

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

Present

Mr J Anderson	Mr A Johnston
Mr R Anderson	Mr T Nicolson
Cllr L Angus	Mr M Peterson
Ms K Fraser	Mr P Scarsbrook
Cllr J Henry	Mrs A Simpson
Cllr J Irvine (left 7.45pm)	Cllr W Stove

Additional Co-opted Members

Mr D Ristori	Mr W Spence
Mr M Shearer	

In Attendance

Mr B Leask, Hjaltland Housing	Mr R Gibson, Hjaltland Housing
Mr M Latham, Shetland Times	Miss C Duncan, Clerk to the Council

Chairman

Mr T Nicolson, Chairman of the Council, presided

06/04/01

Circular

The circular calling the meeting was held as read.

06/04/02

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Cluness, Cllr G Feather, Cllr E Knight and Mr J MacLeod.

06/04/03

Minutes

Mr R Anderson noted that, with regard to the Town Hall Guide Book, Mrs A Simpson had "sought confirmation that it should be funded by Lerwick Community Council" and asked that the minute be amended accordingly.

Mrs A Simpson confirmed that she had said they "would be looking for funding". She also noted that the price quoted was for the current booklet and not the existing one. She stated she had asked for permission to include it on the agenda.

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27th March 2006 were then approved by Cllr L Angus and seconded by Mr R Anderson.

06/04/04

Business Arising

Clydesdale Bank Handrail

Mr R Anderson had completed the sketch of the area and passed to the Clerk to forward to Shetland Islands Council.

Lerwick Local Plan

Mr J Anderson noted that Ms B Barron had stated she would produce a plan showing the 5m contour of Lerwick.

Cllr G Angus stated that Cllr A Cluness had requested he inform members that he would soon be calling a meeting of all Lerwick councillors to review the Lerwick plan. He hoped to get a Community Council representative to attend as well, and

noted that it had not been reviewed recently so this would be a proper root and branch review.

The Chairman felt that they should appoint a member to attend when invited and nominated Mr R Anderson. This was seconded by Mr P Scarsbrook.

Hjaltland Housing Association - Lerwick Community Council Representative

Mr R Anderson noted that Mr J MacLeod had asked him to check his nomination to Hjaltland Housing Association as he had not heard from them. Mr Anderson stated that at a meeting of the Association last week, it had been agreed that he could join as an observer, which meant he could participate but not vote.

Mr B Leask confirmed that this was the case and that Mr MacLeod may be able to become a full member in time as space becomes available.

Headstones - Lerwick Cemetery

Cllr J Henry noted that there had been no progress in repairing the fallen stones and that more newer stones had also fallen over.

The Chairman stated he was very disappointed that the headstone lifting equipment had not yet arrived. He agreed to write again to Shetland Islands Council.

06/04/05

Police Report

PS McCarthy was unable to attend so there was no report or Road Safety DVD.

06/04/06

Hjaltland Housing Association

The Chairman welcomed Mr B Leask and Mr R Gibson of Hjaltland Housing Association to give an update on the proposed development at Grantfield.

Mr B Leask stated they were ready to apply for planning permission and were now seeking feedback on the development from the community.

Mr R Gibson gave a presentation detailing the design and layout of the proposed scheme including artists' impressions of how the finished buildings would look at Grantfield and confirmed that there would be 25 units.

The project brief had been for small dwellings for one or two people with a specific requirement for non-drivers. They did not want common stairs or hallways and it had to be accessible by wheelchair users.

In consultation with SIC officers, it was agreed the site was ideal for non-drivers as it had easy access to transport links, shopping and leisure facilities and was in a central location. They would have visitor parking on site with one space per 4 dwellings. This would be accessed from North Road.

There would be a communal refused point with access for collection vehicles and a central courtyard with trees. The buildings would be timber clad from North Road and masonry from Holmsgarth Road.

Cllr J Irvine expressed concern about traffic management in the area. He was not opposed to the scheme and was keen to see it being developed but noted that at peak times this area was incredibly busy. He felt stringent conditions would have to be applied to ensure the traffic was kept flowing during the construction period. He

felt it would be unreasonable to have a traffic control in place for up to a year while work is ongoing and he didn't want to see the public being inconvenienced.

The Chairman felt it was worthwhile to put a marker on it at this time. While he thought most work would be carried out within the site, there would be traffic exiting onto the road and this would need to be watched. He welcomed the proposed development, especially at this time when there is such demand for single and two person accommodation.

Ms K Fraser noted her interest in the concept of a car-free development and felt it was a good location for this. She wondered how the Association would monitor the situation to ensure the tenants didn't bring cars in after they had moved in.

Mr B Leask agreed it would be nearly impossible to police. He noted that recent surveys had shown that there were a lot less car users in their current schemes, with approximately ½ car per dwelling at their North Road schemes, and these were mainly family housing. He noted that a stipulation would be that the proposed tenant did not have a car when they took on the lease, but he agreed they could not stop them buying a car afterwards.

The Chairman expressed concern as to where they would park their cars, as this was already a problem in the surrounding area.

Cllr L Angus shared the reservations about lack of parking space and felt it would be prudent to have plans for increased parking. He applauded what they were trying to do but felt they were being naïve. He asked when they planned to begin and how long the building phase would take, and also if there was any way of getting away from grey harled buildings.

Mr B Leask said they hoped to be on site in October or November and the construction period should take 18-24 months.

Mr M Peterson was concerned that the heavy traffic would be disturbing to tenants. Mr R Gibson confirmed that they would have improved sound insulation. They would have triple glazing and sound insulation in the walls. He noted that on most of their developments, the majority of residents don't have cars. He thought the rate was 1:4 at present. He noted that more parking spaces would reduce the land available for dwellings, and they would have to look at underground parking.

The Chairman noted that the idea was an ideal way to cut down on car usage as it was in a central location. He felt the difficulty would be if tenants got cars after they had moved in, but he welcomed the idea and hoped it would be successful through the planning process.

Mr P Scarsbrook expressed his concern at imposing stipulations on prospective tenants and he felt these restrictions were wrong. He thought it could put a prospective tenant back down the list again if they were a car user and he felt it was nearly as bad as means testing.

Mr B Leask noted that their allocation procedure was done in partnership with Shetland Islands Council. Their current waiting list had 600 people on it with 400 of those specifically looking for Lerwick. The vast majority of those, almost 200, were for single or 2 person properties. He noted that these were also quite expensive to build and converting existing buildings could prove more economical.

They had money available from the Scottish Executive and planned to build 438 properties across Shetland over the next 5/6 years with 191 of those being in Lerwick.

The majority of these would be at Quoys, where phase 2 would begin in June with phase 3 to follow. The conversion of the Baptist Church had been granted planning permission. They were now waiting for the new Church to be built so that they could begin work. The Nederdale development was going to appeal and they had plans for developing the old water treatment works.

The Chairman noted that these were ambitious plans and wished them well with all the projects. He thanked them for attending the meeting.

06/04/07 **Formation of SIC Scrutiny Committee** Noted

06/04/08 **Town Hall Guide Book**

The Chairman noted that Lerwick Community Council had been involved with the previous production of the booklet. They had paid for its publication and then sold them onto Shetland Islands Council. It was now time to update the booklet.

Mrs A Simpson said they were hoping to get the history of the Town Hall rewritten but it was proving difficult to get someone to do it. It appears no-one will be available to do it this year. The presentation of the booklet needs updating and there are other bits of information that can be added.

The Chairman noted that the existing stock was all gone so there would be none available this year. There were demand for them by the public.

Cllr L Angus noted that the booklet could be written in a journalistic style rather than its present academic style to make it more user friendly. Mrs A Simpson said it was proving difficult to find someone willing to take this on. Mr J Anderson suggested asking a journalist and Mr M Latham agreed to inform his colleagues of the situation.

Mr R Anderson noted that 6000 originally published had lasted over 10 years. The Chairman noted that they would find out how many copies were available for sale this year and bring the matter back to a future meeting.

06/04/09 **Community Council By-Election 2006**

Co-opted members Mr M Shearer and Mr W Spence agreed to stand for election to full member. Following a vote, Mr W Spence was elected as full member.

10.6 Alan Goudie

The Chairman decided to bring forward the item. He noted that any young person showing an interest in joining should be encouraged and supported. It was agreed to appoint Mr Goudie as a co-opted member.

06/04/10 **Correspondence**

10.1 Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

The Chairman noted that the stage to alter anything had now passed. He was interested to see how the public would deal with the new system and felt that the public would need more information, which should come in due course.

10.2 Stout's Court Play Park

The Chairman referred to a petition handed in by a number of enthusiastic young people in support of keeping the play area open.

Cllr G Angus stated that Lerwick councillors had been contacted by SIC Community Development regarding their concern at the condition of some of Lerwick's 23 play

areas so they had visited them all. They found some to be in a sorry state and some were seldom used.

He noted that the Stout's Court play park was the least used in the area so it was decided to improve the facilities at the Ronald Street, Twageos and Church Road parks and to close the Stout's Court one. Closing the little used parks would still leave a substantial amount of play areas which could be better maintained. The limited money available had to be spent where it would serve most children.

Cllr W Stove agreed that it was very expensive to maintain play areas and they were bound by tight Health & Safety regulations.

The Chairman said that he understood the situation, that there was a limited budget available, but he felt it was regrettable that some had to be closed. Stout's Court had generated concern with the residents and he felt Shetland Islands Council should be approached to see if there could be a reprieve for the play equipment.

Cllr G Angus noted that the area consisted of 2 sets of double swings which had recently had its chains renewed.

Mr P Scarsbrook asked what would happen to the area if the play equipment was removed and Cllr G Angus confirmed that bench seating would be installed. Cllr W Stove noted that this had been requested by residents in the Sound area facing the closure of their play parks.

Mr R Anderson noted that these areas had been provided at a time of need, when the scheme was first tenanted by families with young children, but children grow up and move away. He had concerns that officials had said the equipment was expensive to maintain and insurance costs were high but he felt this could not be used as an excuse as insurance is essential. He would like to support the petition.

The Chairman moved that they write to SIC Community Development to suggest they continue to maintain and upkeep the play area, seconded by Mr R Anderson.

10.3 Dog Fouling

Noted

10.4 Gilbertson Park Signage

The Chairman noted that they had written many times to Shetland Islands Council regarding this issue. He had looked today at Gilbertson Park but had not seen any signage. He noted they were to come with more substantial signs in the near future and he would watch for the situation to see how it developed.

10.5 Lerwick Boating Club - thanks

Noted

06/04/11

Traffic Orders

11.1 SIC (Oversund Road, etc, Sound) (20mph Zone) Order 2006 and Oversund Road, Sound: Traffic Calming - Final Version

The Chairman noted that consultation on this had been ongoing for some time now and this appeared to be the best option.

Cllr J Henry noted that the main concern of the Sound School Board had been road safety. The final order would be in the Shetland Times this week and it would be the last opportunity for any individual to comment.

11.2 SIC (A970 Lerwick to Sumburgh Road at Sound Primary School) (Variable 20mph Speed Limit) Order 2006 - draft order

The Chairman noted that this was being brought in nationally and was a good idea. He also noted that the road markings were now in place at the junction to Quoys.

Mr J Anderson stated that the markings were designed to stop the traffic flowing out onto the main A970 road and instead directed drivers down Oversund Road. Mr P Scarsbrook said this was not compulsory and felt the road markings were diabolical and unclear as to who had right of way.

The Chairman agreed that they were a bit confusing and created a blind corner when coming up Oversund Road. He thought this might not be a problem once users had gotten used to the lay out and agreed that they were designed to discourage drivers from the more dangerous junction at the main A970 road.

Mr P Scarsbrook noted that the layout currently directed drivers down Oversund Road and past Sound School where the children cross.

Mr A Johnston noted that a tree in a private garden at the junction was currently bare of leaves but this could possibly cause an obstruction in the line of vision when it is covered in leaves.

The Chairman agreed to write to SIC Roads Department expressing concerns at the poor visibility at the junction.

06/04/12

Financial Report

Noted. The Chairman noted that this year's allocation from Shetland Islands Council had not yet been received. He also noted that he had read in the press that there would be a 16% reduction in grant allocation and he was disappointed that community councils would have to face such a reduction.

06/04/13

Any Other Business

13.1 Community Council By-Election 2006

Mr W Spence thanked Lerwick Community Council for voting for him and giving him the opportunity to become a full member.

13.2 Trees at Clickimin

Mrs A Simpson asked who was responsible for the trees at Clickimin. She noted that they were not growing, and felt that less trees and more maintenance would have been a better idea.

Mr R Anderson noted they had been planted on Shetland Recreational Trust land by Shetland Amenity Trust. He was disappointed with the lack of growth by the trees and noted that the grass was longer than the trees in places. He had raised the matter with SRT in the past.

The Chairman agreed that their growth had been disappointing but he believed there was no money available for their upkeep. He agreed to write to both trusts about the matter.

13.3 Harbour House - Public Toilets

Mrs A Simpson asked if there were any plans to include toilet facilities for the public in Harbour House when it undergoes redevelopment. She thought the yard next to Harbour House could make a nice square for use by nearby cafes and food outlets. Cllr G Angus stated it was to be knocked down and improved facilities to be built for visiting yachtsmen.

Cllr J Henry stated that proposals for the site would be discussed at the next planning committee meeting but they were not yet finalised. There will be an opportunity to discuss the plans at a future date.

13.4 Rock Armour - Sletts

Cllr G Angus noted that the rock armour at the Sletts had to be addressed before another winter and would have to be replaced before the road was undermined.

The Chairman agreed to write and remind Shetland Islands Council.

13.5 Guidelines and Best Practice

Mr M Peterson asked if there had been any development in the guidelines for paying grants to Shetland-wide organisations.

Mr R Anderson confirmed that both the liaison group and ASCC had no problems with this but it would be further discussed by Shetland Islands Council in the near future and he would report after that.

13.6 Road Surfaces

Mr M Peterson noted that tracks being reinstated by contractors following road works were very poor and asked if they were checked by SIC Roads.

Mr J Anderson noted that under the Roads & Streets Act, contractors had 2 years to maintain a road. Failure of the reinstatement within that time had to be repaired.

The Chairman agreed to write to SIC Roads department expressing concern at the standards of the reinstatements.

13.7 Dry-Ships Policy

Mr M Peterson asked, if in the wake of the Anglian Sovereign incident, did Shetland Islands Council and Lerwick Port Authority both operate a dry ships policy, and if so did they carry out random testing on all the ferries and tugs.

The Chairman felt they did but agreed to write and ask what the policies were.

13.8 Chris Hodge - Planning Application

Mr R Anderson stated that he had been very disappointed in the recent decision of Shetland Islands Council to turn down Mr Hodge's planning application, despite it being approved by Lerwick Community Council.

He noted that they were all aware of problems in the past with regard to the views of LCC in planning issues and he felt this particular case was very bad. He would like to complain to Shetland Islands Council at their continued disregard by their planning members of the recommendations of LCC.

The Chairman agreed that it was bizarre to turn down the application but to approve the extended parking.

Cllr W Stove noted that this was not strictly accurate. The two applications had been treated as one, both had been voted on together and both had been rejected. Planning permission for the car park could be approved if certain items were adhered to.

He noted that this application was going against SIC policy from the start. Areas of the Lerwick Plan were designated for this type of business, and this site was not one of them. It is an industrial area and not appropriate for retail. He pointed out that he did not agree with how it had been done.

The Chairman stated that he understood it had been a fiasco from the beginning. There was a situation now where Mr Hodge has invested a lot of his own money as he been advised there was no problem with his application and he now finds out that there is in fact a problem. He felt Shetland Islands Council should discuss the matter at full council when everyone could be involved and Cllr W Stove confirmed that it was still to be discussed at full council.

Cllr G Angus noted that full council still has to give sound reason why it rejects an application. Cllr W Stove felt the matter should be resolved at appeal in Edinburgh.

The Chairman agreed to write to Shetland Islands Council expressing concern at their disregard of Lerwick Community Council's recommendation and support of the item being discussed by full council.

13.9 Bank of Scotland Autotellers

The Chairman had been contacted by members of the public dissatisfied that the machines at Bolts and Sound were often empty and unable to dispense cash. He agreed to write to the Bank of Scotland asking if they could keep them filled.

13.10 Walkways in Lerwick

The Chairman suggested inviting Mr V Hawthorne of Shetland Islands Council to the next meeting to update members on the proposed walkways in Lerwick.

13.11 Provision for the Elderly

The Chairman felt that Lerwick Community Council needed to get involved in discussions over the provisions for the elderly in Lerwick - care homes, etc. He would like to see plans and know how they are progressing. He felt it was very important and noted it would take a long time to replace the older homes but it was necessary.

Cllr G Angus noted that Shetland Islands Council have accepted that this has to be urgent. Provision currently had to be made for 40 people waiting in hospitals and long term care for places. Shetland Islands Council accepted that Viewforth, currently used for the care of dementia patients, was deemed unsuitable for its purpose and needs to be redeveloped.

There was an acute shortage of accommodation, and it was particularly acute in Lerwick, with Lerwick residents being placed in all other care homes outside Lerwick which affects others waiting for accommodation.

13.12 Lerwick Health Centre

The Chairman stated that he had spoken to the manager of NHS Shetland and had raised concerns with him on behalf of Lerwick Community Council. The public were finding it increasingly difficult to get an appointment at the health centre and were often left waiting on hold for long periods of time. This was unsatisfactory and frustrating for patients, especially elderly ones. NHS Shetland were currently looking at ways to improve the system but they had a long way to go. He would like to invite someone to attend a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

MRT R NICOLSON, Chairman, Lerwick Community Council