

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, Stromness, and via Teams, on Monday, 24 March 2025 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, K Bevan, A Esslemont, D Harrold, W Mackay and M Sutherland.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Park.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- 1 member of the Press (via Teams).

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of C Sinclair.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2025 were approved, being proposed by D Harrold and seconded by K Bevan.

3. Matters Arising

A. PA System

Following an update from K Bevan, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Stromness Community Development Trust had applied to various funding bodies to assist with purchasing the new PA system and were waiting to hear back.

2. To note that it was hoped the new PA system would be purchased in time for the summer events.

2. To note that Clan would be contacting K Bevan regarding using the PA system for the Midnight Walk.

B. Gym Opening Times in Stromness

No response had been received regarding why Stromness Academy, which was a community school, were unable to provide the community with access to Stromness Academy Gym through the ActiveLife scheme as it did with both Kirkwall Grammar School and Dounby Primary School. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that no response had been received.

2. That the Clerk would contact the relevant section again for a response.

C. Abandoned Cars near GMB Gardens

Following consideration of correspondence from Environmental Health, copies of which had been circulated, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the owner of the blue Peugeot was taking action to remove the vehicle and environmental health would review the situation at the end of the month.

2. To note that the owner of the white Nissan had removed the vehicle.

D. Potholes, Path Maintenance and Road Defect Issues

Following discussion regarding potholes, path maintenance and road defect issues, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Councillor G Bevan would ascertain whether it would be possible to use the vast quantities of rock and stone currently being used by SSEN for their temporary network for path maintenance once SSEN was in the position to clear up the sites.
2. To note that the path from Ness Campsite at the shore side had been reported to Customer Services as in need of repair.
3. To note that Councillor L Hall had contacted Criminal Justice regarding the overgrown path below Hamnavoe House.
4. To note that Councillor G Bevan would make enquiries as to who was responsible for the track between Warebeth and the kirkyard, which had collapsed.

E. ORIC – Proposed Redevelopment Plans

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that ORIC were to discuss the letter received from Stromness Community Council at its meeting on 20 March 2025.
2. That representatives from ORIC would be invited to the SCC meeting to be held in May.

F. Orkney 2025

Following an update from the Chair regarding a phone call with Kirsty Talbot, Games Director, a complete timetable and booklet had been received for circulation to members. It was reported that the Triathlon was to be held in Stromness on 13 July and that Stromness Golf Club would be used throughout the week. Both Stromness Primary and Stromness Academy would be used as dormitories, and the Ferry Inn, Royal Hotel, Bed and Breakfasts and self-catering units would also be used to house athletes. There were no plans for any floral decorations for Stromness, or additional seating at the Pier Head, but the Orkney 2025 team would welcome any planters or extra seating that could be made available. Additional bins were suggested, as well as the household bins in front of the Lions Tap, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the Chair would write a letter to the residents at Church Road regarding wheelie bins that were kept near the Lions Tap to see if they could be moved to an alternative position.

3. That the Chair would contact the Garden Club and the individuals who looked after the flowers at the fountain to see if they were able to assist with floral decoration.
4. That the Island Games had their own bunting, and it was hoped that they would liaise with Stromness Shopping Week Committee and Stromness Community Council regarding erecting it.
5. That additional bins throughout Stromness for the duration of the Games would be needed.
6. That the Clerk would contact the relevant section regarding upkeep of the Council maintained section of garden in front of Stromness Town House.
7. That D Harrold would seek the costs regarding a Welcome to Stromness Banner which would be erected at the Pier Head.

4. Correspondence - Orkney Quiet Routes

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure Section, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

- A. To note that data continued to be collected, and officers intended to review the information before re-engaging with the Community Councils in the near future.
- B. To note that, as set out in the initial briefing note from January 2024, where the data indicated that the roads met the criteria for a Quiet Route and where there was an indication of community support from the respective Community Councils, officers would seek to deliver Quiet Routes in the 2025/2026 financial year.

5. Consultations

A. Disabled On-Street Parking Places

Following consideration of correspondence received from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, regarding disabled on-street parking places, it was:

Resolved to note that no responses had been submitted to the consultation on disabled on-street parking places prior to the deadline of 28 February 2025.

B. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Following consideration of correspondence received from Scott Gibson, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, regarding the draft SFRS Strategy 2025-28, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the consultation on the draft Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025-2028 were required by 2 April 2025.

C. Proposed Changes to the Environmental Regulation (Scotland) Guidance on Public Participation and Fit and Proper Person Test

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, regarding proposed changes to the Environmental Regulation (Scotland) Guidance on Public Participation and Fit and Proper Person Test, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the consultation on the proposed changes to the Environmental Regulation (Scotland) Guidance on Public Participation and Fit and Proper Person Test were required by 30 March 2025.

D. Visitor Levy Survey and Public Engagement Sessions

Following consideration of correspondence received from Democratic Services, regarding the visitor levy survey and public engagement sessions, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the consultation on the visitor levy survey and public engagement sessions were required by 11 April 2025.

E. Stenness Community Association – Proposed Stenness Local Plan

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stenness Community Association regarding the proposed Stenness Local Plan, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the consultation on the proposed Stenness Local Plan were required by 13 April 2025.

6. Publication - New Surface Water Flood Maps

Following consideration of a publication from Scottish Environment Protection Agency, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the new Surface Water Flood Map.

7. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS Updates

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that D Harrold had reported the new bin at the Co-op which was overflowing.
2. To note that a larger bin in that area would be more adequate as individuals were trying to use it, but it was filling up quickly.

B. Stromness Development Trust

Following an update from the Stromness Development Trust representative, advising that they had been successful in securing funding for the Stromness Development Officer post for another year and that work was ongoing in the background regarding the Stromness Community Centre, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group

It was reported that the Stromness Development Officer had met with representatives of the Council regarding updating and refreshing the Stromness Local Place Plan and what funds were available, It had been agreed that there were some projects, such as the Drama Club and the Mens Shed that could be deleted from the current Place Plan. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That A Esslemont should be added as a further representative from Stromness Community Council.
3. That K Bevan would contact the Stromness Development Officer to arrange a meeting of the Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group to create a brief of the new Place Plan.

8. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 14 March 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £12,412.60.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 17 March 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £1,675.72 of which £1,050.72 was to be solely used for the upkeep and maintenance of the stage area.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2024/2025 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 14 March 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Community Council Grant Scheme 2024/2025 had been fully allocated.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 14 March 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £6,115.63.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 14 March 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Seed Corn Fund had been fully allocated.
2. That although all the funding had been fully allocated, there were still monies that had not yet been claimed.

9. Requests for Financial Assistance

A. Stenness Primary School – Outdoor Education Residential Trip – June 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stenness Primary School, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of three Stromness resident pupils attending an Outdoor Education Residential trip to Hoy, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £25 per pupil, totalling £75, be given towards three Stromness pupils attending the Hoy Residential trip on 16-18 June 2025.

B. M Kirkpatrick – ND Age Group Round 1 – 8/9 February 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from M Kirkpatrick, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the North District Age Group Round 1 held in Aberdeen on 8/9 February 2025, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given.

C. M Kirkpatrick – ND Age Group Round 2 – 8/9 March 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from M Kirkpatrick, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the North District Age Group Round 2 held in Aberdeen on 8/9 March 2025, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given.

D. Stromness Golf Club Juniors – Royal Dornoch Golf Club Links Academy

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stromness Golf Club Juniors, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of four junior members attending four trips to the Links Golf Academy at Royal Dornoch Golf Club between February and May 2025, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 for the four junior members for the February and March trip and £25 for the four junior members for the April and May trip, totalling £360, be given towards the cost of the four Stromness residents from Stromness Golf Club Juniors attending the four events at the Links Golf Academy at Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

E. Orkney Folk Festival 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Folk Festival Committee, requesting financial assistance towards internal transport costs for the Orkney Folk Festival 2025, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £750 be given towards the internal transport costs for the Orkney Folk Festival 2025, subject to the Community Council Grant Scheme 2025/2026 being agreed.

F. Orkney Netball – Senior Netball Trips – March 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Netball, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards a Stromness resident attending two Senior Netball trips to Aberdeen and AIness on 15 and 22 March 2025, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 per trip, totalling £40, be given.

G. E Kirkpatrick – Karate Scottish National Championships – Dunfermline – 15 March 2025

Following consideration of correspondence received from E Kirkpatrick, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the Scottish National Championships for Karate on 15 March 2025, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given.

H. Stromness Primary School – Outdoor Education Residential Trip – Hoy

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stromness Primary School, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of 15 Stromness resident pupils attending an Outdoor Education Residential trip to Hoy, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £25 per pupil, totalling £375, be given towards 15 Stromness pupils attending the Outdoor Residential trip in Hoy.

I. Stromness Shopping Week – Firework Display

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stromness Shopping Week, requesting financial assistance towards the Stromness Shopping Week 2025 Firework Display, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £1,500 be given toward the Stromness Shopping Week Firework Display 2025, subject to the Community Council Grant Scheme 2025/2026 being agreed.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Pole/Cameras – North End Roundabout

A member queried what the poles/cameras were that had been erected at the North End Roundabout and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that the poles had been erected as part of data collection in connection with the safe routes to school project.

B. Erection of Signs

A member raised concern regarding the recently erected signs on the Nethertown Road, as well as the signs that had been erected throughout the county at every bridge. Following discussion, it was believed that the funding for all the signs had come from the Scottish Government. Members agreed that just because there was funding available it did not have to be used in an Orkney context, as the erection of such signage was guidelines from the Scottish Government rather than mandatory, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Removal of Street Lights in Stromness Lanes

The Chair raised that she had received correspondence from a Stromness resident regarding a letter the resident had received from the Council stating that the streetlight at their property, that had been erected and maintained by the Council, was no longer going to be maintained and would be removed unless the occupant wanted to take over the cost and management of the light. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Councillor Bevan had been in contact with the relevant section regarding this matter.
2. To note the information provided.

D. GMB Garden Volunteers

Following discussion regarding the GMB Garden, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Chair had sent a letter of thanks to N Macpherson on behalf of the Community Council.
2. To note that Councillor G Bevan and K Bevan would cut the grass at the GMB Garden again this year.
3. To note that the Chair would contact various individuals to see if they would be interested in volunteering with the GMB Garden.

E. Roads Deteriorating due to SSE Contractors

Following concerns raised previously at the SSEN community meeting held on 18 March regarding what arrangement were in place for SSEN to reinstate roads once their project was complete, correspondence had been received from the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated. It advised that the Council had undertaken pre-commencement surveys of all affected roads, and continued to carry out regular inspections to ensure defects were being actioned. It also been advised that the Council had an agreement with SSEN that all roads would be left in a similar or better condition, and at the moment Council officials were satisfied that this was the case. SSEN were maintaining any defects as they went and had even widened some junctions where required. The letter finally advised that, once work was complete, the Council would undertake a final site survey and ensure that any outstanding defects were repaired. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Representation and Communication

Following a query from a member regarding the best way communicate community council information to Stromness residents, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Stromness Community Council used Stromness Development Trust's Facebook page "Stromness Orkney" to advertise public information.
2. To note that community drop in events involving Stromness Community Council and Stromness Development Trust had been used previously.

G. Signs to Discourage Motorhomes going through the Street

Following a query from a member regarding signs to discourage motorhomes that had been raised at a previous meeting, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would the relevant section to find out what progress had been made.

11. 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 Tuesday, 13 May 2025 at 19:00.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:22.