

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, Stromness, on Monday, 13 March 2023 at 19:15

Present:

P McLaughlin, V Anderson (via Teams), K Bevan (via Teams), D Fischler, A Hutchinson, W Mackay and J Park.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- K MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
- J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- C Omand, Watch Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
- 1 member of the Press.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. New Member

The Chair welcomed A Hutchinson to her first meeting following her election as a member of Stromness Community Council at the Public Meeting held prior to the ordinary meeting.

2. Apologies

Resolved to note that an apology for absence had been received from C Sinclair.

3. Orkney Native Wildlife Project

Resolved to note that, due to unforeseen circumstances, the update from the representative of the Orkney Native Wildlife Project had been postponed until the next meeting.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2023 were approved, being proposed by J Park and seconded by D Fischler.

5. Matters Arising

A. Welcome to Stromness Sign

Resolved to note that there was no update at this stage.

B. ATM in Stromness

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

Resolved to note that Councillor G Bevan was liaising with J Park and N Quinn, Natwest representative, regarding issues that had been raised following the planning application for the ATM to see if the issues could be resolved and would report back to members.

C. Old Stromness Primary School Playground

Resolved to note that C Sinclair was not present to give an update.

D. Bunting

Following an update from the Community Council Liaison Officer, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that it was difficult for the service to break down the costings of erecting the bunting to give a definitive cost for erecting bunting.
2. That this item should be removed from the agenda.

E. Garage at Town House

Following an update from K Bevan regarding replacing the garage door and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that one quote had been received for replacing and fitting the replacement garage door.
2. That W Mackay would source a second quote prior to the next meeting.

F. Public Benches

Following an update from W Mackay regarding public benches in Stromness, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would contact the relevant section to get clarification on what the Council's position was regarding the repair and maintenance of benches in Stromness under Council ownership.
2. That if Community Council were to take over responsibility for the Council benches in Stromness, additional annual funding to cover the costs would be sought.
3. To note that W Mackay estimated that there were 12 benches that needed repair/maintenance and would prioritise the benches prior to contacting the Criminal Justice Section.
4. To note that there were two, possibly three, additional benches that could be placed at the Pier Head to coincide with the Tall Ships event.

G. RNLI Benches – Plastic Replacement Benches

Following an update from W Mackay, it was:

Resolved to note that one bench had been replaced with one of the four new plastic benches recently purchased, with the old bench being moved to outside the Warebeth Cemetery.

The Press representative joined the meeting at this point.

H. Ness Campsite – Traffic Management

Following consideration of correspondence from the Team Manager (Sport and Leisure), Orkney Islands Council, and K Gray, former Warden at Stromness Campsite, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the proposed traffic management measures to be taken at the entrance of Ness Campsite, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the Team Manager's concerns regarding the Community Council's suggestion of using CCTV, sleeping policemen, or signage to reduce speed rather than some kind of barrier at the entrance to the campsite.
2. To note the correspondence from K Gray, former Warden at Stromness Campsite, in support of a gate at the entrance.

3. To note that K Bevan felt that no gate or barrier was necessary at Stromness Campsite but would go with the majority feeling of the Community Council.

4. To note that the Clerk should respond to the relevant section of the Council stating that while the Community Council recognised that the safety of the users of the campsite was important, other practical solutions may be available to enable Stromness residents' access and that the following points of concern had been raised:

- What was the Rights of Way for that area?
- That should a barrier have to be erected, a gate that could be opened or closed would be the preferred option, thereby stopping potential "joyriders" but enabling Stromness residents' vehicular access to the viewpoint and beach.
- If a barrier were erected, what thought had been given for Stromness residents with disabled access, such as mobility scooter users.

I. Passing Places – Community Garden to Reservoir

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Team Manager (Roads Support), Orkney Islands Council, regarding concern raised by Stromness Community Council about the lack of passing places on the single-track road from the Community Gardens to the reservoir, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Team Manager (Roads Support) had advised that, at present, there was no budget for the creation of new passing places, but he would arrange for that section of road to be inspected and if there was work that could be carried out, such as new signs, this would be attended to.

J. Stromness Town House Gardens

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Civil Engineering Technician, Orkney Islands Council, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the Council maintenance plan for the north side of Stromness Town House Gardens which detailed the maintenance to be carried out as well as the number of times per year the work should take place.
2. That Stromness Community Council would monitor the situation.
3. To note that the Chair was waiting for a quote regarding the maintenance of the stage area, which the Community Council was responsible for, and would update members when she received it.

K. Purchase of Hi Vis Vests for Community Council Use

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that 12 hi vis vests had been purchased for Stromness Community Council use.

L. Stromness Academy – Fumes

Following an update from the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities, regarding concerns raised, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Council were aware of the longstanding issue of the fumes coming from the academy which was affecting the neighbouring area.
2. To note that as a result of various tests on the flue, parts had now been ordered to enable servicing of the flue.
3. To note that in the long term it would need to be investigated whether the flue was fit for purpose.

C Omand, Watch Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

6. Correspondence

A. COVID Recovery in Local Communities

Following consideration of correspondence received from the COVID Recovery Adviser, Orkney Islands Council, copies of which had been circulated, offering advice, support and reassurance on all aspects of COVID recovery to the local community prior to the post ending in March 2023, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would respond to the COVID Recovery Adviser requesting some of the free lateral flow tests to be placed in the Warehouse Building for public use, that had been offered in the correspondence.

B. Streets, Pavements and Lanes in Stromness

Following consideration of correspondence received from D Hutcheon, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the state of the street, pavements and lanes, which, as well as being unsightly, were green, slippery and dangerous, as well as raising the issue of dog mess in the street, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would respond thanking her for highlighting the issues and advise that these matters had been raised previously, were being looked into by the relevant section of the Council and were currently being monitored by the Community Council.

C. VAO: National Lottery Community Fund - Funding Information

Following consideration of correspondence from VAO, copies of which had been circulated, advising that the National Lottery Community Fund would be offering information sessions and one to one clinics for community members and organisations seeking grant funding for existing on new projects on 22-24 March 2023, it was:

Resolved that K Bevan would forward the information to R Merriman to upload on the StromnessOrkney Facebook page.

D. Emergency Services – Vehicular Access through Stromness

Following an update from C Omand, Watch Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, regarding the difficulties faced by the Fire Service when responding to emergency call outs and were unable to get the fire engine through the street due to poorly parked cars, cars parked on blind corners or cars that were parked in areas that were not designated for parking.

He cited one incident when the fire service had been responding to a call out and had come down Hellihole Road, which was the quickest way to the incident, only to be unable to get the fire engine through and had to turn around, go back up Hellihole Road and proceed to the incident another way – which wasted valuable time. He went on to say that this issue was not only affecting the Fire Service but also the Ambulance Service as ambulances were as wide as fire engines and had also had difficulty getting through the street. This issue was now affecting most areas of Stromness and had been getting steadily worse, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the Police raising the issues highlighted and requesting action.

E. SEPA 2023 Opinion Survey

Following consideration of correspondence received from SEPA, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the 2023 Opinion Survey which would help inform SEPA of work on regulation and flooding services, it was:

Resolved to note that responses to the survey were required by 17 March 2023.

F. West of Orkney Windfarm – Orkney Community Panel – Minutes

Following consideration of correspondence received from S Morrison, West of Orkney Windfarm, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the minutes of the Orkney Community Panel held on Monday, 23 January 2023.

G. Crofting Commission Area Representatives Recruitment 2023

Following consideration of correspondence received from K MacRae, Crofting Development Officer, copies of which had been circulated, regarding recruitment of volunteers from within the Crofting Counties to apply to come a Crofting Commission Area Representative, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

H. Memorial Benches

1. T Alexander

Following consideration of correspondence received from T Alexander, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the possibility of dedicating a bench to her mother, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would respond to T Alexander giving details of benches, plaques, costs and suggesting the footpath out to Copelands Dock as a potential site for the bench.

2. Kimmet Family

Following an update from Councillor G Bevan regarding the Kimmet family who would like to dedicate a bench, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that Councillor Bevan would liaise with W Mackay regarding details of benches and plaques, together with costs and would then respond to the Kimmet family.

C Omand and the Community Council Liaison Officer left the meeting at this point.

I. Funding for Coronation Events

Following consideration of correspondence received from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, regarding funding for Coronation Events, it was:

Resolved to note that an application to the National Lottery Awards for All Scotland Fund had been submitted but, in the meantime, individual community councils may wish to provide donations from either their general fund or use CCGS and the groups can claim back on receipt.

7. Consultations

Resolved to note that no consultations had been received.

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 various potholes issues had recently been reported.
2. That the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities would raise the concerns regarding the state of the road up to the Reservoir and report back to the Community Council.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

Following an update from the Stromness Community Business Forum, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Annual General Meeting for Stromness Community Business Forum had been postponed and would be held on Tuesday, 14 March.
2. To note concerns raised by local businesses regarding the Deposit Return Scheme and had been working together with representatives from the Economic Development Section on Orkney's response.
3. To note that J Park had attended the Scottish Community Tourism Roadshow on Friday, 10 March which had been very interesting and would circulate the presentation slides via the Clerk for members information.

C. Stromness Development Trust

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

Resolved:

1. To note that M Morrison had pulled together plans for getting sail trainees on board and had managed to get at least two tall ships to call into Stromness.
2. To note that Stromness Development Trust were working closely with Stromness Shopping Week Committee and Stromness Business Forum regarding the Tall Ships 2023 event.
3. To note that the consultation event regarding the community centre, where the public could raise any concerns they had regarding the proposed development, had been cancelled due to weather but it was hoped that it would take place the following week.
4. To note the concerns raised by a member that the local authority appeared keen to relinquish their responsibilities for the Community Centre onto the Trust.

10. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 2 March 2023, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £8,485.46.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 2 March 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 2 March 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 2 March 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 2 March 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. Glaitness Primary School – Application for Stromness Pupil

Following consideration of correspondence received from Glaitness Primary School, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of a Stromness resident attending a P7 Nethybridge Residential trip, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given towards a Stromness resident attending the Nethybridge Residential trip.

B. 40th Anniversary Orkney Folk Festival

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Orkney Folk Festival Committee, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards internal transport costs for the 40th Anniversary Orkney Folk Festival 2023, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £750 be given towards the internal transport costs for the 40th Anniversary Orkney Folk Festival 2023, subject to Community Council Grant Scheme being agreed.

C. Orkney Amateur Swimming Club

1. ND Age Group – Round 1 – Aberdeen – February 2023

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance

towards three Stromness swimmers attending the ND Age Group – Round 1 in Aberdeen on 4 to 5 February 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 per swimmer, totalling £39, be given.

2. ND Age Group – Round 2 – Aberdeen – March 2023

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards one Stromness swimmer attending the ND Age Group – Round 2 in Aberdeen on 4 to 5 March 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 be given.

3. Pentland Pentaqua – Wick – 26 March 2023

K Bevan declared an interest in this part of this item and, although did not leave the meeting, did not take part in any discussion thereof.

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards 11 swimmers attending the Pentland Pentaqua in Wick on 26 March 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 per swimmer, totalling £143, be given.

D. G MacLeod – Just Dance – Portugal

Following consideration of correspondence received from G MacLeod, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards her representing Scotland at the Dance World Cup in Portugal in July 2023, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 be given.

E. K Wood – Horse Trials

Following consideration of correspondence received from K Wood, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards her attending horse trials, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should respond to K Wood attaching the Application for Financial Assistance form, advising her that the age limit for travel assistance was 18 but she should fill in and return the form so members could consider her application as there may be other funding available.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. GMB Memorial Garden – Volunteers to Tidy Garden for 2023

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Councillor G Bevan had volunteered to cut the grass this year at the GMB Memorial Garden.
2. That the Chair would liaise with J Mowat to ascertain what required to be done.

B. Dog Mess in Stromness

A member raised concern regarding the amount of dog mess along the Point of Ness, Tender Tables, Netherton Road and Gun Viewpoint, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant department highlighting the concerns and requesting more dog poo bins at these locations, especially halfway up the Netherton Road and the Gun Viewpoint.

C. Tall Ships 2023

Following queries from a member, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the query regarding additional benches to be placed at the Pier Head for the duration of the Tall Ships 2023 event had been dealt with at paragraph 5f above.
2. To note that should there be a need to operate a park and ride area, if the area concerned had items belonging to members of the public a Notice would require to be placed in the press in plenty of time requesting removal of the items to clear the site.

D. Litter Bins/Lighting – Reported but not being Actioned

A member raised concern regarding reporting litter bins or faulty lighting, only to be told it was another department's responsibility and no-one was taking responsibility or actioning the request. This applied particularly to bins at the Squash Court which had been reported as urgently needing emptied and nothing had been done, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities would investigate the issue of the bin at the Squash Court.
2. That the Clerk would raise the concerns with the relevant sections of the Council.

E. Old Coplands Dock – Pillar Reinstatement

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant department requesting an update for the pillar reinstatement.

F. Vandalism

A member raised concern regarding the increase in vandalism recently at various points around Stromness including the gates at Warebeth Cemetery, the wall at the

all-weather football pitch, the seat at the War Memorial, as well as the ongoing issue of the wall between Coplands Road houses and Hamnavoe which was getting steadily worse, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to monitor the situation.

G. Public Benches owned by OIC

Resolved to note that this item had been discussed at paragraph 4f above.

H. Update on Islands Deal

Following a query from Councillor J Stockan regarding an update on the Islands Deal, it was:

Resolved to note that it was hoped that the Programme Manager, Islands Deal, would be able to join the next meeting to give members an update.

I. Beach Clean

A member queried whether there was any update on a Bag the Bruck for this year, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would make enquiries.

13. 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, 15 May 2023 at 19:00.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:00.