

Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwich Community Council held in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams on Wednesday, 23 August 2023 at 19:30

Present:

Mr David Hamilton, Mrs Helen Woodsford-Dean, Mrs Evelyn Grant, Mr Colin Kirkness, Mr Gary Sinclair, Mrs Karen Ritch and Mr Graham Brown.

In Attendance:

- Mr Roddy McKay, Head of Planning and Community Protection, Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (via Teams).
- Councillor Jean Stevenson.
- Councillor Rachael King.
- Councillor Duncan Tullock.
- Councillor Owen Tierney (via Teams).
- Mr Steven Wylie, Swartland Driving Range.
- Mr Christopher Omand, Swartland Driving Range.
- Ms Inga Gaudie, Community Council Liaison Assistant.
- Ms Jayne Smith-Saville, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

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1. Presentation – Golf Driving Range, Swartland

Representatives of the project presented to the members their proposal to establish a golf driving range at Swartland, and explained firstly that funding for the project was available from the Farm Diversification Fund.

A survey had been circulated to seek any objections to the proposal, and the return had been 98% positive. Golf clubs in Kirkwall and Stromness had no objection and the proper consultation notifications would be adhered to. Members also heard that all infrastructure was already in place, and there would be no impact on wildlife. It was intended that all facilities would be made accessible.

Councillor King advised that she was in support of such a venture, as it would have a positive health and wellbeing aspect for the community. The representatives left the meeting, leaving members to consider the proposal, and it was:

Resolved:

A. That all members were in favour for the Golf Driving Range at Swartland to go ahead.

B. That a letter of support for the golf driving range to be sent on behalf of the Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

2. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mr Kevin Groundwater.

3. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 was approved, being proposed by Mr Graham Brown and seconded by Mrs Evelyn Grant.

4. Matters Arising

A. Car Park at St Peter's Kirk, Sandwick

Colin Kirkness confirmed that grubblings had been delivered by B F Kemp, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would check if the invoice had been received, so that an application to the Community Council Grant Scheme could be made to cover the costs.

B. Harray Hall Car Park

Members stated their disappointment that no work had still been done. The Chair referred back to the letter to Harray Hall in July 2004, which quite clearly stipulated that Orkney Islands Council were responsible for repair works. The Head of Planning and Community Protection advised that he had spoken to the Roads Team at Orkney Islands Council, and they confirmed that there was no capacity in this year's

budget to carry out the repairs. Members were further advised that it would be looked at again in the 2024/2025 Roads Maintenance Plan, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would issue a letter of complaint to the Roads Department, following Orkney Islands Council's non-adhesion to their admission that the car park resurfacing is their responsibility.
2. That members wish to receive a guarantee from the Roads Department that this work will be built into the maintenance works for 2024/25, and as such, a letter confirming this.

C. War Memorial, St Peter's Kirkyard

No update was received, and it was:

Resolved to pass item on to the next meeting's agenda for an update.

D. Road Repair near Refuge Corner

It was advised that the road repairs had now been completed, and it was:

Resolved to remove the item from the agenda.

E. Zebra Crossing, Dounby

No update was received, and it was:

Resolved to pass item on to the next meeting's agenda for an update.

F. Blackening Vandalism

No update was received, and it was:

Resolved to pass item on to the next meeting's agenda for an update.

G. Bay of Skail Benches

No update was received for the missing benches, but members suggested to research the price of benches with a view to purchasing, and to ensure they were bolted down if so, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To pass item on to the next meeting's agenda for an update.
2. That the Clerk would investigate the price of benches.

H. Planning Applications

No update had been received, and it was:

Resolved to pass item on to the next meeting's agenda.

I. Health and Care Representative

The Chair enquired from Councillor King the requirements and frequency of meetings, and it was:

Resolved that the Chair would put his name forward to attend.

J. Dounby Primary School – Norwegian Constitution Event

Resolved to note that the Community Council does not cover the cost of school transport.

K. Strathborg

The Chair and Colin Kirkness had visited Strathborg and reported that the car park and paths were needing to be cleared of weeds, and grass trimmed back from path edges. A number of willow trees were also needing to be trimmed. Members agreed that the site would benefit from more trees, and that there were several tree guards already in the house, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would contact the Woodland Trust in relation to the cost of trees.
2. To enquire as to whether the Young Farmers from Harray or Sandwick would be prepared to help with the tidy up of Strathborg in return for a donation.

L. Island Games - Guernsey

Members discussed whether for such future events, a letter ought to be circulated, stating that the Community Council are open to funding for those taking part. The Community Council Liaison Assistant stated that all participants were now encouraged to apply to their own Community Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of above.

M. Remembrance Bench - Skail Bay

Members suggested that the member of the public wishing to provide a remembrance bench could place the bench at the site where benches had been missing for some time. Recommendations were given to ensure the bench was placed on a concrete plinth and bolted down to prevent the bench being blown away or removed, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, to contact the member of public with the site suggestion.

N. Poppy Wreaths – Remembrance Sunday

Members were in favour of providing wreaths, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, will forward the request to Democratic Services.

O. Christmas Lights

The Chair reported that he had received a quote from E Fraser for the cost of installing fittings, fixing and dismantling the lights. The Chair wished to know if the lights had been ordered and that another 8 silhouette and 23 wraparound lights were required. A request for lights were placed last summer and confirmation is required of their arrival for this year, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would forward the quote to Democratic Services.
2. That a CCGS application would be submitted for the cost of the fittings, light installation and dismantling, with one third of the final cost to be paid by Birsay Community Council.
3. To note that Councillor R King had asked whether the annual installation of Christmas Lights could be offered out on a contract basis as a collective for all Community Councils.

P. Christmas Tree Lighting

Members agreed on a date of Friday, 1 December for the Christmas Tree Lighting. It was agreed that there was no need for a road closure, and the event should not impede on the Market Green development. It was also agreed that better planning needed to be in place, so that everyone could hear the speakers, and it was:

Resolved to note the date and contents of above.

5. Correspondence

A. Scottish Online Conference for Community Councillors 10th June

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. OHAL Committee Recruitment Event 21.6.23

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. VAO Membership Renewal

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. RSPB Birsay Moors Peatlands

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. SEN Resilient Communities Fund

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Visitor Levy Bill (PACT)

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. VAO AGM Invite

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Scottish Health Council Member Recruitment

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Climate Change Event - Orkney

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

J. Community Led Development

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

K. Scottish Islands Passport – Latest News and Short Survey

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

L. 25th Anniversary SURF Awards 2023 SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

M. Memorial Bench – Grimeston Road

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

N. Thank you letters

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

O. Listening to you – Invitation to the Scottish Water ACM 2023

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

P. Important Update on Crofting Applications Process

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

Q. ORSAS – An Appeal for a Compassionate Community approach to Media Engagement

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

6. Consultations

A. Boundaries Scotland – Scottish Parliament Consultation on Provisional Proposals for Constituencies

Resolved to note that there were no proposed changes.

B. West of Orkney Windfarm – Pre-Application Consultation Event

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Finstown Variable 20mph Speed Limit Order – launch of the next stage of the statutory consultation process

Members agreed that in certain areas, there is a requirement for speed reduction, but how was this to be policed? Members agreed that there appears to be no uniformity when it comes to speed reduction, and not placed in areas that ideally require speed limits. Members agreed that the introduction of average speed cameras would capture motorists not adhering to speed limits, and it was:

Resolved that members want to respond:

- Reduction in speed limit is futile if this is not going to be manned or policed.
- Has a consideration been made for average speed cameras to be installed?

D. Scottish Government Planning Phase 3 of Permitted Development Rights Review

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Women’s Aid Orkney – Domestic Abuse in Older Women

Resolved to note the contents of the consultation and that members could complete the survey if they wished to.

F. Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board – Review of Statement of Alcohol Licensing Policy

Resolved to note the contents of the consultation.

G. Draft Procurement Strategy 2023 to 2023

Resolved to note the contents of the consultation.

H. Visitors Levy Bill – Consultation Extension

One member thought that the bill taxes the wrong group of tourists to the island. A penalty would be placed on those bringing more income onto the island - those staying in hotels, bed and breakfasts, holiday lets etc, whereas those just visiting for the day, staying in camper vans without booking into a camp site, would not pay the fee. The member also believed that income received from cruise liners wasn't advertised sufficiently. Councillor King stated that a strategy was being implemented to cover this area, and it was:

Resolved to wait the outcome of the Bill.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the general fund statement as at 1 August 2023, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £14,018.98.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 1 August 2023, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balances remaining for approval in the main and additional capping limits were £1,419.77 and £743.00 respectively.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 1 August 2023, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the total remaining available for allocation was £9,640.

D. Seed Corn Fund

Members had previously been sent copies of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 1 August 2023, and it was:

Resolved to note that £2,500 remained available for approval to projects.

8. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. OASC - Thurso Mini Meet

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Hannah Morice, Archie Brass Gregor Custer, Ruaridh Custer and Irving Norquoy who competed in the Thurso Mini Meet on 6 May 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £240 had been awarded to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

B. OASC - Mid-Summer Meet, Lerwick

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Arwen West, who competed in the Mid-Summer Meet at Lerwick on 17-18 June 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 had been awarded to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

C. Eve Wood – British Championships, Sheffield

Following consideration of correspondence received from Emma Wood, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Eve Wood, who competed in the British Championships, Sheffield between 22 – 28 July 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 had been given to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

D. Ewan Foubister – Scottish Athletics North District Competition, Inverness

Following consideration of correspondence received from Liz Foubister, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Ewan Foubister, who competed in the Scottish Athletics North District Competition in Inverness in May, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £60 had been given to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

E. Ewan Foubister – Inter Island Games, Guernsey

Following consideration of correspondence received from Liz Foubister, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Ewan Foubister, who competed in the Inter Island Games in Guernsey in July, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 had been given to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

F. Ewan Foubister – Scottish Schools Outdoor Championships, Grangemouth

Following consideration of correspondence received from Liz Foubister, copies of which had previously been circulated and approved, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Ewan Foubister, who competed in the Outdoor Championships in Grangemouth in June, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 had been given to cover the travel costs, which was met from the General Fund.

G. Ewan Foubister – Scottish Athletics Age Group Championships, Aberdeen

Following consideration of correspondence received from Liz Foubister, copies of which had previously been circulated, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Ewan Foubister, who competed in the Scottish Athletics Age Group Championships in Aberdeen in August, it was:

Resolved that the application be declined due to the individual exceeding the number of applications as per the Harray and Sandwick Community Council Financial Policy.

H. Matthew Reid – Island Games, Guernsey

Following consideration of correspondence received from Matthew Reid, copies of which had previously been circulated, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of Matthew Reid, who competed in the Island Games, Guernsey in July, it was:

Resolved that the application be declined in accordance with the Harray and Sandwick Travel Community Council Financial Policy.

I. Bonfire and Fireworks – Picky, November 2023

Following consideration of correspondence received from Hazel Flett, Clerk to Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, copies of which had previously been circulated, applying for financial assistance towards the costs of the bonfire and fireworks in November, it was:

Resolved:

1. To make a donation of £100 towards the cost of the event, which would be subject to CCGS approval.
2. To ask, at the request of one member, if there was a possibility to purchase fireworks that omit less noise, to protect surrounding residents, pets and wildlife.

J. Harray SWI – Harray Bairns Halloween Party

The Chair read out a request which had been received by email, asking for financial assistance towards the cost of the Harray Bairns Halloween Party, and it was:

Resolved to make a donation of £200 towards the cost of the event, which would be subject to CCGS approval.

9. Publications

Resolved to note that the following publications had been forwarded to members:

- VAO – Newsletter – April, May, June and July 2023.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – May, June and July 2023.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter - June 2023.
- Police Scotland – Orkney Area Command – Issue 2.
- NHS “Good to Share” Information Bulletin.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Glass on Path – Dounby School to Northbigging Road

The Chair brought in evidence of glass still being present on the path from the Dounby School to Northbigging Road. He explained that he had reported this issue twice, and had been informed that the area had been cleaned, but there was still glass remaining on the path, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To inform the relevant department, via business letter, and ask for the path to be cleared of glass.
2. That Colin Kirkness would check if glass is being transported for Cursiter Quarry.

B. Rat Boxes – Harray Kirkyard

It was reported that a member of the public had sighted a rat by the side of a headstone, and it was:

Resolved to enquire, via business letter, when the bait boxes were last checked.

C. Brodgar Road – Tourists Blocking Road

Members raised a long-standing issue of tourists being dropped off by the X1 bus at the junction of Brodgar Road. A member had taken photographs of tourists walking on the road in large numbers and walking in the middle of the road. Sandwick residents had also voiced their concerns. Councillor King stated that this issue has been raised with the police before, and if the situation was allowed to continue, it wouldn't be long until there was a fatality. It was agreed that something needed to be done meantime, until the Orkney Gateway Programme comes into effect. Councillor King offered that she was more than happy for any complaints relating to this, to be forwarded onto her and, after discussion, it was:

Resolved to issue a letter to the OIC Chief Executive (along with photographic evidence) voicing member's concerns and suggest that the area needs to be managed when large numbers of tourists visit the site.

D. Waste Collection after Dounby Show

A member raised a concern from the West Mainland Agricultural Society concerning the significant increase in the cost of the waste collection after the Dounby Show. It was reported that the cost in 2021 was £900, but in 2022 this had risen to £3,550. There is a concern that the bill this year will be even greater. It was resolved to:

Request, via business letter, an explanation of the significant increase in cost, and request a breakdown of the cost.

E. Plastic Wrap at Isbister Store

A member of the public had approached a member to voice their concerns that there was a significant amount of plastic wrap stored outside at Isbister's. They had felt that the area was becoming a bit of an eye sore, and were concerned that the plastic had the potential to break off during high winds. A member explained that the store will be not taking anymore deposits of plastic for some time, as Solway Recycling were not uplifting at present, and it was:

Resolved to note the content of the above.

F. Abandoned Car – Dounby Crossroads

A member stated that there appears to be an abandoned car in the car park opposite the Smithfield Hotel, and it was.

Resolved to contact Environmental Health to ask if they could visit the car and place a sticker on the vehicle.

G. Dounby School Road Entrance

Members voiced their concerns about the incompleteness of the resurfacing works, as there was a patch of road that had not been resurfaced and still had potholes, and it was:

Resolved that, via business letter, enquiries would be made to the relevant department as to why this patch had been omitted and when the area would be resurfaced.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next two meetings of Harray and Sandwick Community Council would be held on Wednesdays 4 October and 22 November 2023 commencing at 19:30 in the Milestone Community Church.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

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