

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, Stromness on Monday, 12 June 2023 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, K Bevan, D Fischler, A Hutchinson, W Mackay, J Park and C Sinclair.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- L Richardson, Head of Neighbourhood Services.
- I Burton, Programme Manager, Islands Deal.
- T Hadley, Community Engagement Manager, Orkney Native Wildlife Project.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- 1 member of the Press.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that an apology for absence had been received from V Anderson.

2. Orkney Native Wildlife Project

After hearing an update on the Orkney Native Wildlife Project from the Community Engagement Manager, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved to note:

- That the Orkney Native Wildlife Project began in 2018.
- That in the Stromness area, there are 387 active traps and have been 326 stoats removed.
- That there had been a total of 4,483 stoats removed throughout the whole programme with a total of 7,224 active trap boxes.
- That throughout the whole county there have been 327,131 trap checks undertaken.
- That 12,580 hours have been devoted to wildlife monitoring since project started of which 4,368 have been given by volunteers.
- That in the 2022 breeding season, 370 wader nests were monitored.
- That 36 volunteers currently help with monitoring.
- That stoat detection and tracker dogs were now active.
- That workshops have been held regarding biosecurity and plans agreed for high risk islands, training, equipment and support provided.
- That events that had taken place so far, included:
 - 55 talks with local groups and community councils.
 - 12 tourist provider training events.
 - 37 biosecurity events.
 - 29 volunteer trapper training events.
 - 31 monitoring volunteer training events.
 - 5 agricultural shows were attended in 2022.
- That the total number of volunteer hours was 13,360.
- That the Orkney Wildlife Native Project had given 137 school lessons and had recently hosted a teacher training day.

The Chair thanked Community Engagement Manager who then left the meeting at this point.

3. Islands Deal

K Bevan declared an interest in this item, in that he was Chair of the Board of the Pier Arts Centre but concluded that his interest did not preclude him taking part in discussions.

C Sinclair declared an interest in this item, in that she was employed by EMEC but concluded that her interest did not preclude her taking part in discussions.

After hearing an update from the Programme Manager, Islands Deal, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note:

- That the Islands Growth Deal was a ten-year package of investment, funded by the UK and Scottish Government, that sought to drive economic growth and the creation of sustainable jobs across Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides.
- That the total value of the Islands Growth deal was £100 million, with the UK and Scottish Governments investing £50 million each over 10 years, subject to approval of full business cases for each project.
- That the Islands Growth Deal projects were supported by a wide range of partners from across the public, private and academic sectors who would seek to invest up to a further £293 million to deliver the projects, with £33.3 million being invested within each island group.
- That over the ten-year period, the Islands Growth Deal would invest in 16 projects and programmes, subject to approval of Full Business Cases, which were built around three strategic themes of:
 - Low carbon.
 - Supporting growth and future industries.
 - Thriving sustainable communities.
- That there were joint island investments, such as Islands Centre for Net Zero and Creative Islands Wellbeing, as well as Orkney specific projects such as Orkney World Heritage Site Gateway, Orkney Community Vertical Farm and Scapa Flow Future Fuels Hub.
- That many of the institutions that were involved, such as Orkney Research and Innovation Campus, Heriot Watt University, and the Pier Arts Centre, had strong links with Stromness.
- That there were many benefits that would occur as a result of the Islands Deal so it was essential that the Stromness community were made aware of the plans.

The Chair thanked the Programme Manager, Islands Deal, who then left the meeting at this point.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2023 were approved, being proposed by D Fischler and seconded by A Hutchinson.

5. Matters Arising

A. Old Stromness Primary School Playground

Resolved to note that there was nothing to report at this time.

B. Garage at Town House

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that as the current garage door was still useable, the proposal to replace the garage door should be put on hold meantime.

C. Old Copland's Dock – Pillar Reinstatement.

Resolved to note that as no response had been received regarding the pillar reinstatement at Old Copland's Dock, the Clerk would again contact the relevant department.

D. Gates at Market Green

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture), copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that although the correspondence received stated that the gates had been replaced there were still issues with gaps in the gate and fence which W Mackay had raised by email to the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture).

E. Tap at Football Changing Rooms, Market Green

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture), copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write back to the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture) enquiring whether there was any way that the issue of getting water out of the tap into water bottles could be rectified.

F. Additional Signage

Following consideration of correspondence from the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the need for additional signage to direct motorhomes to use the Back Road rather than trying to go through the street, and after hearing an update from the Head of Neighbourhood Services, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure had been in discussions with colleagues in Harbours and between them they were happy to put some signs up.
2. That if Stromness Community Council had any examples or suggestions for the signs they should get in touch with the service.
3. To note that the Head of Neighbourhood Services was going to make representations to Satnav companies to see if it was possible for traffic to be guided to the campsite using the Back Road rather than through Victoria Street.

G. Bank Lane – Railings and Lampposts

Following consideration of correspondence from the Head of Neighbourhood Services, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Head of Neighbourhood Services had advised that the responsible team were working on a programme of replacement, and preventative painting, of railings in Stromness.
2. To note that the team had also programmed a lot of the lanes in Stromness for streetlight replacement in the coming years so the lampposts in Bank Lane were likely due to be replaced in the next 3–5 years.
3. To note that, in the meantime, the team would inspect the lampposts to ascertain whether urgent repairs were necessary.

H. Road between Argo's Bakery and former Squash Court, Cairston Road

Following an update from the Head of Neighbourhood Services advising that the road between Argo Bakery and the former Squash Court, Cairston Road, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Head of Neighbourhood Services had advised that as road in question was not an adopted road, it was not eligible to be maintained by the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure section.
2. To note that Councillor J Stockan believed that historically the road came under the Education section and should be maintained in the same way that roads leading to schools were.
3. That the Clerk would contact the Education section and highlight the need for work to be done on the poor state of the road.

I. Kirk Buyout

C Sinclair declared an interest in this part of this item, in that she was a member of the Stromness Kirk Buyout Group but concluded that her interest did not preclude her for taking part in discussions.

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Stromness Kirk Buyout Group, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that since the community meeting in May, the Stromness Kirk Buyout Group had received further offers of support and ideas for the building's future from across the community.

2. To note that the Group's core membership had also increased with several new members bringing strong skills and experience from a range of backgrounds and professions to help progress the project.
3. To note that the Group was having initial discussions with potential future users of the Kirk, to determine whether it might be suitable for their needs once the Church of Scotland congregation vacated the building.
4. To note that a wider community engagement plan was being developed to seek the support and input of people across Stromness and surrounding areas.
5. To note that work to formally create a company limited by guarantee was also being progressed, which would allow the group to apply for funding from the Scottish Land Fund to complete a feasibility study on the Kirk.
6. To note that the proposed feasibility study would be done in a similar manner as the the project run by the Community Development Trust on the Community Centre – a business case would be established regarding the Kirk's future with costed proposals for upgrades/maintenance and running the building.
7. To note that the Trust had generously shared insight on their experience of running their feasibility study, to help the Buyout Group to make plans for the Kirk and make sure both potential projects would complement each other.

6. Correspondence

A. Lack of Police Presence in Stromness

Following consideration of correspondence received from S Conlon, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. VAO – Renewal of Membership 2023/2024

Following consideration of correspondence received from VAO, copies of which had been circulated, regarding renewing membership for 2023/2024, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved to renew the membership subscription of VAO for 2023/24 at a cost of £15.

C. VMO2 – Shared Rural Network – Orkney Landowner Query

Following consideration of correspondence from VMO2, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a query regarding land ownership, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should respond suggesting that VMO2 contact either the District Valuer or check the Scotland Land Registry.

D. Two Areas at North End

Following consideration of correspondence received from S Flett, copies of which had been circulated, regarding two areas of land at North End, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should reply saying that the land was already zoned for development.

7. Consultations

A. Boundaries Scotland

Following consideration of correspondence received from Boundaries Scotland, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a review of Scottish Parliament boundaries, it was:

Resolved to note that Stromness Community Council had no response to the consultation which was required by 17 June 2023.

B. Scottish Government – Permitted Development Rights Review – Phase 3

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Scottish Government, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a review of permitted development rights (PDR) as part of its wider planning reform programme, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair would respond to the consultation prior to the deadline of 23 August 2023.

Councillor G Bevan joined the meeting at this point.

C. 20mph speed limit extension Finstown

Following consideration of correspondence received from P Maxton, Solicitor, Legal Services, copies of which had been circulated, regarding proposals regarding a 20mph speed limit extension in Finstown, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that the Clerk would respond to the consultation, prior to the deadline of 7 July 2023, as follows:

- That Stromness Community Council were receptive to the 20mph signs around school time in the heart of the village while children were walking to/from school, particularly around the junction turning from the A965 onto the A966 towards Rendall.
- Regarding the A965, Finstown – Stromness Community Council did not agree with the proposed extension of the 30mph speed limit to 46 meters southeast of the southeastmost corner of the property named The Boathouse to a point five metres east of the property named Marsdene. Members felt that this long restriction on speed was likely to lead to frustration in drivers and may even be more dangerous as attempts at overtaking at the end of this stretch were too near the bends in the road approaching Davies Brig. Stromness Community Council

members proposed that the 30mph should extend slightly – but no further than the entrance/exits of Atlantis Lodges.

8. Publication

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

9. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS Updates

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Head of Neighbourhood Services would instruct her team to investigate Boys Lane, which members had reported as being overrun with bird poo and overhanging branches.
2. To note that the Clerk would contact BDS requesting a quote to fill two large potholes at the top of Downie's Lane, which was not an adopted road and therefore not covered by the Council.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

Following an update from the Stromness Community Business Forum representative, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Business Forum were looking to develop a tour to celebrate the small independent shops that were in Stromness.
2. To note that the Business Forum were looking for an Orcadian dialect name for this venture.
3. To note that Seed Corn funding might be available for this project.

C. Stromness Development Trust

Following an update from the Stromness Development Trust representative, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the final feasibility study would be discussed by the Development Trust shortly.
2. To note that discussions had taken place with the Council and Sustrans regarding paths and the route from the Back Road via Faravel to the Museum had been identified and were looking for a way for the Council/Sustrans to take forward.
3. To note that no confirmed visits of tall ships calling into Stromness had been confirmed as yet.

10. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 29 May 2023, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £7,144.20.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 5 June 2023, copies of which had been circulated, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £1,562.72 of which:

- £100 had been donated from Stromness Drama Club towards purchasing a new flag but as the money was not ring-fenced, it would be put towards another worthwhile community project if replacing the flag did not go ahead.
- £1,050.72 was to be solely used for the upkeep and maintenance of the stage area.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme 2022/2023

Following consideration of the 2022/2023 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 5 June 2023, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Community Council Grant Scheme 2022/2023 had been fully allocated.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 5 June 2023, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,524.04.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 5 June 2023, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £340.03.

11. Financial Requests

A. OASC – Midsummer Meet – Lerwick – 17-18 June 2023

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards four Stromness swimmers attending the Lerwick Midsummer Meet on 17-18 June 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 per swimmer, totalling £80, be given.

B. Z Adamson – Inter Island Games Gymnastics

Following consideration of correspondence received from Z Adamson, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the Inter-Islands Games Gymnastics in Aland, Finland, on 1-10 July 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. GMB

A member had previously raised that two volunteers of the GMB garden would like to step back, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved active recruitment of more volunteers to help at the GMB Garden was required.

B. Gardens at Hamnavoe House

A member had been approached regarding the gardens at Hamnavoe House, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that Councillor L Hall would contact the Criminal Justice Section of the Council advising that there was some work that may be able to be undertaken by their clients in the gardens at Hamnavoe House.

C. Sharp Kerb in Victoria Street

A member raised concern regarding a sharp kerb edge in Victoria Street, just outside the Commercial Hotel, which had punctured a number of tyres, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Head of Neighbourhood Services would instruct her team to investigate the area and report back to Stromness Community Council.

D. Stromness Shopping Week – Staging Request

Following correspondence received from Stromness Shopping Week, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Stromness Shopping Week had requested the Stage area from Saturday, 15 July to Sunday, 23 July.
2. That the Chair and Vice Chair would oversee the staging being erected.

E. Dirty Water along Stromness Waterfront

A member raised concern regarding dirty water along Stromness Waterfront, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the member should contact SEPA the next time there was dirty water present.

F. X1 Bus Route

Following concerns raised regarding the new X1 bus timetable, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair should write to Stagecoach raising concerns and the knock-on effect the change in the bus times were having on the passengers that live in Kirkwall and the East Mainland who travel to Stromness to work, as well as the consequences for Hoy residents coming into Stromness by ferry who now miss the connection to Kirkwall.

G. Presentation by Planners

A member requested that the planners be invited to a future meeting to discuss the new Masterplan, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should contact the Planners.

H. Backup Ferry Service

A member highlighted concerns regarding what would have happened if there had been an issue with the MV Hamnavoe whilst covering additional sailings for the MV Pentalina as there was no back up service, and urged Councillors to raise those concerns at their next meeting with the Scottish Government, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

I. Library Cutbacks

A member raised concern regarding recent cutbacks at the Stromness Library where daily papers were no longer being purchased, and highlighted that this was impacting members of the public who came in to read the papers, as well as socialise, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

J. Path at Yorston Drive to Stromness Primary School

A member queried whether a barrier should be installed running along the length of the burn at the path from Yorston Drive to Stromness Primary School, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that there had been no remit for the developer to erect a barrier.

13. Provisional Dates for Meetings

Resolved to note the following dates for Stromness Community Council had been agreed:

Monday, 21 August 2023.

Monday, 2 October 2023.

Monday, 13 November 2023.

Monday, 22 January 2024.

Monday, 18 March 2024.

Monday, 6 May 2024.
Monday, 17 June 2024.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, on Monday, 21 August 2023 at 19:00.

15. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:11.