

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the John Rae Room, Warehouse Buildings, Stromness, on Tuesday, 23 August 2022 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, K Bevan, D Fischler, W Mackay, J Park and C Sinclair.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- R MacKay, Head of Planning and Community Protection (via Teams).
- J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- 1 member of the Press.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that an apology for absence had been received from V Anderson.

2. Election of Office Bearers

A. Appointment of Chair

Resolved that P McLaughlin was duly appointed as Chair of Stromness Community Council.

B. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved that K Bevan was duly appointed as Vice Chair of Stromness Community Council.

C. Appointment of Planning Representative

Resolved that C Sinclair was duly appointed as Planning Representative of Stromness Community Council.

D. Appointment of MARS Representative

Resolved to note that the MARS Representative was no longer an official office bearer position and as such, rather than appoint one person to take on the role, as had been done previously, the MARS updates should be kept on the agenda where all members could update rather than one specific representative.

3. Adoption of Constitution

Following consideration of the Constitution for Stromness Community Council, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Constitution for Stromness Community Council be approved.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2022 were approved, being proposed by K Bevan and seconded by W Mackay.

5. Matters Arising

A. Welcome to Stromness Sign

Resolved to note that there was no update at this stage, but K Bevan would report back to the next meeting.

B. Post Box on Hillside Road

Following consideration of a letter dated 28 April 2022 from Michael Hogg, Senior Public Affairs Manager, Royal Mail, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the letter from Royal Mail dated 28 April 2022 cited the delay with installing the post box on Hillside Road was due to no response being received from the Council to approve a works licence.

2. To note that the Community Liaison Officer confirmed that in May 2022, Democratic Services had checked with the Roads team as to what the delay was and were advised that the proposed location was in the remit of the Education, Leisure and Housing Service who subsequently confirmed that the required Agreement had been signed by Legal Services and sent back to Royal Mail.

3. To note that members felt that it was unacceptable that the Post Box was still not in place since it was now a year since it had been removed.

4. That the Community Liaison Officer should contact Education, Leisure and Housing Services to get a copy of the letter that had been sent back to Royal Mail enclosing the Agreement and once received, the Chair would then write to Michael Hogg, Senior Public Affairs Manager, Royal Mail Headquarters, with the above information requesting a response.

C. ATM in Stromness

Following an update from J Park, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that J Park, P McLaughlin and Councillor J Stockan had met with Mark Pauley, Link Development Management, regarding the possible siting of an ATM machine in Stromness.

2. To note that, following consideration of various options, the Mark Pauley had recently confirmed that the ATM would be sited opposite Wishart's Shop where the BT phone kiosks were situated.

3. To note that Mark Pauley had been made aware of how many times the ATM at Stromness Co-op was out of order and confirmed that that ATM was going to be replaced shortly.

4. That the Head of Planning and Community Protection would check to see if a planning application had been received for the siting of an ATM in Stromness and report back to Stromness Community Council.

D. GMB Garden

Following an update from the Chair and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the GMB Art Legacy Artwork was now in place.

2. To note that the Chair had attended the opening ceremony to mark the occasion.

E. Jubilee Celebrations

The Chair updated members that the jubilee celebrations had gone well and had been very successful with various events taking place, such as planting a tree at Hamnavoe House to mark the occasion, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Stage Canopy

Following discussion regarding the stage canopy, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that erecting the stage canopy at Shopping Week had been well attended by volunteers which meant it had been erected easier to erect than previously.
2. To note that the wording on the Stage Area Booking Form should be amended slightly to give more leeway, in negotiation with Stromness Community Council, rather than stating that the canopy should not be erected more than 2 days prior to the event.

Councillor J Stockan joined the meeting at this point.

6. Correspondence

A. Thesis Research – Request for Assistance

Following consideration of correspondence received from the E Thomson requesting assistance with her thesis research in “The National Plan for The Scottish Islands: A New Beginning for Empowerment and Engagement in Island Communities, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would respond with K Bevan’s details who was happy to assist.

B. Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm – Consent Application

Following consideration of correspondence received from Copenhagen Offshore Partners, copies of which had been circulated, querying whether any hard copies of any of the Environmental Impact Assessments were required, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Waterworks – Potential Sale

Following consideration of correspondence received from J Taylor, regarding information received regarding the potential sale of Stromness Waterworks, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that Stromness Community Council would monitor the situation meantime.

D. Crown Estate Scotland's Sustainable Communities Fund

Following consideration of correspondence received from West of Orkney Windfarm, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the Crown Estate Scotland's Sustainable Communities Fund, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that K Bevan would forward the information to R Merriman, Stromness Development Trust, to see if the Crown Estate Scotland's Sustainable Communities Fund was funding that could be utilised.

E. Compliance with Publicity for LEADER Funded Project

Following consideration of correspondence received from A Barclay, Orkney Islands Council, regarding project websites funded in the 2014-2020 LEADER programme not being fully compliant with grant conditions, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. OIC Neighbourhood Service and Infrastructure

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the new management structure of the section, as well as outlining plans for the attendance of one of the four management team at community council meetings, it was:

Resolved to note that the information provided.

G. ORIC 2 – Outline Business Case

K Bevan referred to the correspondence received, and previously circulated to members, from J McGlynn, Executive Manager, ORIC, regarding the 'ORIC 2' Outline Business Case for the Islands Growth Deal confirming that it had been approved by UK and Scottish Governments and funding had been awarded by ORIC's partner organisations HIE and OIC to continue with development of the Full Business Case.

K Bevan thought that the local community did not know what the Islands Growth Deal meant for Stromness and felt it would be useful if the newly appointed Programme Manager, Islands Deal, was invited to the next meeting, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would invite the Programme Manager, Islands Deal, to the meeting to be held on Monday, 3 October.

7. Consultation - West of Orkney Windfarm – Orkney Community Panel

Following consideration of correspondence received from West of Orkney Windfarm, regarding a Community Engagement Plan which outlined the community engagement programme for the proposed project, copies of which had been circulated, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would respond, by the extended deadline of 26 August 2022, to West of Orkney Windfarm highlighting that the island of Suleskerry was in the Parish of Stromness and should, therefore, be taken into account when funding for community project was considered.

8. Publications

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

9. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS

W Mackay confirmed that there had been various ongoing issues that had been dealt with, such as the sight line at the bottom of the Howe Road but highlighted that potholes were still an issue.

He raised concern regarding the scrap operation at Copland's Dock and referred to the email he had circulated earlier which included photos of the damage to the pillars and walls, where he hoped action would be taken shortly to repair the damage.

Responding to a query regarding "listed building" status, the Head of Planning and Community Protection, was unsure of the status but confirmed he would check. Having checked online, C Sinclair confirmed that the area was not on the listed building list.

The Chair raised that land at Copland's Drive opposite where the new houses had been built was becoming a dumping ground for soil/rubble and was being used as a "flytipping" area. As such the area was becoming unsightly. Following further discussion, it was:

Resolved to monitor the situation at Copland's Dock and the land at Copland's Drive.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

The Stromness Community Business Forum representative updated members that the Shop Along the Street had been a great success again this year with over £600 worth of prizes and 25 business signed up. This year the prize window was in J and S Allan's and the winner was L Thorpe, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Development Trust

The Stromness Development Trust representative updated R Merriman was involved in procuring soft furnishings for the Community Centre. There was also a Stromness Community Climate café being arranged for Saturday, 3 September which would be part of the Orkney Climate Festival. He confirmed that R Merriman would be issuing more details on this shortly. He went on to say that the next Board Meeting of the Trust was on 12 September, and all were welcome, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

10. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 15 August 2022, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £14,174.46.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 15 August 2022, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £1,557.72 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.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme 2022/2023

Following consideration of the 2021/2022 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 15 August 2022, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £2,015.45.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 15 August 2022, 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 15 August 2022, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £1,940.03.

11. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Islands Sea Angling Association SCIO

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Islands Sea Angling Association SCIO, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of repairing the steering mechanism and rudder bearings, replacing part of the exhaust below deck, crane use, paint and antifouling, replacing anodes, hire of life-raft and harbour dues, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that, to enable the Community Council to reach their decision, the Clerk would contact Orkney Islands Sea Angling Association SCIO to ascertain if the Association had:

1. Approached the local authority regarding additional funding/assistance with Harbour dues.
2. Approached other community councils seeking financial assistance.
3. Examined other avenues of funding such as COVID-19 funding.

B. A and Z Adamson

Following consideration of two applications for assistance towards football trips from A Adamson and one application from Z Adamson for assistance towards a gymnastics event, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 for each application be given, totalling £26 for A Adamson and £13 for Z Adamson.

C. Incredible Edible Stromness through Stromness Community Garden

Following consideration of an application for financial assistance from Incredible Edible Stromness through Stromness Community Garden for assistance towards funding two planters in the town to demonstrate and raise awareness of the possibility of growing food in small places, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that, to enable the Community Council to reach a decision, the Clerk should contact Incredible Edible Stromness inviting them to the next meeting to give a short presentation giving more detail on the project.

D. Eventide Club

Following consideration of an application for financial assistance received from Stromness and Parish Eventide Club towards the 70th anniversary social meal for club attendees and volunteers, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £650 be approved to Stromness and Parish Eventide Club towards costs associated with the 70th anniversary social meal for club attendees and volunteers, and that an application should be made to the Council for assistance through the Community Council Grant Scheme on a project cost of £650.

E. Fireworks for Stromness Bonfire Night

Resolved that a grant of £1,300 be approved towards purchasing fireworks for Stromness Bonfire Night, and that an application should be made to the Council for assistance through the Community Council Grant Scheme of a project cost of £1,300.

F. Applications Granted between 20 April and 30 June 2022

Resolved to note that the following applications for financial assistance had been granted between 20 April and 30 June 2022:

- Renewing Annual VAO Membership - £13 (General Fund).
- Platinum Jubilee Bunting etc - £225.75 (General Fund from Jubilee Grant).
- OASC – Thurso Mini Meet - £156.00 (General Fund).
- OASC – North Atlantic Challenge, Shetland - £52.00 (General Fund).
- OASC – Midsummer Meet - £52.00 (General Fund).
- OASC – Scottish National Open - £26.00 (General Fund).
- Stromness Shopping Week – Fireworks - £1400 (CCGS).
- Greener Orkney – Freezer for Stromness Premises – £333.75 (Seed Corn).

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. Housing and the Local Development Plan

K Bevan raised that the lack of housing in Stromness which was having a wider impact on the community. He highlighted that the Local Development Plan expires in 2022 and queried when the new Local Development Plan would be out for consultation.

The Head of Planning and Community Protection confirmed that the planning system in Scotland was currently undergoing a complete overhaul. Once finalised, he would be in more of a position to give a timescale as to when the new Local Development Plan would be going out for consultation. He confirmed that the new Development Plan had been held up due to the new planning regulations but it that he would keep the community council in the loop when it would be ready for consultation.

Councillor J Stockan confirmed that it would be good to get community councils involved at an early stage.

K Bevan stated that it would be good to ascertain OHAL and the Council's plans for building in Stromness and that this item should be on a future agenda where representatives from both the Council and OHAL were invited.

The Head of Planning and Community Protection agreed that it would be good to have a round-the-table discussion and would liaise on the best way forward for the presentation with the Community Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Stromness Community Centre

K Bevan raised that talks with the Council regarding Stromness Community Centre had so far been unsuccessful.

The Head of Planning and Community Protection confirmed that he would raise the matter with the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities and get him to provide an update.

W Mackay requested clarification on who was responsible for the Postman Pat Playpark, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Head of Planning would raise the matter of Stromness Community Centre with the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
2. That the Clerk would ask Democratic Services to contact the relevant department seeking clarification on who was responsible for the Postman Park Playpark.

C. Weeding and Cleaning of Paths and Closes

A member raised how treacherous paths such as Boys Lane, Manse Lane and Leslie's Close were due to moss/weed growth and stated that there was clearly a lot of work needing to be done to maintain these paths. She queried whether a Community Day Approach was needed to address these areas.

W Mackay raised that the issue was with the wash that was used to clean the areas now as chemicals were not permitted.

C Sinclair raised the issue of overhanging branches also causing issues and queried whether there was an Order that could be imposed.

Councillor Stockan confirmed that the cutting back of branches was the owner's responsibility. The Council could cut back shrub branches and then charge the owners but there was the problem of limited manpower to do this. Regarding the paths he stated that the tanker with the pressure washer had been in Stromness a couple of years ago, but he had not seen it around so much this year.

K Bevan raised that perhaps the media present at the meeting would publicise the issue of overhanging branches being the responsibility of the owners. The issues with the paths and walkways should be reported through the Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Old Stromness Primary School Playground

A member raised that she had been in contact with John McGlynn of ORIC regarding the possibility of using the Old Stromness Primary School Playground for some kind of temporary community space. The use would be temporary as the area was earmarked for developing accommodation in the future.

She was aware that some groups had already approached ORIC regarding that area and queried whether going through Stromness Community Development Trust would be the best way to get all interested community groups together to put together a proposal for ORIC, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Parking on Victoria Street

A member raised concerns regarding the number of cars that were parked throughout Victoria Street, in some cases on a permanent basis, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to raise the issue of parking in Victoria Street with the Police.

F. Costs Associated with erecting Bunting

A member has been approached by the Shopping Week Committee querying how much the Council charged for putting up flags for events such as Shopping Week – as the invoice they had received was a lump sum rather than individualised.

Councillor G Bevan stated that an overview had recently been made of all civic events so finding out the costs should not be too difficult. Having the civic events calendar would also mean less chance of events being missed in the future.

The member went on to query whether all associations got charged for putting up flags. Councillor Stockan said the likes of BID in Kirkwall and the Association in Finstown were responsible for erecting flags for their own events, and following further discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would ask Democratic Services to contact the relevant department regarding the cost of erecting flags.

G. Stromness Church

A member raised concern regarding the recent announcement that Stromness Church of Scotland may be going on the open market for sale, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that C Sinclair would contact both Stromness Church of Scotland members and Stromness Community Development Trust to explore possibilities for a way forward.

H. Garage at the Town House

The Chair raised the issue of the garage door at the Town House where the stage canopy is stored and stated that the door was about to give way. Councillor J Stockan thought the issue with the garage door had already been raised with the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Head of Planning and Community Protection would liaise with the Corporate Director regarding the situation and report back.

I. Benches

A member had recently been approached by a joiner who was willing to work on the benches at the pier head which were in needing attention, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held on Monday, 3 October 2022, commencing at 19:00.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:06.