

Minute of the Meeting of Eday Community Council held in the Eday Heritage Centre and via Teams on Thursday, 31 July 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Mr A Garson, Mrs M Byers, Mr M Cockram, Mrs L Garson, Mr A Jones, Mr T McCabe and Mr H Thomson.

In Attendance:

- Councillor M Thomson.
- Mrs M Slater, Service Manager, Customer Services and Corporate Administration (via Teams).
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.
- Ms J Walker, CDO, Eday Partnership.
- Ms J Herbert, Community Liaison Manager, SSEN Transmission.
- Mr C Bell, Lead Project Manager, SSEN Transmission.
- Ms N Ross, Stakeholder Engagement Team, SSEN Transmission.
- Four members of the public.
- One member of the press (via Teams).

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that no apologies for absence had been received.

2. Neven Point Wind Ltd (EIA – Application)

The Chair advised that due to the interest in this item, they would take item 4N on the original agenda at this stage in the meeting.

Members had previously been provided information advising that the Neven Point Wind Ltd application had been lodged. It had been agreed, via email, to put in a request to be formally consulted on the application, noting that further discussion would be required.

Two members of the public were given an opportunity to speak to this item and information on their response/alternative to Neven Point was passed around members for their consideration. They suggested that there were other technologies that would be more suitable for Eday than the ones proposed and provided information on a project that they together had been working on. This detailed that these smaller turbines (2m x 1.4m) were deemed “temporary structures” and therefore wouldn’t require planning permission. They claimed that these could produce the same amount of power as larger models.

They then referred to the Neven Point application suggesting that they were purely high voltage for export to England and that none of the electricity generated would be distributed here in the island. He suggested that the turbines plus a substation would be a further industrialisation of the island. He suggested that the turbines they were proposing to use on their project were for local use in vulnerable island communities.

The members of the public asked if the community council had conducted their own consultation on how residents felt about the application and advised that they had done their own independent research, suggesting that 46 residents did not want the application to be approved.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their contributions to the meeting and sharing another side of the story, acknowledging that they had been provided with information from Green Power and SSSEN and that it was good to hear both sides of the story. He advised that the community council represent the public and the island as a whole, and respect that. He welcomed information on how residents felt about issues that affect them. When questioned, he advised that the community council had to stay neutral on planning applications unless they could evidence that there was total opposition or support across the whole island.

The members of the public requested that a specific issue meeting be held by the community council in order to gauge feeling in the community on the Neven Point application. It was agreed that this would be considered, and a meeting held if it was deemed necessary, however they warned that it was often difficult to convene a meeting in a short period of time. In the meantime, bearing in mind that the deadline for comments on the application was 17 August, the members of the public were urged to lodge their representations to the planning application directly with OIC as

this would form part of the information that was presented to Councillors when the application was considered by the Planning Committee.

The members of the public then referred to the presentation by SSEN, asking if that was not something that should go out to the wider public at some stage. Councillor M Thomson advised that a public event would be held in September so that all residents could be provided with the information once there was more clarity on the project scope.

Following the discussion and consideration of the information that had been presented, it was:

Resolved:

A. To note the information provided, in the planning application 25/203/PPMAJ (Neven Point), from Eday Technologies and Innovation Forum, and by Green Power separately.

B. That members would give further consideration to holding a specific issue meeting on the proposal at Neven Point, on the request of the member of the public.

C. That Eday Community Council remained neutral on this application.

D. That Eday Community Council would advise anyone with a representation to make on this application to do so via the appropriate channels, directly to OIC, prior to the deadline, to ensure their views were taken into consideration.

3. Presentation by SSEN - Eday Project

Members were provided with a presentation by members of SSEN regarding the Orkney Link project. They advised that they wanted to ensure communities had enough information, and although the Eday project was at a very early stage, SSEN wanted to introduce the proposal before visiting Eday in September to host a community event for locals.

They advised that the Pathway to 2030 was a project which involved new overhead lines, substations, converter stations and subsea links. A major upgrade of the to meet energy security and climate change targets connecting and transporting renewable energy. Approved by OFGEM. Duty to provide a safe and reliable supply of electricity to our communities.

It was advised that they wanted to get in as early as possible to explain a bit more about the project so that we can get the communities involved and get their input straight away. The Project Manager gave an overview of the project – an Eday Grid Supply Point, a facility that they proposed to install in Eday – consisting of a GSP (transformer, switchgear and isolating gear), an element of marine/subsea cable and landing point, and then depending on site location, a short section of overhead line or underground cable from landfall to the supply point. The route was still to be defined, but it would effectively connect to the Finstown substation that was currently being developed.

They further explained that they were at a factfinding and feasibility stage just now and were looking to do a seabed survey in Spring 2026 to feed into the route selection process.

They advised that they would be able to provide a lot more information in September when they do an on-island engagement, shortlist of sites and a bit more clarity on proposed marine cable route.

Members queried what kind of site was proposed for the Eday GSP, and were told that it would be 132kv, and would allow the transport of generated power from the proposed wind farm. It was advised that the Eday site would be much smaller than what was currently being developed in Finstown. Size was still to be determined.

Members also asked if the community turbine could be connected to the line, and were told that, in principle there would be capacity for local turbines etc to feed in.

SSEN representatives lastly reported that once they got further refined in site selection, they would go into the more formal planning application process, issuing scoping reports and then public application (PAC) events next year. They agreed to keep the community informed and share information on the upcoming community events. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the update from SSEN and await further information on this project.

The SSEN representatives left the meeting at this point.

4. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the meeting of Eday Community Council held on 15 May 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mr T McCabe and seconded by Mrs L Garson.

5. Matters Arising

A. Shelter at Linkspan

The Interim Clerk advised that Marine Services had responded to say that they were happy to provide a shelter once funding comes available, and that they would be working closely with the Transportation team to arrange facilitation. Once funding had been received, they would organise installation, with a timeframe to be confirmed. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Cattle Pens

Resolved that there was no update on this but that it should be kept on the agenda.

C. Isles Haulier

The Interim Clerk advised that they had not managed to secure a meeting with the haulier, but that members should keep a note of incidents, comments and queries that could be forwarded to the haulier for response, and it was:

Resolved to monitor the situation and that members should forward any queries to the Interim Clerk.

D. Eday Medical Incident

Resolved to note that information had been passed to relevant officer and that a response had been received to advise that this would be looked into and appropriate steps taken.

E. Benches

The Chair confirmed that the benches had been received, and it was:

Resolved that one should be sited at London Bay and the other at the Setter Stone.

6. Correspondence

A. Eday School – Strimmer

Correspondence had been received from Eday School in May, asking if the school might be able to borrow the community council-owned strimmer. Members had been consulted, and it was:

Resolved to note that permission had been granted for use of the strimmer by the school and that a thank you note had been received.

B. The Orkney Fund – Place Plan

Members had previously been sent correspondence from OIC Economic Development, advising of funding available to community anchored organisations to fund local Place Plans, along with an expression of interest form, and it was:

Resolved to note that Eday Partnership were leading on a local Place Plan for Eday and were aware of the funding.

C. Community Wealth Building Action Plan Online

Members had received an invitation to an online meeting to discuss community wealth building on 24 June 2025, and it was:

Resolved to note that nobody had been able to attend this meeting.

D. RTS Switch-off information

Information from Neighbourhood Watch Scotland had previously been circulated to members, asking for help with cascading information on the forthcoming Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) switch off, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. TWP Small Donations Fund

Correspondence had been circulated from Thistle Wind Partners to members regarding a small donations fund for local communities to groups based in Orkney

and Caithness. Grants of up to £500 were available for projects, and priority would be given to community led initiatives that support the rural regeneration and sustainability of communities in the fund area. The Chair suggested that the community council think of some suitable projects that could be supported by this fund, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence and that if any member had an idea of what could be assisted by this fund, they should contact the Interim Clerk.

F. Payphone Removal Proposals

Members had previously been sent information regarding the removal of payphones in the Orkney area, one of which was in Eday. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that the community council had no wish to retain the payphone that was earmarked for removal.

G. Annual Grants 2025/2026

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

Resolved to note that the annual grant received by Eday Community Council for financial year 2025/2026 was £4,063.76.

H. Briefing Note – Outer North Isles Airfields - SATE

Members discussed correspondence from Marine Services and Transportation, copies of which had previously been circulated, providing an update on aviation related projects, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

I. Ferry Replacement Programme – Phase 1

An update on progress of the Ferry Replacement Programme had previously been circulated to members, advising that simulation testing had been completed using the initial outline design for the new larger north isles ferries, and then a final design would be drafted. On-island consultation visits were planned for the end of September, with the Eday events scheduled for Thursday, 25 September, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and that the plans for new ferries would be presented at the on-island meeting in September.

J. Transport Forum – Draft Timetables – Transport Representative

The draft air and ferry timetables for summer 2026 had previously been circulated to members ahead of the forum meeting. Mr H Thomson voiced his disappointment that the timetables hadn't been amended previously when he had asked for a longer day on a Friday but hoped that this might be possible in future. He also advised that discussion was still required on the matter with Stronsay Community Council, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that these points would be fed back to the Transportation Service by the Interim Clerk.
2. That there were no further comments on the timetables.

K. Eday Community Climate Action Plan

Members had previously been sent correspondence from the Community Development Officer, Eday Partnership, in relation to Eday's Community Climate Action Plan, advising that they would be moving to a second community consultation in June, looking at Farming and Fisheries, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and that this meeting had since taken place.

L. Eday Resilience – Eday Partnership

An email from Eday Partnership had previously been circulated to members, advising that they had discussed serious concerns regarding the lack of fire service cover on the island and asking that a resilience meeting be convened as soon as possible. It was suggested that this was something that should be led by the Council, and Councillor M Thomson advised that it was concerning as people on the island were not fully aware of the situation, and SFRS were content that they were covering the island. It was agreed that resilience on the island was at a low, and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would advise Democratic Services that Eday Community Council would support the idea of a resilience meeting being held in Eday with relevant organisations and ask that this be arranged as soon as possible.

M. Ayre Offshore Windfarm

Members had previously been sent information regarding the submission of marine licence applications to construct an offshore windfarm and associated transmission infrastructure for the Ayre Offshore Windfarm. Information was also provided regarding PAC events in August, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

N. Neven Point Wind Ltd (EIA – Application)

Resolved to note that this item had been discussed earlier in the meeting, at item 2 above.

7. Financial Statements

A. Annual Accounts as at 31 March 2025

Following consideration of the annual accounts for the 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 statement for Eday Community Council as at 31 March 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the end of year balance of £13,349.37.

B. General Finance 21 July 2025

Following consideration of the general fund statement for Eday Community Council as at 21 July 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £14,445.10.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the CCGS statement for Eday Community Council as at 21 July 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance of the main capping limit was £308.83, the island capping limit was fully allocated and that the additional capping limit had £780 available for allocation.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the CDF statement for Eday Community Council as at 21 July 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that £7,667.11 remained available for allocation to eligible projects.

8. Financial Request - Eday Partnership – Local Place Plan

Members had previously been forwarded correspondence from the Community Development Officer, Eday Partnership, asking for a letter of support and funding towards the formulation of a local Place Plan for Eday. The CDO advised that the project had been delayed but that they would be applying to the next round, and funding may still be required at a later stage, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To provide a letter of support and funding of £500 from the Community Development Fund towards the local Place Plan project being led by Eday Partnership, when required.

B. That the Interim Clerk would apply to use £500 of CDF funding for this purpose.

9. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

Resolved to note that transport matters had been raised at various points earlier in the meeting.

B. Planning

Resolved to note that the application for five turbines had been a current application of note, and that individuals who had queries in relation to a planning application they had lodged should contact the planning department for advice in the first instance.

C. Health and Care

The Health and Care Representative advised that, as this had been her first meeting, she was unsure of what she was allowed to bring back from these meetings to the main group, however she gave a summary of the issues that had been discussed, which included concerns around the slow progress to fill positions in health and social care, a total lack of care assistants everywhere, and the amount being spent on agency staffing as a result. She advised that they had also discussed transfer from the isles to the Balfour Hospital, as well as plans afoot to produce a new children's services plan. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the update provided.

10. Publications

The following publications had previously been circulated to members and were noted:

- VAO Newsletter – June 2025.
- VAO – Training and Funding Update – June and July 2025.
- VAO Newsletter – Volunteering Special Edition.
- Orkney Ferries Statistics – April 2025.
- Scottish Water – Spring/Summer 2025 Newsletter.
- ORSAS – May Newsletter.
- Letter from School Place – May, June and July 2025.
- Childminder Training.

11. AOCB

A. Clerk's Post

The Interim Clerk advised that recruitment was ongoing for the post of Clerk and that interviews would be held in the coming weeks, and it was:

Resolved to note the update provided.

B. Dredging at Eday Pier

The Interim Clerk circulated correspondence from Marine Services in relation to material that would be available following dredging works at Eday Pier. It was agreed that the area that they proposed to dredge was not the area that needed to be dredged and that they needed to extend the area being cleared out. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To respond to Marine Services via Democratic Services that a larger area needed to be dredged around Eday Pier to ensure that the pier could be fully accessible by all vessels.

2. To note that the community council could think of no use for the material but to suggest that Marine Services advertise it to the community.

C. Vermin at Pier

Concerns were raised by a member around vermin control around Eday pier, and that there was currently no contract in place to fill the boxes, and it was:

Resolved to monitor the situation and to bring the matter to a future meeting should it become a problem.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of a date for the next meeting, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Eday Community Council would be held on Thursday, 2 October 2025 at Eday Heritage Centre and via Teams at 19:30.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:28.