson enquired if it had been discovered who owned the land at the golf course.

Mr C Nicolson replied that the land was owned by Shetland Islands Council and had been gifted to them.

The Chairman asked if the cost included the rebuilding of the public toilets in the area.

Mr C Nicolson replied the cost was included, if indeed they did need replaced.

He explained a school car park was planned for the North of the site and the covered walkway underneath the games hall would offer some protection to people walking from the car park to the school.

Mr C Nicolson stated the service area will be one central point and at the back of the school, away from pupils.

Cllr J Wills enquired how far away the rubbish skips will be from the residential area.

Mr C Nicolson replied they would back on to the wall of the residences but stated the skips would be kept covered.

He stated the main games hall to the west could be used as a stand alone facility and could be locked off keeping the school safe and secure.

Mr C Nicolson explained the main entrance for the school would be off the realigned Knab road and would be sheltered by a wall. He stated that although there were other access points to the school they would all automatically 'lock down' at 9am. The main entrance would be the only access and pupils would have to report to main reception.

The new School plans incorporate a large central atrium at the heart of the School on level '0'. Skylights would let natural light into the atrium. The Sports Hall on the right is split into three sections to facilitate better teaching and on the left the new ASM.

The rooms for teaching would be built on level '1' and consideration will be given to allow flexibility of space within the classrooms e.g. moving walls.

Mrs Helen Budge, Head of Schools explained needs for pupils changed depending on what type of class they were attending and what year they were in. As an example, 5th and 6th year classes tend to be smaller than 1st or 2nd year.

She noted some classes could be as large as 30 where others, teaching English or Maths tended to be around 20.

Mr C Nicolson stated a Library was planned for level '1' with balcony and views over the central atrium.

The top level is planned to contain the science and art teaching rooms.

The School would contain four stairwells and four lifts which would take pupils to any point and plenty of fire escapes.

Mr W Stove stated lack of storage had been an issue in other schools and enquired what provision for storage had been made.

Mrs H Budge replied that there would be some storage space centrally with and built in storage areas would also be planned within classrooms.

She stated the more detailed plans for the classrooms were still 'a work in progress' and stressed the flexibility of classroom space as an important consideration.

Cllr J Wills enquired if the site at the Knab for the proposed new Anderson High was defined by what is not occupied at the moment.

Mr W Stove stated that there was surely no other choice if the current school was to be kept running.

Mr Stove then raised the issue of the 'flat roof' and asked why lessons had not been learned from previous problems.

Mr Craig Nicolson replied the roof was not flat but had a six degree pitch.

He pointed out that technology had moved on since the 70's and 80's where felt was generally the material used on flat roofs.

Mr C Nicolson explained the builders planned to use 'Sarnafil', a building material widely used to great success in Scandanavia where weather conditions were similar to ours.

He also noted that 'Sarnafil' has also been successfully used on other buildings in Shetland.

Mrs A Simpson stated that the flat roof had blown off from on a new school in the Highlands and she wondered if they had been told the same thing.

The Chairman stated the photo montage giving a view of the school from the area of Somerfield was misleading and did not correlate with the scale model.

He stated the photo montage should depict the proposed New Anderson High as being on the same level as the Coastguard Station and covering the length of Knab Road.

Mr C Nicolson defended the photo montage stating it had been produced as accurately as possible and everything had been double checked. He pointed out the 'photograph' which had been taken from a low angle was a true representation.

Mr L Angus noted the revised design of the school was actually 20ft lower than the original design.

Mrs M Robertson asked what the overall height of the school was.

Mr Craig Nicolson replied that he was uncertain but would try to find out.

Mr L Angus thought the overall height was around 17.5m

The Chairman noted the proposed new school was to be built on a very exposed area and this was a concern to the general public. He stated that at approximately 12 meters above Knab Road the school would be an imposing structure.

He asked if there was any room for maneuver. He noted that no one wanted to see the project 'fall by' but felt there was a real concern regarding the roof and the possibility of it blowing off.

Mr W Stove stated that as a resident in the area he had no complaints and felt the sooner the building work commenced the better. He felt he would be no longer here when the roof blew off.

Mr E Knight noted that he too was a resident in the area and also had no complaints.

He stated that the chances of the structure being built with a peaked roof was very remote and stated no matter where the school was built there would be objections. He also felt that the building should be allowed to commence as soon as possible.

Mr L Angus noted the only reason the proposal to build the new Anderson High at Clickimin was thrown out was due to there being a saving of £9million if the Knab site was used. However projected costs had soared from £33million to £48million plus.

Mr W Stove stated that if the Clickimin site was looked at again, the costs would have risen there too.

Mr L Angus asked when an updated estimate for the building costs could be expected.

Mr C Nicolson replied it would be June. He noted the contract was an 'open book contract' where the costs would be worked out but the actual costs would be paid.

Mr L Angus noted the size of the school and the space allowed per pupil had increased considerably since the first plans.

Mrs H Budge replied the space per pupil allocated in the proposed new Anderson High was on a par with other schools within Shetland.

Mr W Spence enquired how often pupils would have to be bused to Clickimin to use the facilities and for what reason.

Mr C Nicolson replied that it would be for swimming only as all other aspects were covered by the new school.

Mrs H Budge stated the cost and frequency of busing pupils to Clickimin varied depending on how many pupils were being taught at a standard or higher level.

She corrected that Clickimin would not just be used for swimming but also some 'dry side activities'.

Cllr J Wills stated the internal design of the school was terrific but felt it had been shoe horned in the available site. He did not feel the architects had done all they could to alleviate the problems which concerned the residents and thought the design could be 'tweaked to satisfy'.

Mr E Knight enquired as to how many of the residents had concerns over the proposed new school and noted he as resident in the area had no concerns.

He noted that out of a population of 6,000, 2 or 3 members of the public with concerns over the proposed new school were very few.

Cllr J Wills asked if those people should be 'sacrificed for the greater good'.

Mr E Knight stated that this was done all the time and there would always be objections no matter how much the plans were altered. He thought the architects had made a great job of the design.

Mr W Stove asked if there was any way to get around the preservation order on the Janet Courtney Hostel in order to make more room on the site.

Mr E Knight stated he had heard Shetland Islands Council was looking at the possibility of replacing the hostel at a cost of £9.7million and asked if the cost could be justified.

Mr C Nicolson replied it was being looked at but the number of pupils staying in the Hostel was dwindling all the time. Those mainly in need of accommodation at the hostel were from Fair Isle, Foula, Papa and possibly Unst.

He explained the Janet Courtney Hostel was a listed building and there were no plans to demolish it as part of the new Anderson High School project.

Mr L Angus stated the preservation order did not apply to the whole of the building; just the front of it and thought there had been an application to demolish it.

The Chairman asked the Clerk of the Council to write to Gwenan Hughes, Planning Officer (conservation), Shetland Islands Council for clarification.

Mr C Nicolson stated that the existing games hall would be knocked down first and new games hall built as soon as possible. He explained the school has two mini gyms and also hoped to make use of the facilities at Clickimin. This part of the project was estimated to take between 12-13 months to complete.

He noted the main teaching arc would be built in isolation and could be fenced off for safety. The rest of the school would be built, then all of the old buildings would be demolished except the hostel. The site would then be cleared for road and landscaping.

Mr L Angus asked what would happen to Blyde Haven Nursery and if would be relocated.

Mrs H Budge stated a feasibility study was currently underway which was looking at primary and pre-school care throughout Lerwick and they would look at the study to see what it was saying.

Mr C Nicolson stated 570 people came to the presentation at the Museum and they received a lot of feedback and were looking at a number of points raised by members of the public.

He assured members of Lerwick Community Council that the issues raised would be looked at they hoped to answer the questions and address the issues before going back to planning, possibly at the beginning of May.

Mrs M Robertson noted 60-70 people from the Knab area attended the presentation and it was not just a few residents with grave concerns. She stated she was pleased with the work Cllr J Wills was doing and noted that although residents had not been happy with the lack of consultation, the latest developments were positive.

He advised Mr C Nicolson to answer as many of the residents queries as thoroughly as possible prior to submitting their application to planning.

The Chairman thanked Mr C Nicolson and Mrs H Budge for their presentation.

The presentation concluded at 8.25pm.

08/04/07

Correspondence

7.1 Cllr J Wills – Report on meeting for Anderson High School Neighbours, held at The Shetland Museum on 10 March 2008

Cllr J Wills stated both himself and Cllr C Smith had met with residents at Belleview to discuss their concerns.

He explained the report was a result of meeting with the residents at Belleview and the Knab area and summarised the resident's comments and complaints.

He hoped the issues would be resolved but doubted they would.

Cllr E Knight stated he hoped Cllr J Wills would advocate as well for those not objecting to the plans.

Cllr J Wills stated he had looked round the Anderson High School with one of the janitors and reported it was in a 'poor state', but still felt the plans for the new Anderson High School should be modified.

Mr L Angus noted there was a convincing majority who backed the plans to carry on with things at the Knab site. He stated that perhaps the size of the building would be reduced when the final estimate comes in.

7.2 Cllr J Wills – Copy email to Craig Nicolson, Planning – Proposed new AHS
Noted

7.3 Mr M Mann – Objection to Planning Application PL2008/113 – St Olafs Hall
Noted

7.4 Ms Fiona Mann – Objection to Planning Application PL2008/113 – St Olafs Hall
Noted

7.5 The Scottish Parliament – Climate Change Bill, Consultation
Mr L Angus noted the UK had the worst record on renewable energy in the Northern hemisphere.

Mr W Stove suggested members of Lerwick Community Council should individually contact the Scottish Government.

The Chairman agreed to this proposal.

7.6 Postwatch Scotland – Post Office Closure Programme
The Chairman asked the Clerk of the Council to write to National Consultation Team with a copy to Tricial Dow, Postwatch Scotland stating Lerwick Community Council is against the closures.

7.7 Natural Capital Ltd – Options for the Bressay Link; STAG Appraisal
Cllr C Miller stated a letter had recently been received from STAG and residents were going over the final draft.

She noted she felt things were going in the right direction and the process of consultation thorough.

7.8 James Linklater, Northlink Ferries – Photo ID requirement for passengers
The Chairman stated the reply from Mr Linklater seemed sensible, but time would tell and hopefully no one would be turned away.

7.9 Neil Robertson, Infrastructure Services, SIC – Flagstones, Commercial Street
The Chairman asked the Clerk of the Council to hold the letter over to the next meeting when Mr I Halcrow, Head of Roads, Shetland Islands Council would be discussing the possible pedestrianisation of Commercial Street.

7.10 David Oakley, ATM Performance Analyst – ATMs at Sound Service Station & Toll Clock Shopping Centre
Noted

7.11 Robert Gunn, Shetland Retailers Association – Chewing Gum on Flagstones
Noted

7.12 Shetland Forwards – Grant Thanks
Noted

7.13 Margaret Stevenson, St Columba's Church – Grant Offer Thanks
Noted

7.14 Neil Robertson, Infrastructure Services, SIC – Christmas Street Lighting
Noted

7.15 Neil Hutcheson, Infrastructure Services, SIC – Sign Request
Mr D Ristori noted an 'Otters Crossing' sign was not just to protect otters but to encourage tourists and make them aware otters were in the area.

The Chairman asked the Clerk of the Council to write to Jill Blackadder regarding the issue and ask if she would take up the cause.

7.16 Neil Hutcheson, Infrastructure Services, SIC – Disabled Parking Spaces, TSB
Noted

7.17 John MacNeil, Digitaluk – Getting Ready for Digital TV Switchover
Noted

7.18 Shetland Amenity Trust – Redd Up
Mr E Knight and Cllr J Henry declared an interest.

Cllr C Miller stated Bressay Community Council supported the History Group, School and Boating Club where they gave funds in return for the beaches getting cleaned.

She suggested Lerwick Community Council tried a similar approach when offering funding.

The Chairman agreed to this proposal and suggested the wording on the grant application forms be amended to include this request.

7.19 Mr S McConnachie, Scottish Water – South Staney Hill Reinstatement
Mr A Johnson offered to meet a representative from Scottish Water and show them the area of disturbed ground.

7.20 SIC – Proposed Community Council Grant Distribution 2008/09
The Chairman stated at a recent meeting of ASCC he had been led to believe the 20% of funding which had been held back would be forthcoming. However he looked forward to seeing the offer in writing.

08/04/08

Financial Report
8.1 Grants Projects 20078/2008
Noted

8.2 Report Main Annual Running Costs 2007-2008 & Projected Costs 2008-2009
Noted

8.3 Committed Grants & Projects 2007-2008 & Projected Costs 2008-2009
Noted

08/04/09

Financial Assistance
11.1 Lerwick Boating Club – Upgrade/Renewal of Function Room Furnishings; 10 Tables and 50 Chairs
Mr L Angus, Mr E Knight and the Chairman all declared an interest.

Mr E Knight noted that although he had an interest it shouldn't preclude him from speaking for Lerwick Boating Club.

Mr E Knight stated Lerwick Boating Club did a lot of good work. It hosted the Bergen Race, Round Britain Race which is held every 4 years and the Dutch Triangle.

He also pointed out 50-60 youngsters a year were trained for sailing and legislation required that they had separate changing facilities. He stressed the function room was also used as a classroom, teaching theory and the furniture was 'falling to bits'.

Mr W Stove proposed Lerwick Boating Club should be offered £2,000 to assist with their purchase.

This was seconded by Mrs A Simpson.

08/04/10

Planning Applications
2008/112/PCD – To erect Church with general community facilities and café, Quoys, Sound, Lerwick by Lerwick Baptist Church
No objections

2008/113/PCD – To restore and convert main hall to offices, demolish rear extension & erect 8 flats, St Olaf’s Hall, Church Road, Lerwick by Westfish (Shetland) Ltd.

Cllr J Wills stated St Olaf’s Hall was a lovely building but the plans for change of use would ruin into trouble over parking issues.

Ms K Fraser agreed but stated housing was needed in town and anyone purchasing a flat would have to consider the parking problem

Mr L Angus noted that traffic generated by the proposed offices in the building would cause more of a problem.

The Chairman stated the existing application from the Baptist Church would mean the loss of a further six parking places in the area.

He stated there was already real concern from those living in the area with regard to parking but conceded the plans for change of use were presented extremely well.

He proposed Lerwick Community object over the issue of car parking problems.

Mrs A Simpson agreed with Mr L Angus that the proposed offices would bring particular problems with regard to parking.

Ms K Fraser stated Shetland Islands Council should become serious about encouraging people not to use their cars so much.

Mr W Stove noted it was planning policy that buildings should have sufficient parking facilities.

Mr L Angus replied parking spaces could not be created in a conservation area.

Cllr J Wills noted it seemed a shame to object due to lack of parking facilities when such a good job had been done with the design.

The Chairman stated that over the years the occupation of the houses in the area had changed from older age groups to younger people and families with more of a need for cars.

He proposed the plans should be objected to on the grounds of overdevelopment and loss of car parking facilities to those already in the area.

This proposal was seconded by Mr D Ristori.

08/04/11

Any Other Business

Cllr J Wills noted a member of public had complained to him about a lamp post outside 14 Chromate Lane which had been damaged for 27 years. Despite numerous requests the lamp post had never been mended and was in a poor state of repair.

Cllr J Wills said he was unsure what to do at this stage but would not let the matter rest.

The Chairman asked the Clerk of the Council to write to Shetland Islands Council detailing the problem and ask that the situation be addressed.

Mr R Leith again raised the issue regarding the problem of receiving guaranteed use of chairs, from Shetland Islands Council, for the Up Helly Aa Hosts and Hostesses, Gilbertson Park.

The Clerk confirmed she had written to Cllr A Cluness as requested, but had not received a reply. She stated she phoned in order to prompt a response but her call had not been answered.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to write to Mrs A Arthur, Administration Officer, Executive Services, Shetland Islands Council with a copy of the letter and state that no response had been received.

The Chairman thanked members for attending the meeting.

There being no other competent business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

MR J ANDERSON
CHAIRMAN
LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL