

Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwick Community Council held in the Milestone Kirk and via Teams on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 19:30

Present:

Mr David Hamilton, Mr Colin Kirkness, Mr Graham Brown, Mrs Evelyn Grant and Mrs Karen Ritch.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Jean Stevenson.
- Councillor Owen Tierney.
- Councillor Duncan Tullock.
- Mr Tom Hadley, Community Engagement Manager, Orkney Native Wildlife Project.
- Mrs Jenny McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer (via Teams).
- Ms Jayne Saville-Smith, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

Order of Business

1. Orkney Native Wildlife Project Update.....	2
2. Apologies.....	2
3. Adoption of Minute.....	2
4. Kirkyard and Strathborg Grass Cutting Tenders 2024	2
5. Matters Arising.....	3
6. Correspondence	6
7. Consultations	7
8. Financial Statements	8
9. Applications for Financial Assistance.....	8
10. Publications	9
11. Any Other Competent Business.....	9
12. Date of Next Meeting	10
13. Conclusion of Meeting	10

1. Orkney Native Wildlife Project Update

The Community Engagement Manager, Orkney Native Wildlife Project, gave an update on the stoat eradication program in the Harray and Sandwick parishes, and throughout Orkney. He explained that the program was now in the “knock down” phase, where responses were made to individual sightings, as the population of stoats was now at such low levels to enable this.

- Stoats caught in Harray – 249 with 466 traps deployed.
- Stoats caught in Sandwick – 328 with 477 traps deployed.
- Total stoats caught 5,876.
- Total traps deployed 7,932.
- 105 volunteers currently active.
- So far, volunteers have given 16,415 hours.

The Community Engagement Manager completed his talk, and answered a number of questions, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

The Community Engagement Manager left the meeting at this point.

2. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Ms Helen Woodsford-Dean and Mr Gary Sinclair, and Councillor Rachael King.

3. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the meeting held on 22 November 2023 was approved, being proposed by Mr Colin Kirkness and seconded by Mr Graham Brown.

4. Kirkyard and Strathborg Grass Cutting Tenders 2024

The Clerk provided information on the tenders received for the grass cutting at Harray Kirkyard, Sandwick Kirkyard and the Strathborg Seating Area, from two different contractors. Following discussion, clarification was being sought, that a three-year contract would not be impacted by future Council budget cuts, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To await confirmation that any future budget cuts will not impact on an awarded three-year contract.

B. To award the contract for Harray Kirkyard, Sandwick Kirkyard and Strathborg Seating Area to Mr M Brass.

C. That the Clerk would write to all contractors confirming the outcome of the tender exercise.

5. Matters Arising

A. Dounby Market Green Development

The Community Council Liaison Officer informed members that the Team Manager, Sustainable Tourism, wished to meet members from Harray and Sandwick and Birsay Community Councils on Wednesday, 31 January at 19:00 to discuss the development and address any questions before final submission is made, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would inform members of Birsay Community Council of the meeting and secure a meeting room.

B. Harray Hall Carpark

The Community Council Liaison Officer read out an email from the Service Manager (Roads and Grounds) that, each individual is responsible for their own actions, however if they chose to claim against the Council for injury that they believed was a result of the car park surface, the matter would be passed to the Councils insurers to determine liability, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

C. War Memorial, St Peter's Kirkyard

The Clerk had previously circulated the costs of repair to members and stated that funding had been applied for. Members agreed a decision can be made once a decision had been received on the funding applications, and it was:

Resolved to await the outcome of funding applications.

D. Blackening Vandalism

Members were informed that Building Cleaning will put posters up in the toilets, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

E. Trees for Strathborg

Contact had been made with the Orkney Woodland Project, and a site visit made. Trees for the area had been ordered and were due to arrive in February, with planting to be arranged for March. Members agreed to inform the Clerk prior to planting, so that an advert could be circulated for help with the area clear up and planting, and it was:

Resolved that members would inform the Clerk prior to the tree planting, so that an advert could be circulated for help with the area clear up and planting.

F. Play Park Fund

The Clerk had forwarded information to Dounby School to see if they had an interest in the fund, but no reply had been received. Members considered the area behind Market Green as a possibility for future Dounby Plan developments. A query was raised if permission needs to be sought to develop this area, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, will enquire as to whether permission needs to be sought to reinstate the playpark behind Market Green.

G. Bus Shelter - Dounby

Following the email, which had previously been circulated to members stating that this was not a formal bus stop, the Roads Department had followed this up with a further email suggesting that, should a designated bus stop be placed in the parking section, with yellow Bus Stop markings, it would result in the loss of 5/6 parking spaces, and that this may not be well received with residents. Therefore, a suggestion was made to mark the area in front of the bus shelter with "Keep Clear", thus only resulting with the loss of one car parking space, and with an aim of keeping a clear walkway from the shelter to the bus. Members also discussed the need to include the bus stop sign on the existing signpost, and it was:

Resolved to, via business letter, request that "KEEP CLEAR" be marked on the road directly in front of the bus shelter, and that the existing signage have the bus stop logo reinstated.

H. Dog Mess Signs

Examples of possible signs had previously been emailed to members, with a view to having these distributed around key points in Dounby. Members were happy for these signs to be used. It was also advised that dog bags were available in Dounby Pharmacy should members of the public need to obtain some. Mrs Karen Ritch stated that she would post one of the signs on the Community Council Facebook page, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk, via business letter, would request for signs to be put up around the Dounby area.
2. That the Clerk would forward the pdf attachment to Mrs Karen Ritch to post on the Community Council's Facebook page.

I. Bins at St Michael's Cemetery

A request had been submitted for an additional bin, but members were informed that it was unlikely that this would happen, and that the existing bin will be moved to the new site, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

J. Dropped Kerbs

It was advised that the Urban Design Planner will make a note to include this in the Dounby Plan. Members discussed the possibility of contacting Morven Brooks, VAO, to help with the Ian Findlay Path Fund, and inviting her to the next Community Council meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Clerk would contact Morven Brooks, VAO, to invite her to the next meeting and discuss the possibility of guidance with the Ian Findlay Path Fund.

K. Verge Cutting

Councillor Owen Tierney reported that he had enquired as to why Dounby did not have verges cut within the 30mph speed limit, and that this was due to lack of budget. He offered to make an additional enquiry, as there was little distance involved to make a significant budget impact, and it was:

Resolved that Councillor Owen Tierney would investigate the matter further, and report back at the next meeting.

L. Roads Repair Policy

Following a request for the Roads Repair Policy to be circulated amongst members, this had been emailed to all members, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of above.

M. Road Repair – Netherstoke

An email had previously been circulated to members from a member of the public concerning an area of footpath that was in a state of disrepair. Following discussion, members agreed that a donation had previously been given to the landowner for repairs, and that no further help would be available. The Clerk will inform the member of the public of the decision, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk will inform the member of the public of the decision.

N. Remembrance Bench

An email had previously been circulated to members from the member of public with an alternative location to the one suggested originally. The land suggested was not council owned, so land permission needed to be sought. Mrs Karen Ritch offered to try and find the landowner and report back, and it was:

Resolved that Mrs Karen Ritch would try and locate the landowner of the proposed site and report back at the next meeting.

O. Quilco Path

Following on from previous discussions concerning a pathway to the Quilco area, the Clerk advised that she had contacted Sustrans, and received a response from the Senior Project Officer with a possible funding avenue from the Ian Findlay Path Fund. Members thought this was an ideal follow on from the Dounby Plan. Contact details of the Manager of the fund was included, and the Clerk offered to try and arrange a Teams meeting to discuss the project further at the next Community Council meeting, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the Manager of the Ian Findlay Path Fund, with the hope that she would be able to discuss the matter further via Teams, at the next meeting.

6. Correspondence

A. Letter of Thanks

Members were advised that letters of thanks had been received from Harray Young Farmers following their successful trip away at the Junior Speechmaking Event in Edinburgh, and from Harray SWI for a donation towards the children's Halloween Party, and it was:

Resolved to note the thank you letters.

B. Business Gateway Orkney

Members had previously been forwarded correspondence advertising a workshop event in the area for people who were thinking about starting up a new business, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. CYCJ's Annual Stakeholder Survey

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, as they were keen to hear from community councils on what they think in relation to children, young people and crime in their local area, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. R100 Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme

Correspondence had been forwarded via email regarding the R100 Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Celebrating Placemaking Efforts in Scotland

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from the Scottish Civic Trust to raise awareness of their national My Place Awards, which celebrate projects and people that work to improve places and communities in Scotland, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund – Round 3

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from VAO regarding a grant fund aimed at supporting community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing within the adult population, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. New Scottish Islands Passport Feature

Correspondence had been forwarded via email providing a brief update and what's happening next year, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Community Councils Webinar – Open University Scotland

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from OU Scotland for a webinar providing an overview of the portal and how it can be used to support skills development within CCs. The aim was to provide a more general overview of the work of the OU in communities across Scotland and share information about funding opportunities that might be of interest to CCs and the people in their local areas, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Additional Tranche of CDF Funding

Correspondence had been forwarded via email informing members of a top up to each community council's CDF funding, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

7. Consultations

A. Local Transport Strategy Consultation

Members had previously been sent information from Orkney Islands Council, who were calling for comment on its new Local Transport Strategy, which sets out ambitions for an efficient, accessible local network which contributes to net zero as well as supporting the economy and wellbeing of our island, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. West of Orkney Windfarm – Section 36 and Marine Licences Application

Information in relation to an application submitted from Offshore Wind Power Limited to the Scottish Ministers, in accordance with legislation, to construct and operate the West of Orkney Windfarm and associated transmission infrastructure located west of Hoy, Orkney had previously been emailed to members, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Local Development Plan Scheme

Members had previously been sent information concerning a consultation which is the start of the review of Orkney's Local Development Plan. It was agreed that members should discuss and complete this at the Dounby Plan meeting on 31 January, and then the Clerk would then submit the response, and it was:

Resolved that, after the meeting on 31 January, the Clerk will respond with the member's views.

D. Verge Maintenance Plan 2024

Members had previously been sent information concerning the proposed Verge Maintenance Plan for this summer 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

8. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the general fund statement as at 8 January 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £14,069.21.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 08 January 2024, 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 £0.03 and £743.00 respectively.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 8 January 2024, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the total remaining available for allocation was £2,892.16.

D. Seed Corn Fund

Members had previously been sent copies of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 8 January 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that £0.00 remained available for approval to projects.

9. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Eve Wood, Scottish National Winter Meet, Edinburgh

Following consideration of correspondence received from Eve Wood, requesting financial assistance towards a trip to Edinburgh for the Scottish National Winter Meet, it was:

Resolved that the request be declined, due to Eve Wood receiving the maximum amount of donations in the financial year.

B. Nathan Smith, Aberdeen, North District Age Group Championships

Following consideration of correspondence received from Nathan Smith requesting financial assistance towards a trip to the North District Age Group Championships in Aberdeen on 10/11 February and 2/3 March 2024, it was:

Resolved that a general fund donation of £40 be given to Nathan Smith for the trip on 10/11 February, but further applications be denied, as the maximum has been reached in this financial year.

10. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – November, December 2023.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – December 2023.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Harray Kirkyard - Boxes

Members had been forwarded an email notifying them of a price increase of site visits. After discussion, it was decided to go ahead with one more visit, and investigate alternative sources, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, would request one more site visit to be made.

B. Christmas Lights

The Chair informed members that the lights were due to be dismantled, and the issue of storage was raised again. Insurance needed to be arranged for a value of £20,000. Lights were due to be delivered to the Chair. Two of the larger lights had broken due to strong winds, even though they were bought on the premise that they could withstand the winds in Orkney. The Chair suggested that replacements were sought, as long as they weren't of the same size (6 x 9ft) for 8mt poles. The Chair also wished to request 3 boxes of lights for the tree, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, would request:

1. Insurance to be arranged for light storage for a value of £20,000.
2. Replacement lights to be ordered – but not 6 x 9ft.
3. Three boxes of tree lights to be ordered in readiness for next year.

C. Safety and Resilience

The Chair read out an email he had received from the Safety and Resilience Service Manager requesting feedback on the recent snow and wind weather conditions. In order to support communities, they wished to hear how they can improve resilience plans for each area. Members discussed various issues, and agreed that, in general,

communication had improved greatly, but there was a lack of clarity when it came to school closures and bus transport, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would report the feedback to the Safety and Resilience Service Manager.

D. Drain Issues – Harray

The Chair informed members that there was an issue with flooding from the Harray Hall towards the old post office. This was also noticeable halfway across the football pitch. It would appear that the drains need to be looked at, and it was:

Resolved that Councillor Owen Tierney would investigate the matter and report back to members.

E. Grit Bin – Sandwich Hall

A member stated that the grit bin at Sandwich Hall had still not been delivered, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk, via business letter, would request that the bin be delivered as soon as possible.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of dates for the next meeting, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Harray and Sandwich Community Council would be held on Wednesday, 13 March 2024 commencing at 19:30 in Milestone Community Church.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:37.