

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

Present

Mr R Anderson
Mr I Bruce
Ms K Fraser
Mr T Nicolson
Mr P Scarsbrook
Cllr W Stove

Mr L Bisset
Cllr G Feather
Mr A Johnston
Mr M Peterson
Mrs A Simpson

Additional Co-opted Member

Ms B Wishart

Mr M Shearer

In Attendance

Reporter, Radio Shetland
PS G McCarthy, Northern Constabulary

Reporter, Shetland Times
Miss C Duncan, Clerk

Chairman

Mr T Nicolson, Chairman of the Council, presided

05/04/01

Circular

The Circular calling the meeting was held as read. The Chairman welcomed Mr M Shearer as a new additional co-opted member and congratulated Mrs A Simpson on her appointment as a full member.

05/04/02

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Anderson, Cllr L Angus, Cllr J Irvine and Cllr E Knight.

05/04/04

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2005 were approved on the motion of Mr R Anderson and seconded by Ms B Wishart.

15.4 Anderson High School Wall

The Chairman stated that he had said the wall had been demolished as it was considered unsafe and that Cllr L Angus had confirmed that work was underway with contractors on site. It was agreed to write to them and ask for the proposed timescale of the replacement work and to be kept updated on its progress.

05/04/04

Business Arising

15.1 Headstones, Lerwick Cemeteries

The Chairman confirmed that there had been no response from Shetland Islands Council to date.

15.2 Knab Footpath

The Chairman noted that work had recommenced on the footpath and Mr R Anderson confirmed that it had restarted last week.

14.6 Sands of Sound Road

The Chairman noted that there had been discussions in the past between Mr I Halcrow of the SIC Roads Department and the landowner in respect of parking spaces for the public at the beach. There had been differences with the landowner and so nothing had been done. The condition of the road was now atrocious, with large plant vehicles constantly using the road during the building of the new dwelling at the end of it. He suggested writing to the SIC with a view to getting an agreement from the landowner and the resident building the house as soon as possible, as it would soon be summer when the road was under increased use by the public. It required proper ditching work and replacement tarmac. He asked if it would be appropriate to allocate Community Council's funds to repair the road.

Mr R Anderson suggested having a meeting with the engineers, as the Community Council had put in money in the past for access by the public. He had no doubt that the destruction of the road was down to the heavy vehicles currently using it and felt that a long term resolution was required.

Mr L Bisset suggested representatives of Lerwick Community Council meet with the SIC Roads Department to discuss the matter. He felt there was no point in spending money on it at the moment while the problem was ongoing.

The Chairman noted that the owner of the new property was prepared to reinstate the road to a standard to be adopted by the Shetland Islands Council and that the problem seemed to lie with the landowner.

Mr P Scarsbrook noted that as the road was for public access there would be Health and Safety issues arising.

The Chairman agreed, and stated that they did not want the road to be closed. It was agreed that the Chairman and Mr P Scarsbrook would arrange a meeting with Mr I Halcrow of the Roads Department.

10.6 Sewer, Sletts Footpath

Mr R Anderson confirmed that there had been no further discussions with regard to the sewer, and he would draft a letter to Mr D Okill of SEPA.

05/04/05

Police Report

PS G McCarthy presented figures for the two-month period from 21st February.

1183 incidents	18 thefts
	67 vandalism
	19 assaults
	5 positive drug searches
	3 drink drivers

He noted that the 67 vandalism was an especially high figure. The majority of these had taken place in the Sandveien/Nederdale and North Ness areas within the last couple of weeks and they were following a positive line of enquiry, from which they expected to detect the culprits and report them to the Procurator Fiscal or Children's Panel. There are currently 2 groups of individuals, each targeting

their own area. Last weekend there had been no further incidents, with a reduced number this weekend.

With regard to the Alcohol By-Law, the latest information he received was that it is hoped to run it in conjunction with the Harbour By-Law so no area is missed out.

The Chairman noted his concerns with the high level of vandalism. He felt that it was down to groups of youngsters graduating to the age where they had to destroy property, and believed both groups reported by PS McCarthy were mixing together.

PS McCarthy noted that they had no evidence of a link between groups, and felt they were looking at two very separate gangs of individuals.

05/04/06

CCTV

The Chairman continued the Police Report into the subject of CCTV and noted there seemed to be a desire for more protection in the community. He passed on Cllr J Irvine's message that he was very much in favour of CCTV on Commercial Street to protect people and their property.

PS G McCarthy stated that he had received information that day that contracts for CCTV had gone out to tender and to date they had received a quote back from one company, another noting that they were interested in the feasibility study and no response from the third company. He confirmed there would need to be a study.

Mr L Bisset asked what CCTV will do for the residents of Sandveien and Nederdale, and the North Ness, who had been targeted by vandals recently but would not be covered by the scheme.

The Chairman answered that it can only assist in policing. He thought that if CCTV covered the town centre it would free up officers to patrol other areas of the town.

PS G McCarthy said that businesses in the North Ness area had their own CCTV cameras in operation and evidence from these had been used to assist in detecting the perpetrators. He agreed that CCTV in the town centre would release them to do more work in other areas.

Mr R Anderson noted he was glad to hear that the North Ness cameras had proved effective, as he had heard they hadn't been.

Ms K Fraser stated that they have to remember that CCTV isn't a "cure-all". Chief Inspector A Cowie had made it clear at a meeting last year that it doesn't deter crime and can move it around from area to area. Ms K Fraser felt it was expensive to operate and would require manpower to do so. She stated that studies had not proved that it is effective and she is very sceptical. Evidence has it that it can reduce crime during its first year of operation then the effect wears off.

She noted that there was a push for CCTV in the town centre during a period of unprovoked violent crime but felt that in that instance CCTV was not the best option. Offenders would (a) not commit the crime in front of the cameras but would go to other areas, or (b) they wouldn't care if they got caught and commit the crime anyway. She was concerned that there would be huge costs and felt there would have to be much more information available. She added that Orkney had done a trial and they should look at their results.

Mr R Anderson noted that he thought Ms Fraser was suffering from the classic delay syndrome – “don’t do anything and see if it goes away”. He stated that no one was suggesting it would be a 100% cure-all. The concept of CCTV he had was that the cameras would operate 24 hours a day unmanned, with the tapes being looked at if an incident occurred.

Ms K Fraser said she believed the operation of CCTV would cost £100,000+ and thought this money could be better spent on other methods of policing. She thought the cameras would lead to a displacement of crime around the town and still wouldn’t free up police time.

Mr L Bisset noted that incidents will still occur and the police will continue to react. CCTV monitors would not prevent it happening but it could be a deterrent.

Mr R Anderson agreed that having someone constantly monitoring the cameras would cost money. He felt that prevention of crime was useful but the apprehension of the people involved was crucial. He felt that businesses on Commercial Street or the residents of Sandveien and Nederdale would be more interested in the apprehension of criminals and prevention of crime than the cost involved.

Ms K Fraser asked if he thought the businesses on Commercial Street would pay towards the operation of the scheme or where he proposed the money would come from, as it would require continual funding to maintain.

Mr L Bisset expressed his disappointment that, with the number of resources available in Shetland, the vandalism problem exists in the first place. He didn’t have the answers but he expected councillors to try to resolve it.

The Chairman stated that if they had the answers, there would be no problem. He noted that there had been discussions some time ago when it was agreed that more funding would need to be found to strengthen the police force. He was pleased to see that this had happened, with the appointment of around 13 special constables, more full time officers and the appointment of the community wardens.

He suggested deferring a decision on the CCTV scheme until they had the results of the tender process. He noted it would be very expensive and that resources would have to be balanced with what method is most effective.

Mr M Peterson asked if it had to be a static system within the town centre, or could a mobile system operate, whereby cameras were set up wherever required and moved on as the problems were resolved. This would give the element of surprise.

Cllr W Stove noted that he agreed with everything raised so far. He thought that until it was confirmed whether or not the cameras were to be monitored, it should be assumed that they would only be watched during peak times. He noted that they would not be able to see everything and would not be able to see up lanes if they were fixed in place on Commercial Street or at the Market Cross.

He also noted that the police could not man Sandveien or Nederdale if they were required to be at Commercial Street. He felt there was a need to convince the community to play their part and come forward with information. He agreed that there was a need to wait for the results of the feasibility study or tenders before making any decision.

PS G McCarthy confirmed that the CCTV system they were looking at would be monitored, although it had not been decided whether this would be on a full time basis or not. He noted that CCTV was not the be all and end all of police detection but could assist and could be a deterrent.

Mr L Bisset asked who would be funding the proposed scheme.

The Chairman replied that he understood it was the Scottish Executive who were providing funding.

Cllr W Stove agreed that they could fund the capital costs but was unsure if also funded the running costs, either for 2-3 years, or indefinitely, or if this was the responsibility of Shetland Islands Council.

The Chairman suggested asking the Shetland Islands Council where the funding was to come from, and then raising the matter again when costs and sources of funding had been established.

Mr R Anderson moved to vote whether the Community Council approved in principle the provision of CCTV. He noted that if it was too expensive then it would not be possible and also that he knew members of the community were against it as they felt it would be against their civil liberties.

The Chairman agreed to the vote.	Agree in Principle	8 votes
	Disagree	1
	Dissenters	2

Ms K Fraser noted that it was difficult to vote yea or nay, as she could agree to the proposals but didn't disagree in principle.

Mr L Bisset stated he was not prepared to vote until it was clearer what exactly Lerwick would be getting. He noted that it appeared some people were not prepared to make a decision either way until further information was available. He would like to see more details regarding cost, manning and how outlying areas would benefit.

The Chairman agreed to defer a decision until further information became available.

05/04/07

Delting Community Council – Possible Road Closure

The Chairman distributed a response from the Shetland Islands Council to a letter from Delting Community Council regarding possible road closure due to an accident or other incident. He noted this had been raised at a previous meeting and stated that although there had been inconvenience to the motoring public they could not lose sight of the fact that people had lost loved ones at that time, to whom he expressed his sympathy.

He had been concerned by the length of time the road had been closed. He understood that the police have to carry out their investigations properly but was concerned at the time taken to transport specialist officers from Inverness to do so. He asked if it would not be possible to train up officers in Shetland to do the investigations as this would speed up the process.

PS G McCarthy replied that in the event of a serious road accident, they had to bring in specialist officers from the mainland. It was force policy that fatal

accidents are investigated by a special department of the Road Policing Department, and they could not change force policy to train officers outwith that department. The officers on the mainland investigated an average of 40 accidents per year so their skills were ongoing. Shetland had an average of 2 per year, so it was prohibitive to train someone here to maintain their skills.

The Chairman noted that, going back a number of years, local police did the job and there weren't such lengthy road closures. He understood why the specialists were required and that they were better at the job, but felt that Shetland's remoteness and weather, particularly fog, presented difficulties with transport at times.

He stated that he would like to put forward that the Area Commander trained local officers in the techniques required to carry out a full investigation. He noted that officers on the mainland could get to the scene of an accident in a relatively short space of time but that was not possible here.

Mr R Anderson noted that more technical skills were required these days. He felt that specialist officers should not be expected to rely on normal means of transport to get to Shetland in the event of a fatal accident and suggested they use a police helicopter to get here as quickly as possible.

PS G McCarthy stated that Northern Constabulary had no access to police helicopters and the nearest ones were in the Strathclyde force. He noted that fog had never been a contributory factor or a source of delay in getting officers here in the past 5 years.

He explained that all police officers were bound by the Association of Chief Officers' manual on how to deal with road accidents and they could not breach the instructions laid down in the manual.

Mr L Bisset asked how long the road had been closed. The Chairman replied it had been 24 hours.

Mr L Bisset then asked what the actual inconvenience had been, and if it had been the fact that people had had to make a diversion to get home.

Mr R Anderson stated that there was no alternative diversion through Voe at Tagon, so people would be unable to get through.

The Chairman stated that he had received several telephone calls from areas served by single track roads regarding large vehicles using them during the period of the diversion, e.g. large lorries using the road through Nesting.

Mr L Bisset stated he was baffled, as an accident was an accident and as such no one could predict where or when one would occur. If there was no possibility of a diversion the road would just have to be closed until such time as the police had completed their investigations and were able to open it again.

The Chairman suggested that they write to Chief Inspector Cowie to point out the transport issues regarding the remoteness of Shetland and ask that the Association of Chief Police Officers give consideration to training officers based in Shetland.

PS G McCarthy added that it was not force policy to train officers outwith the road traffic department and it wouldn't be a priority for those skills to come to Shetland.

These were highly trained traffic officers and when they were not required then they were on the road operating as normal traffic officers.

The Chairman thanked PS McCarthy for attending and he left at 8.05pm.

05/04/08

Co-opted Members

The Chairman had received letters from Mr William Spence and Mr Damien Ristori, who, he noted, were both Sound residents. He reminded members that they have a right to co-opt new members as required. He felt that when members of the public came forward they should be accepted. He noted that there had never been a big rush from the public at election time, but this way they could be co-opted.

Everyone agreed to co-opt both applicants as additional co-opted members.

05/04/09

Future Primary Provision - Bells Brae Primary School

The Chairman noted his concerns regarding the long term future of Bells Brae School and the condition of the fabric of the building. He felt it was time to start planning for the future.

Mrs A Simpson expressed a keen interest in being part of the task force to consider the primary provision for Lerwick as a whole. Cllr W Stove noted that he and Cllr L Angus were already part of this task force and he cautioned that people shouldn't expect any short term results as the task force were looking at the long term.

It was agreed to put Mrs A Simpson forward as the LCC representative.

05/04/10

Correspondence

10.1 South Road/Oversund Road Roundabout – Traffic Calming

The Chairman agreed to defer a decision on the traffic calming measures until it had been discussed by Sound Community Association and their response was known.

10.2 Hjaltland Housing Association – Proposed Quoys Place Names Noted

10.3 Sound Community Association – Quoys Housing Area Street Names

The Chairman noted that the response had been received too late to change anything at this time as Lerwick Community Council had already overturned their previous decision and agreed with the proposed names.

Ms K Fraser noted that it had been agreed at a previous meeting that Sound Community Association were to be considered before Lerwick Community Council made their decision. She noted that Sound Community Association had now given their response so this should be taken into account and LCC's decision reversed.

The Chairman stated that they had not been in receipt of all the information at the start, but the decision had been made at last month's meeting following the production of this information. He felt it would not be appropriate to change their minds again. He thanked Sound Community Association for responding and noted that the names they proposed may be appropriate for future areas still to be named within the development.

Ms K Fraser pointed out that the Infrastructure Department would not be meeting until June when their final decision would be made. She referred to Hjaltland's letter last month which stated that their policy for Sound was to name the streets after local areas and felt that they were not doing this appropriately.

The Chairman stated that this had been discussed before and he didn't want to waste any more time on the subject.

Ms K Fraser noted that she had previously suggested naming the streets after local notaries as people make history. She preferred this to false Nordic names and was against all contrived Nordic names. She moved to reverse last month's decision and to support the Sound Community Association's proposal for names, seconded by Mr M Peterson.

Mr R Anderson moved to amend that they stay with the decision already made and keep the status quo. Mr P Scarsbrook seconded this.

The results of the vote were	Status Quo	5
	Reverse Decision	4

The Chairman noted that the status quo remained. He added it was good to see Ms Fraser was passionate about place names.

05/04/11

Financial Report

The Chairman noted that they were still awaiting Shetland Island Council's grant.

Mr R Anderson noted that he believed that this year it would be in the region of £41,000. He could not understand why they were not yet in receipt of the funds and suggested writing to ask why there was a delay in the award.

The Chairman stated that it was usually received at the start of May.

Mr R Anderson said that the initial allocation had been around £44,000, less 10% so it was around £41,000. He had a problem with this, as at the end of 2003/04 they had asked for the remaining balance to be transferred for play areas. As this had happened, it can't be classed as surplus.

Cllr W Stove noted that it had actually missed the meeting so was only discussed into the 2004/05 financial year.

The Chairman agreed to look at the financial accounts before the next meeting.

05/04/12

Financial Assistance

As the allocation of funds had not yet been received, it was agreed to defer all decisions till the next meeting, and to write to all applicants informing them of this.

05/04/13

Planning Applications

13.1 Three 2-bedroomed dwellinghouses – Rudda Park No objections

13.2 Change of use – The Manse, South Road No objections

05/04/14

Any Other Business

14.1 Graffiti, Stouts Court

Ms B Wishart noted that there was a lot of unsightly graffiti at the bottom of Stouts Court. It was agreed to write to Shetland Islands Council to get it removed.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

MR T R NICOLSON, CHAIRMAN, LERWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL