

Minute of the Meeting of North Ronaldsay Community Council held in the Community Centre and via Teams on Wednesday, 29 March 2023 at 19:00

Present:

Mr I Deyell, Mr P Donnelly, Ms A Duncan, Mrs L Paterson, Mrs H Scott (via Teams) and Mr I Scott.

In Attendance:

- Councillor H Woodbridge (via Teams).
- Councillor M Thomson (via Teams).
- Mr K MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
- Ms H Galland, Clerk.

Order of Business

1. Apologies	2
2. Adoption of Minutes	2
3. Matters Arising	2
4. Correspondence	4
5. Consultation Documents.....	5
6. Financial Statements	5
7. Financial Request - North Ronaldsay Trust – Business Travel.....	6
8. Reports from Representatives	6
9. Publications	7
10. Any Other Competent Business.....	7
11. Date of Next Meeting	8
12. Conclusion of Meeting	8

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mr C Kerlake.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of meeting held on Monday, 13 February 2023 was adopted being proposed by Mr P Donnelly and seconded by Mr I Scott.

3. Matters Arising

A. Cattle Trailer Update

It was reported that two of the island's trailers had now arrived on island and a discussion regarding how to manage them was undertaken. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to ask Democratic Services for a special meeting, within 2 weeks of the current meeting, to discuss the following issues:

1. Determine who will manage the booking of the trailer.
2. Determine who will manage maintenance and servicing of the trailer.
3. What are the legal obligations around insurance? Is it the responsibility of the individuals or the Community Council?
4. The Scottish Government say a lifeline service cannot be removed unless it is replaced like for like and that the added costs of the above do not constitute a like for like substitute service.
5. That urgency is needed to resolve this matter as requests to use the trailers had already been made, and Spring Cattle Markets are due very soon.

B. Septic Tank Support Scheme

The Clerk stated there had been a couple of enquiries and that a list based on first come, first served was being compiled. A question was raised querying if the current scheme was correct, as it was believed that the previous scheme only expected customers to pay a nominal fee, no more than £50, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk ask Democratic Services if they can source historic minutes or financial statements to discern how the scheme worked prior to 2018.

C. Servicing Mower and Strimmer

The Clerk presented invoices, now paid, to the Members. The mower service by MLM Engineering amounted to £328.58, the strimmer service by J&W Tait Ltd amounted to £31.20 including VAT (£26 exclusive). It was agreed at the previous meeting to add funds to cover these costs, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would ask J&W Tait Ltd where the Strimmer is currently located, as it was thought to have been returned in February.

D. Grass Cutting Tender 2023

There was only one application from Ms C Alexander for the Grass Cutting Tender and was approved by members. The Kirkyard Tender Document was read out and it indicated that should work not be to an appropriate standard, money can be withheld, and work done to remedy this will be at the Contractor's expense, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would write to Ms C Alexander confirming she had won the 2023 contract and highlight the terms and conditions of the tender document.
2. That an incentive of £400 (equal to an extra £100 for the first 4 cuts of the season) be offered providing that the work was to a standard acceptable to the CC.

E. NILPS Stiles Tender

It was announced there had been no applications from islanders to take up this tender. Letters explaining the work to be undertaken, with permission slips to be signed and returned to allow work to be done, had been sent to all households with land that may have public access stiles or gates on, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would let NILPS Officers know there were no islanders offering to do the work and that NILPS should now recruit their own labour force.
2. That the Clerk would let NILPS know the number of signed permission slips received and the number remaining to be returned.

F. Scalpings Update

It was reported that all the allocations had now been delivered and paid for. After an underestimate of cost there were 3 tonne bags unallocated, which were delivered at freight cost to North Ronaldsay Community Council, and it was:

Resolved that the three bags be used to resurface the kirkyard road.

G. Playground Update

Correspondence had been sent to and received by Shapinsay Community Council. Mr C Kerlake, who offered to take on this issue, was unavailable, so it was:

Resolved to hold this issue until the next meeting.

H. Coronation Events

Correspondence had been received from Orkney Islands Council on a funding application, the decision of which was still not known, and it was:

Resolved that any funding available would be allocated to the North Ronaldsay Community Association for any event they deem appropriate.

I. Bag the Bruck Events

Correspondence had been received from Orkney Islands Council for the annual event, and it was:

Resolved to apply for CCGS and that the £300 funds available be issued to North Ronaldsay Community Association who were carrying out a collection.

J. Deposit Return Scheme Update

It was noted that the Community Council's thoughts had been shared with Scottish Islands Federation. It was agreed that the Scheme, due to start on 16 August, would penalise customers on islands and be unworkable by small businesses on islands, and it was:

Resolved

1. To request that Democratic Services contact the Council's legal team to ask if the Scheme falls into the criteria where an Island Communities Impact Assessment is required and if so, had one been conducted. Additionally, whether the assessment had considered the islands' specific challenge profile of air, ferry and freight connectivity.

2. That the Clerk should ask Democratic Services if an all-island Teams meeting could be organised, so that all Community Councils could form a united front to put pressure on officials to address this situation before it comes into place.

4. Correspondence

A. VAO Communities Fund Events

Correspondence had been emailed on 2 March regarding VAO events on 22-24 March, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had passed.

B. Olly Gibb - Plastic Recycling Bins

Correspondence from Olly Gibb had been circulated previously to members, indicating that recycling bins would be placed at the Pier that week, but it was noted they had not yet been installed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Crofters Commission - Volunteer Job Advert

Correspondence had been emailed on 14 March and circulated to members regarding representatives, and it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

D. MS Marine Renewables

Correspondence had been emailed on 14 March regarding the ongoing work by Marine Renewables in Orkney, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. NHS Orkney - Air Ambulance Feedback

Correspondence was emailed 16 March and circulated to members, reminding people that should they have views on the future of the new air ambulance, that the deadline for responses was 17 March, and it was:

Resolved to note that some members had been grateful for the reminder and had completed the survey.

5. Consultation Documents

Resolved to note that there had been no consultation documents circulated for comment since the last meeting.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Members considered the General Finance statement as at 17 March 2023, copies of which had been previously circulated, and it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £16,573.19.

B. Turbine Fund

Members considered the Turbine statement as at 17 March 2023, copies of which had been previously circulated, and it was:

Resolved

1. To note that the estimated balance was £21,272.80.
2. That the Clerk would write to North Ronaldsay Trust requesting payment for the Community Council's share of the Turbine energy production.
3. That the suggestion to use the Turbine Fund to pay for the maintenance of the new cattle trailers be brought up at the Special Meeting.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 17 March 2023, copies of which had been previously circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the statement.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 17 March 2023, copies of which had been previously circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that total available for allocation was £3,656.

E. Seed Corn Fund

A request was made that the small amount of £232 left in this fund, be reallocated to the Community Council General Fund and close the Seed Corn Fund, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would put this request to Democratic Services.

7. Financial Request - North Ronaldsay Trust – Business Travel

There was an informal request from North Ronaldsay Trust for funding at the meeting, and it was:

Resolved that the Trust should send a formal request for funding support to the Clerk before the next meeting.

8. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport Representative

It was announced that the current Airfields Superintendent had resigned and that the position was not expected to be refilled. This raised concerns that the outer isles airfields may not meet CAA regulation requirements and as a result may be closed temporarily. The Members agreed this is an untenable result, and it was:

Resolved

1. To note that the North Isles Councillors had not been aware of this issue until the meeting and would find out further information and report back at the next meeting.

2. To note that the current island airfield manager position was vacant and no advert for the role had been issued. No training had been offered to the current fire crew to undertake the role in the interim either. It was agreed that without an Airfields Superintendent, in addition to the forementioned issues, it is highly likely that CAA standards were not being met.

B. Planning Representative

Resolved to note that the Trebb project will continue and there was nothing else to report.

C. North Ronaldsay Development Trust Representative

It was reported that representatives had been to visit the island and were pleased to announce an extension to the use of the grant had been accepted, on the grounds of the effect of Covid on projects timelines, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Orkney Health and Care Representative

Members heard that Stephanie Johnston, Directorate Secretary, Orkney Health and Care, had been in contact with island Chairs asking for volunteers from each community to represent their island at meetings with NHS Orkney. This would be to discuss availability and medical resources on the isles. It was requested that the current locum GP, with practical experience of island medical provision and its challenges, be asked to be a representative or be asked to attend as an advisor. It was:

Resolved

1. That the Clerk would ask Dr Gillespie his thoughts about being involved.
2. That the Clerk would report back that North Ronaldsay Community Council have nominated Ms H Scott and Mr P Donnelly. The Chair, Mr I Deyell, would attend if either of the other two were unavailable.

E. Yarn Company Representative

As Democratic Services were not present it was:

Resolved to hold this nomination over until the next meeting.

9. Publications

The following publications had been made available to members and were noted:

- VAO Newsletter – February 2023.
- Letter from School Place – February 2023.
- VAO – Training and Funding Update – February 2023.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Mobile Signal: Removal of 2G and 3G

News had been circulating that, it was believed, 3G and 2G were being taken away and replaced with 4G as a method to upgrade the mobile signal. It was reported 2G would in fact not be affected at this time. It is understood most of the island did not currently receive a 4G signal, and that mobile providers would need to address this before removing the availability of the other services. Further information revealed that BT were turning off their dial tone service from 2025, in a move to all-digital, and that this would affect vulnerable people who rely on the Telecare Service, as well as islanders in general during power outages. It was reported that Orkney Islands Council were working with the Scottish Government on a pilot for the replacement of Telecare but the coverage of this scheme was unknown. Members believed it was also the case that on mainland where 4G is available there are still “not-spots” and that neither 3G, 4G nor the new 5G are able to penetrate stone walls (i.e. croft houses), rendering them unusable within homes. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities would look into this issue and report back to the island.
2. That Councillor H Woodbridge and Councillor M Thomson would contact Liam McArthur MSP to get clarification on the situation and proposals for the outer isles.

B. Old Kirkyard Rabbit Damage

There was a discussion on the amount of damage caused by rabbits burrowing in the kirkyard, resulting in some bones being exhumed and a general disorderly state of the area, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would ask Democratic Services for clarification of who is responsible for the maintenance of the Old Kirkyard, and what can be done to address this issue.
2. That the Clerk should raise the request that the large gate at Holland Farm House be repainted.
3. To note that the wire under the gate, to keep rabbits out, is not working, therefore an alternative measure is required.

C. Trailer signs

The Clerk reported that Orkney Ferries would like the new trailers labelled in some way, like the fuel tanks, and it was:

Resolved to deal with this during the Special Meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of North Ronaldsay Community Council would be held on Monday, 22 May 2023 subject to availability of Democratic Services.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities thanked everyone for their hospitality, then the Chair thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 22:30.