

Minute of the Meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held in the North Walls Community Centre and via Teams on Friday, 7 February 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Ms R Thomson, Mr A Clark, Mrs T Avis, Ms P Johnston, Mrs I Mathieson (via Teams) and Mr A Sinclair.

In Attendance:

- Councillor L Hall.
- Mrs K Dobrzynski, Island Link Officer (ILO)/Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of Councillors G Bevan and J Park.

2. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the general meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held on 20 September 2024 was adopted, being proposed by Mr A Clark and seconded by Ms P Johnston.

3. Matters Arising

A. Resignations

The ILO advised that Ms A Kinsey had resigned from the community council in December 2024 and that further resignations had been received from both Ms P Johnston and Ms R Thomson, which would take effect from the end of this meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note the resignations from the community council, and that the ILO would contact OIC for further instruction on the next steps to elect replacement members.

B. Sunken Graves

Following consideration of an update from the Burial Officer that the graves at Osmandwall Cemetery had now been levelled as at 22 November 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the update.

C. Graemsay Gate repair and Lights at Moaness Pier

Following consideration of an update to advise that the OIC portal was used to report the faulty gate at the Graemsay Kirkyard and the lights out at Moaness Pier, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the content of the update.
2. To note that there had been work done on the kirkyard gate but the lights at the pier were still not working, and that the ILO would add this to the Business Letter

D. Young Scot non-linked Isles Ferry Travel

Following consideration of an update from OIC to advise that 'The Scottish Government proposed draft budget for 2025-2026 includes the provision of inter-island free ferry travel for children and young people under 22 and that more information will be made available once the Scottish Government's budget has been finalised', it was:

Resolved to note the update and wait for an announcement from the Scottish Government.

E. Christmas Lighting Ceremony

Following consideration of an update from the ILO that OIC had approached the local Christmas Tree lighting group to offer free of charge promotion of any lighting events, in the Orcadian, it was:

Resolved to note the update and that the Christmas Tree lighting group had declined the offer from OIC.

F. Dog fouling around St Colms

Following consideration of a complaint received from OIC about dog fouling in the St Colms Quadrant area and that new signs were to be displayed on lampposts in the area, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the complaint and that the ILO had posted the OIC dog fouling information leaflet onto the CC Facebook page.

G. Nordic Sea – Graemsay Route

Following consideration of an update on the request that the Nordic Sea has a provision to allow it to call in to Graemsay, should it continue with the South Isles Passenger Service and an update from OIC to advise that it was to be deployed elsewhere for the foreseeable future, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the update.

H. Graemsay Kirkyard – Gate Repair

Following consideration of an update on the request for a repair to the Graemsay Kirkyard gate, with confirmation from the Burial Grounds Officer that the work needed carried out, with a request to see if anyone local was available to do the work, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the update and that Mrs I Mathieson would talk to a possible candidate to carry out the work and advise on the outcome.

I. Verge Cutting Graemsay

Following consideration of an update on the request for the overdue verge cutting and ditch clearing on Graemsay, with OIC advising that there had been issues with getting suitable plant over to carry out the work and that further options were being looked into, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the contents of the update.
2. That Councillor L Hall would discuss with OIC the possibility of a local gentleman, who had previously carried out the duties along with pothole filling, resuming the work as he had done previously.

4. Correspondence

A. Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Update (GP12)

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC Marine Planning team to advise of Community Consultation events with a closing date for correspondence of 25 October 2024, copies of which had been previously circulated on 27 September 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. Orkney Towns Fund Board – Online Community Engagement Event

Following consideration of correspondence from the Orkney Towns Fund Board inviting Community Council members to their online community engagement events on 1 October 2024, copies of which had been previously circulated on 21 September 2024, it was:

Resolved to note contents of the correspondence.

C. Islands Games Services

Following consideration of correspondence from Andy Trafford (Headmaster of the North Walls School), requesting support from the Community Council for an additional sailing on the Hoy Head to enable the school children who are participating in the opening event of the Island Games, copies of which had been previously circulated on 26 September 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the ILO had forwarded the request on 27 September and had received a confirmation from Democratic Services that the request had been forwarded to Orkney Ferries.

D. Graemsay Timetable

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC to confirm that a request for the 18:00 Stromness to Moaness ferry to be part of the permanent timetable, year-round, without the need for booking, had been passed on by Democratic Services, copies of which had been previously circulated on 29 September, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and, as no further update had been received, the ILO would request further information on the Business Letter.

E. Winter Service Plan 2024-2025

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC regarding comments received from each community council during the consultation period, copies of which had previously been circulated on 2 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence but that the request for gritting to recommence on the Rackwick Road, and it be upgraded from a priority 3 route was missing from the comments, and that the ILO would add the request to the Business Letter.

F. Island Housing Group Meeting and CPG Islands

Following consideration of correspondence from Scottish Islands Federation regarding two housing related meetings on 9 and 10 October 2024, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 9 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. Community Advisory Group Invitation – A safer Route to School (Stromness) Feasibility Study

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC and Sustrans with an invitation to a Community Advisory Group on 21 October 2024, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 13 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Orkney Ferries - Booking

Following consideration of a letter detailing a complaint from a community resident on the difficulties using Orkney Ferries' new booking system and the disadvantage that it puts on regular commuters having to phone to make a booking if they already had prepaid tickets as the new system would not allow an online booking without payment being made, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 19 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that Councillor L Hall continued to look into this and various other issues with the new booking system.

I. Call for Help – Health and Care Evacuations

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC and Lynda Bradford, Head of Health and Community Care, regarding information on the current provision for health-related evacuations, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 20 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that contact should be made with the Surgery to clarify the current procedure.

J. Orkney Matters 2 Meetings Online

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC to advise of two online Orkney Matters meetings on 29 and 30 October, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 24 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

K. Sir Chris Hoy

Following consideration of correspondence from Sara McMahon, representative for Sir Chris Hoy, to give thanks for the letter of support from both the community and the community council of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 25 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

L. West of Orkney Windfarm Offshore Application – Additional Information submission

Following consideration of correspondence from West of Orkney Windfarms with additional information including specific technical responses, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 31 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

M. Orkney Community Wind Farm Project

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC regarding an update on the Orkney Community Wind Farm Project, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 19 November 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

N. TRICE Meeting

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC with information on the planned TRICE meetings with an amendment to the previous correspondence, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 3 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

O. MyOrkney

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC with details on the MyOrkney portal and a request to inform the community to report issues through this portal, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 13 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that a post had been made to the community council's Facebook page.

P. Transport Meeting between Hoy and Flotta

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC to arrange a meeting between Hoy and Flotta to discuss the Hoy Head timetable for summer 2026, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 16 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that a meeting had gone ahead on 13 January 2025.

Q. AbilityNet Event

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC advising of the date for the in-person digital roadshow event to be held on 30 January at the Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall, copies of which had been previously circulated on 9 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

R. Webinar – Rural and Islands Poverty

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Island Federation with an invite to the webinar on 15 January 2025 on Rural and Islands Poverty, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 7 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

S. Mud and Debris on the main road at the Muirs and Stonequoy

Following consideration of correspondence from a resident about the mud and debris that had, periodically, been left on the main road between the Muirs and Stonequoy, copies of which had been previously circulated on 9 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the ILO would advise the resident that it is up to the person creating the mess to clear it up and pass on the details of the MyOrkney portal so that the resident could report the issue, along with and photographs, directly to OIC.

T. Safety of lithium-ion batteries campaign

Following consideration of correspondence from Ron Bailey regarding a request for support from the CC on the campaign for the safety of lithium-ion batteries, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 27 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the ILO would write a letter of support.

U. Waste Bins - Longhope

Following consideration of correspondence from the Service Manager (Environmental Services) requesting the community council's preference on the siting of a waste bin on the Manse Road, copies of which had been previously circulated, it was:

Resolved that the ILO would advise that the CC preference would be the area (2b) which was nearer to the road than the car parking area.

V. Osmondwall Cemetery

Following consideration of correspondence OIC with an update on a previous request for 'No Dogs Permitted' sign at Osmondwall Cemetery, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 7 February 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the ILO would check to see what signs were in place and the potential to move any existing ones to a more prominent place.

5. Publications

Resolved to note that the following publication was made available at this meeting:

- Orkney Ferry Statistics – September, October and December 2024.

- VAO Training and Funding Update – October, November and December 2024, and January 2025.
- VAO Newsletter – September, October and December 2024 and January 2025.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – October 2024 and January 2025.
- Transportation Infographic.
- Cross Party Group on Islands.
- Scottish Islands Federation – November Newsletter.
- Orkney Marine Planning Newsletter/Update.
- VAO: Communities Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults opens for a second tranche.
- VAO: How should VAO support charities and community groups in Orkney.

6. Consultations

A. Boundaries Scotland Consultations – Publication of Further Proposals – Constituencies and Provisional Proposals – Regions (Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries)

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Boundary Commissions' Secretariat regarding a consultation on the review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries, with a deadline of 26 October 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated to members on 27 September 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

B. Offshore Wind Power Limited – West of Orkney Windfarm – Additional information Consultation

Following consideration of correspondence from Marine Renewables on the West of Orkney Windfarm additional information consultation with a deadline of 3 December, copies of which had previously been circulated to members on 19 October and 4 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Insights on Community Resilience in Emergencies

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC with a request to complete a survey to gather insights and information on a range of resilience issues with a deadline of 15 November 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated to members on 29 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2024

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC regarding a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2024 with a request for any comments or issues to be raised by the deadline of 16 December 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated to members on 15 November 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Consultation – 20mph Proposals

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC to advise of a public consultation regarding the 20mph proposals and a survey to be completed by 13 December 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated to members on 3 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Draft Internal Air and Ferry Timetables 2025/2026

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC to advise that the Transport Forum would take place on Wednesday, 22 January 2025 and that all comments need to be submitted by this date, copies of which had been previously forwarded on 4 December 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. Verge Maintenance Plan

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC with a deadline for responses of 28 February 2025, copies of which had been previously circulated on 6 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Visitor levy – Full Islands Act ICIA Required

Following consideration of correspondence from Uistkat regarding the Highland Council Visitor Levy with a request for comments and participation in a consultation with a closing date of 31 March 2025, copies of which had been previously circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the community council's general finance statement, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £21,301.25 as at 9 January 2025.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2024/2025 Community Council Grant Scheme statement, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval of £1,093.62 as at 9 January 2025.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for allocation of £7,800.68 as at 9 January 2025

D. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement, it was:

Resolved to note the funds remaining for approval of £0.00 as at 9 January 2025.

8. Finance Requests

A. Island of Hoy Development Trust

Following consideration of an application from Island of Hoy Development Trust requesting financial assistance towards the cost of annual buildings insurance for the YM Hall, it was:

Resolved to grant the sum of £1,280.00 toward the cost of the annual insurance for the YM and that a Community Council Grant Scheme application should be submitted on a project cost of £1,280.00.

B. St Johns Kirk

Following consideration of an application from St Johns Kirk requesting financial assistance towards the cost of annual buildings insurance for the Kirk, it was:

Resolved to grant the sum of £964.80 toward the cost of the annual insurance for the Hoy Kirk and that a Community Council Grant Scheme application should be submitted on a project cost of £964.80.

C. Island Games School Legacy Banner Project

Following consideration of correspondence from the Orkney 2025 Island Games with a request for support for the Island Games School Legacy Banner Project, copies of which had been previously circulated on 20 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that a donation of £200 would be made towards the project.

9. Any Other Competent Business

A. Grass Cutting

Following consideration of a request by R Thomson to advertise the grass cutting tenders, it was:

Resolved to note the request and that the ILO would put out a Facebook post and public notifications with a closing date of the end of March 2025.

B. Postage and Paper

Following consideration of a request by the ILO to look at the cost of postage to send out pre-meeting information and the amount of paper that was currently being used as a whole, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the contents of the concerns.
2. That members were in full support of reducing postage where possible and that the ILO could hand deliver the letters on Hoy and only post to members and Councillors who live out with.
3. That Councillor L Hall would raise the issue with Democratic Services.

C. Health and Care Representative

Mrs T Avis advised that she had attended the recent Joint Isles Health and Care meeting and raised the issues of the lack of care facilities on the island and also the change of use of the first row of properties on St Colms that were previously specifically allocated to residents with care needs but there was no longer such an allocation. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved:

- A. To note that, due to the resignations this evening, all four remaining members would need to be present at the next meeting to ensure it was quorate.
- B. That a meeting date would be agreed in due course, following advice from Democratic Services.

11. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:47.