

# **Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, Stromness, and via Teams, on Monday, 20 January 2025 at 19:00**

## **Present:**

P McLaughlin (via Teams), K Bevan (via Teams), A Esslemont (via Teams),  
D Harrold (via Teams), W Mackay and M Sutherland (via Teams).

## **In Attendance:**

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

## **Chair:**

- P McLaughlin.

## **Order of Business**

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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 11 November 2024 were approved, being proposed by M Sutherland and seconded by P McLaughlin.

## **3. Matters Arising**

### **A. PA System**

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

Resolved:

1. To note that, having investigated both systems for which a quote had been received, it had been decided that the PA system which quoted at £5,500 including VAT should be purchased.

2. To note that Stromness Community Development Trust were investigating various funding options, out with Stromness Community Council's funds, which may be available to purchase the PA system.

### **B. Gym Opening Times in Stromness**

Following consideration of correspondence from the Business Manager, Stromness Academy, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the response from the Business Manager:

- That Stromness Academy was a community school, and bookings were managed by Stromness Academy staff.
- That the Sport and Leisure service did not operate the community facilities at Stromness Academy, as was the case with Kirkwall Grammar School and Dounby Primary School.
- That Stromness Academy, therefore, was not part of the ActiveLife scheme and the facilities at Stromness Academy were not available on that basis.

2. That the Clerk would contact the relevant section querying 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.

### **C. Stromness Cemetery**

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that no response had been received regarding the outcome of the initial rabbit survey.
2. To note that, as yet, the remaining slates had not been removed from the Old Gravediggers Shed by the contractor.

#### **D. Tree Lighting Ceremony – Review**

Following discussion regarding the recent Tree Lighting Ceremony, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the event had gone well.
2. To give thanks to K Bevan, G Bevan and M Shiner for organising the PA system.
3. To note the issue regarding the vehicle that had been parked in front of the stage entrance.
4. That, to avoid the same thing happening at future Tree Lighting events, cones should be placed in the parking bay earlier in the day.

#### **E. Memorial Bench**

Following an update from W Mackay, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that, in order to purchase the benches prior to the end of the financial year, W Mackay would order 4 benches – 2 of which would be paid for from the Community Council Grant Scheme fund and 2 would be paid for by two individuals who had previously contacted Stromness Community Council regarding purchasing memorial benches.

#### **F. Abandoned Cars near GMB Gardens**

Resolved to note that no update had been received.

#### **G. Abandoned Boat on Path**

Following correspondence from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that a Notice had been served on the owner to remove the boat and that the progress of removal would be followed up by the service.

### **4. Review of Travel Grant Policy**

Following consideration of Stromness Community Council's Travel Grant Policy, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved, on the motion of K Bevan, seconded by D Harrold, that from 1 April 2025, Travel Grants be set as follows:

- Travel Grants at £25 per individual per trip.

- Travel Grants be applied for by any organisation with participants aged 18 years or under.
- The participants must reside in the Stromness area.
- Travel must include:
  - Going off the mainland of Orkney, or
  - Organised residential Orkney Outdoor Educational trips (for example, overnight outdoor educational trips organised by primary schools).
- For any other grant, each request is taken on a case-by-case basis.

## **5. Correspondence**

### **A. VAO: Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund**

Following consideration of correspondence received from VAO Orkney, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the second tranche of applications for the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for Adults was open for applications until Monday, 3 February 2025.
2. To note that a total of £12,000 was available to local groups and organisations for activities which promoted mental health and wellbeing for adults in Orkney.
3. That grants of up to £7,500 were available and of that a maximum of £5,000 could be used to purchase capital equipment such as computers or furniture.

### **B. MyOrkney**

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Communications Unit, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that complaints and queries regarding Council services could be logged on the Council website [www.orkney.gov.uk](http://www.orkney.gov.uk) and clicking on the [MyOrkney](#) tab.
2. To note Customer Services in both Stromness and Kirkwall could also be used to log issues.
3. To note that to create an account to log into MyOrkney, required the user to create a 12-digit password, which members felt should be made easier as it may put people off.

## **6. Consultation – Verge Maintenance Plan 2025**

Following consideration of correspondence received from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the consultation on the proposed 2025 Verge Maintenance Plan were required by 28 February 2025.

## **7. Publication**

Following consideration of a publication from the Transportation Service, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the Transportation Service Statistics publication.

## **8. Reports from Community Council Representatives**

### **A. MARS Updates**

Resolved to note that the issue of potholes was on the agenda under Any Other Business.

### **B. Stromness Development Trust**

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

Resolved:

1. To note that the recent Log Pull event and firework display had been a great success and had attracted a large crowd into Stromness.
2. To note that, regarding the Community Centre Project, at its meeting in November, the Trust had resolved to take forward charitable status, which was now underway.
3. To note that work was underway to identify additional funding to continue to fund the Stromness Development Officer, whose contract was due to end at the end of February 2025.

### **C. Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group**

Resolved to note that there was nothing to report meantime from this working group.

## **9. Financial Statements**

### **A. Community Council General Fund**

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 6 January 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £13,326.81.

### **B. Donations Account**

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 6 January 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 6 January 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,218.49.

## **D. Community Development Fund**

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 6 January 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £6,524.04.

## **E. Seed Corn Fund**

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 6 January 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.

## **10. Requests for Financial Assistance**

### **A - International Island Games Legacy - Banner**

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney 2025, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards primary schools being twinned with one of the visiting island teams and making banners to mark the occasion, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £200 be given to Orkney 2025 towards the cost of the banner for Stromness Primary School to take part, subject to Community Council Grant Scheme being agreed.

## **11. Any Other Competent Business**

### **A. Parking in Stromness**

Members raised parking concerns when discussing the Tree Lighting Ceremony, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that extended parking in parking bays was still an issue, as was parking throughout the street.
2. To note that there was a lack of Police enforcement which meant that it was a recurring theme.

3. To note that in order for the Council to take over parking, it would need to be decriminalised.

4. To note that emergency services vehicles were still having issues getting to properties due to vehicles parking through the street.

## **B. Potholes**

A member raised concern regarding the number of potholes and road defect issues, notably on the Outertown Road and the North End Road junction, and following discussion, where the state of paths was also raised, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the concerns raised by members regarding the use of cold tar to fill potholes, which offered a quick fix solution but was not long lasting.

2. That Councillor G Bevan would raise the state of the West Shore path and check that it was on the Coastal Path network.

3. That the path along from Ness Campsite at the shore side would be reported to Customer Services as in need of repair.

3. That the Clerk would contact Criminal Justice to see if they were able to assist with maintenance of the path below Hamnavoe House, which was very overgrown.

## **C. Strategic Housing Investment Plan**

A member raised concern regarding the new Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), which had been approved at the November meeting of the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee. He stated that most of the new build houses were due to be built in Kirkwall, with only 39 due to be built in Stromness over the 5-year lifetime of the SHIP. He continued that without appropriate housing being built, he feared for the future of Stromness. Councillor L Hall confirmed that himself and his ward colleagues were on the case and had taken his comments on board, and it was:

Resolved to note the concerns raised.

## **D. Orkney Health and Care Group**

Following an update from the Chair following her online attendance at the recent Orkney Health and Care Group, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the pressures that Health and Social Care and NHS Orkney organisations were under.

2. To note, that if all goes to plan, five new dentists could be in Orkney in the next 5-8 months.

3. To note that Orkney had the highest uptake for vaccinations for both flu and COVID-19.
4. To note that there were still care home pressures due to staffing illness.
5. To note that there was an ongoing recruitment drive for foster carers, which were in very short supply.

## **E. ORIC – Proposed Redevelopment Plans**

Following ongoing concerns raised by members regarding the proposed redevelopment plans by ORIC which were currently going through the planning process, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would write to the Chair of the ORIC Board highlighting Stromness Community Council's continued concerns surrounding the proposed development.

## **12. 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, 24 March 2025 at 19:00.

P McLaughlin, seconded by W Mackay, moved that the remaining items be taken in private.

The member of the press left the meeting at this point.

## **13. Request for Financial Assistance (continued)**

### **B. The Orkney Folklore and Storytelling Centre**

Following consideration of correspondence received from The Orkney Folklore and Storytelling Centre, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards Stromness Spirit of the Sea – A Story of Place events, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that, as this application had been received from a business rather than a community organisation or charity, no assistance be provided.

## **14. AOCB – Continued**

### **F. Defibrillators – Liability**

Following queries from a member regarding potential liability for defective defibrillators, as well as maintenance of the defibrillators, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that D Harrold would contact G Deans, who had previously maintained the defibrillators, regarding suppliers and liability issues.

## **G. Proposed Scalloway Twinning Display – Stromness Travel Centre**

Following an update from Councillor J Park regarding a Scalloway/Stromness twinning display that was proposed for Stromness Travel Centre, and after discussion regarding potential photos and artifacts that may be available, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would look for items in Stromness Community Council's cabinets situated in Stromness Town House.
2. That Councillor J Park would contact D Stout who may have some photographs.

## **H. Community Surgery**

Following an update from Councillor J Park, regarding a proposed Surgery for members of the public, involving Stromness Councillors and Stromness Community Council members, where individuals would be invited to speak on current key issues which were pertinent to Stromness, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that the first Community Surgery should take place on Thursday, 30 January 2025 at 19:00 in the Warehouse Buildings.

## **15. Conclusion of Meeting**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:39.