

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 16 November 2020 at 19:30

Present:

P McLaughlin, K Bevan, G Deans, K Donald, W Mackay, J Mowat and J Park.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R Crichton.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- Councillor M Thomson.
- Darren Richardson, Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects, Orkney Islands Council (for Items 1 to 3).
- Lorna Richardson, Strategic Policy and Projects Manager, Orkney Islands Council (for Items 1 to 3).
- Jonathan Walters, Environmental Services Facilities Manager, Orkney Islands Council (for Item 3).
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- 2 members of the Press.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. Apology

Resolved to note that an apology for absence had been intimated on behalf of E Knight.

2. Police Matters

Resolved to note that there was no police representative present at the meeting.

3. Garson Amenity Site

The Chair welcomed the three OIC representatives who had joined the meeting to discuss concerns raised by members regarding Garson Amenity Site.

The Chair referred to the correspondence sent to the Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects from the Vice Chair and raised the issue of the difference in opening times between Hatston and Garson.

The Strategic Policy and Projects Manager explained that due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, distancing had had an enormous impact on the operational side of work. She went on to say that at the beginning of lockdown all sites were closed. From 2 June 2020, Garson and Hatston amenity sites opened with ongoing additional safety measures having to be put in place. Key issues faced had been issues with managing/enforcing distancing on site with the workforce having to work in a different manner. She continued that the reason that Garson Amenity site opened an hour later was due to skips being emptied first thing in the morning. The drivers reported to work at the Kirkwall depot, dealt with the skips at the Hatston site first before coming through to Stromness to change over the skips at Stromness. Rather than open and then have to close for a skip changeover, the site opened at 10:00 to give them time to do this.

The Chair then raised the issue of Garson Amenity Site closing early on several occasions on Saturdays due to the skips being full.

The Strategic Policy and Projects Manager acknowledged that they were aware of the higher volume of usage on Saturdays but were dependent on the availability of drivers. She explained that onsite the staff monitored the skip levels, then placed a call to Kirkwall depot to request the skips to be turned around – which was not a very precise science and was also dependent on the availability of drivers.

Councillor R Crichton said that he understood that the problems at Garson Amenity site had been exacerbated by the fact that it was felt by some that it was quicker to drive through to Garson Amenity site rather than wait in the queues to enter Hatston Amenity site. He went on to say that if this was an issue then this situation needed to be addressed.

The Strategic Policy and Projects Manager said that she had seen no evidence of that taking place but conceded that there were no controls in place at the moment to establish if that was happening. She continued that under normal circumstances there were five recycling centres open whereas at present there were just two. She felt that the situation may change with the St Margaret's Hope and Cursiter sites opening shortly thereby easing the strain.

A member suggested that as this was such a big topic, perhaps it would be an idea to set up a small sub-committee who could meet with the waste representatives on a regular basis.

The Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects said that the Council were reviewing many areas and ways to address the impact on the delivery of services and he appreciated the chance of local commentary towards solutions. It was good to get more facts but it should also be noted where it sits within the wider budget context.

Another member cited lack of communication as a major factor – especially with the recently introduced change in recycling kerbside collection. Another problem was the site closing with no notice which was especially frustrating if you had just loaded the car only to find the site closed. He also queried whether it was still necessary for two people to work on site.

The Strategic Policy and Projects Manager said that notices regarding waste collections went in The Orcadian as well as daily updates on social media, and customer services staff were kept informed, but she did understand that they were still missing some customers. Regarding two members of staff being on site, this was to remain as it was at this point but would be under review. She went on to say that channels such as meeting community councils can help to explain the challenges being faced by the service.

The Head of Infrastructure and Strategic Projects said that both he and the Strategic Policy and Projects Manager judged the impact on how well the service was getting on by how residents reacted. At the moment, compliments outweighed criticism. He continued that if residents did have any concerns regarding issues such as missed bins, early closure of sites etc. then they should contact the Council on 873535 to raise the concern.

With there being no further questions or comments, the Chair thanked the representatives for their attendance, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 5 October 2020 was approved, being proposed by K Bevan and seconded by J Park.

5. Matters Arising

A. Jack Renton – Proposed Plaque

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that the plaque had been delivered to the Clerk who would pass it to W Mackay and J Park for erecting on site.

B. Keith Allardyce Hobbs – Proposed Public Memorial

Following an update from J Park and W Mackay, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that J Park would contact D Stout and B Wilson regarding an inscription for the bench.
2. To note that the Clerk would liaise with W Mackay to source the cost of a plastic bench for the proposed public memorial for Keith Allardyce Hobbs.

C. Seahaven – Keith Allardyce Slides

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair had signed all necessary paperwork to donate the Seahaven Slide Collection by Keith Allardyce to Stromness Museum on a permanent basis.

D. Defibrillator

Following an update from G Deans, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Orkney Heart Support Group had been contacted and had recommended certain types of defibrillators and wall boxes.
2. To note that the cost of the defibrillator and wall box would be in the region of £1,500 to £1,800.
3. To note that G Deans had spoken to G Burton and M Byers regarding the possibility of mounting the defibrillator on an exterior wall at Stromness Swimming Pool.
4. To note that a quote had been requested from E Fraser, Finstown, a Council approved contractor, for the mounting and installation of the defibrillator and wall box.
5. To note that G Deans was yet to receive a quote for ongoing yearly maintenance costs.
6. To note that the donor had been updated of progress made.

E. Old Lifeboat Shed, Point of Ness

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that no response had been received from the letter sent to the Directors of Stromness Golf Club on 12 October 2020 regarding concerns raised about the safety of the Old Lifeboat Shed, Point of Ness.
2. To note that the Clerk would contact the Directors again.

F. Benches

Following an update from G Deans, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Community Justice, Planning, Performance and Information Officer had confirmed that his section were able to do maintenance work with the benches, providing Stromness Community Council provided the paint.
2. That W Mackay would create an up to date list of benches situated throughout Stromness that were the responsibility of Stromness Community Council and which were the responsibility of the Council.

G. Christmas Tree Lighting 2020

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that due to the ongoing pandemic, members agreed that no tree lighting ceremony would go ahead.

H. Orkney Fishermen's Society

Following consideration of correspondence received from the General Manager, Orkney Fishermen's Society, copies of which had been circulated, regarding concerns raised by members in connection with waste products, and it was:

Resolved to note the measures that Orkney Fishermen's Society were putting in place to rectify the issues.

6. Correspondence

A. Waste and Recycling Services

Following consideration of a briefing note received from Infrastructure and Strategic Projects, Orkney Islands Council, to update members on the delivery of waste collection services in the COVID-19 period, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the briefing note.

B. Festive Lighting

Following consideration of correspondence received from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that an initial review of existing street lighting columns and festive lighting/decorations had been completed by the Development and Infrastructure Section.

2. To note that a report regarding proposed changes to the decorations and future responsibilities will be presented to the Council's Development and Infrastructure Committee in Spring 2021.

7. Consultations

Resolved to note that no consultations had been received.

8. Publications

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

9. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS

The MARS representative updated members on the ongoing vandalism to the dyke along the footpath from the Pumping Station to Hamnavoe which was getting worse and confirmed that he would be reporting this again. He also raised concern regarding the fact that 17 parking spaces had been lost in a prime parking location. He understood that it would have been more cost effective to install all the electric car parking charging points at the same time but queried the need for so many at the present time as it was very rare to see more than two electric charging spaces being occupied at the same time. Following further discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the MARS representative would report the vandalism to the dyke along the footpath from the Pumping Station to Hamnavoe.
2. To note that the Clerk would contact the relevant department to enquire whether it would be possible to monitor the usage of the electric car spaces.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

Following an update from the Stromness Community Business Forum representative, it was:

Resolved to note that the Stromness Bonanza had been taken up by businesses that had not previously been involved.

C. Stromness Development Trust

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

Resolved:

1. To note that the Pop competition had gone ahead online.
2. To note that the Stromness Development Officer had been in touch with the Chair of Stromness Community Council regarding the new website.
3. To note that it was hoped that the Christmas Lights would be in place by mid-December.

4. To note that the Stromness Living Advent Calendar was due to begin on 1 December with a number of windows being revealed daily.
5. To note that the Yule Log 2020 event had been cancelled.
6. To note that an interpretation board regarding the Yule Log would be on display in Leviathan's window.
7. To note that alternative funding was being sourced for the Stromness Development Officer's post which was due to end on 28 February.
8. To note that plans were in hand by SDT for New Year fireworks.

D. Playpark Sub-committee

Following an update from the Playpark Sub-committee representative, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the works had to be completed by February 2021, but it was hoped that handover of the site would be by December 2020.
2. To note that the Play Inspector had reported rotten fence posts.
3. To note that the Playpark Sub-committee representative would report back where the responsibility for the fence posts lies.

10. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

After consideration of the General Finance statement as at 6 November 2020, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £7,581.22.

B. Donations Account

After consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 6 November 2020, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £4,906.62 of which:

- £82 revenue interest had been earned for the financial year 2019/20.
- £3,607.90 would be held to be released once the Christmas lights had been purchased for the town.
- £100 which had been donated from Stromness Drama Club towards purchasing a new flag but as the money was not ring-fenced if replacing the flag did not go ahead the money would be put towards another worthwhile community project.
- £1,050.72 to be solely used for the upkeep and maintenance of the stage.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2020/2021 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 6 November 2020, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £3,040.75.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 6 November 2020, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,824.04.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 6 November 2020, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £2,673.78.

11. Financial Request - Stromness Golf Club Juniors

J Park declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions thereof.

Following consideration of correspondence received from Stromness Golf Club, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £312 be given, being £13 each for the four Stromness junior golfers attending 6 trips to Royal Dornoch Golf Club Links Academy between November 2020 and March 2021.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. Welcome to Stromness sign

The Chair informed members that she had been contacted by K Holland who had the Welcome to Stromness sign in his possession and wondered if Stromness Community Council would like to take charge of it, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would investigate and report back to the next meeting.

B. Christmas Lights

A member highlighted that last year the Christmas Lights on the tree not coming on until 16:00 in the afternoon and queried whether it would be possible for the lights to come on all day on a Saturday and a Sunday, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant department highlighting this concern.

C. West Shore Path

A member highlighted that community council funds were looking healthy as there had been limited requests for support, and wondered whether some funds could go

to repair some of the path at the West Shore which had been well used during 2020. Councillor Stockan said such repairs used to be done via Land Management but was unsure whether this was still the case, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022

G Deans informed members that he had attended an online event on 6 October on Local Housing Strategy 2012-2022 where he was given the opportunity to feed into discussions regarding local housing. The wider strategy was also looked at with different housing styles similar to the Scandinavian model of co-housing being looked at, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Path – North End Road

The Chair reported that she was pleased that the trees that had been encasing the path at North End Road had been cleared. However, the undergrowth had not been removed making the path slippery and unsafe to walk on, and following further discussion, it was:

Resolved that K Donald would report the matter.

F. Wheelie Bin – Warebeth

A member raised that there was a problem with the lid of the big wheelie bin at Warebeth and now it could not close, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant department to request a replacement for the damaged wheelie bin.

G. Standing Water – Church Road to Sutherland's Chemist

A member raised that there was still an issue with standing water from the bottom of Church Road to outside Sutherland's Chemist, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant department for actioning.

H. GMB Garden

A member requested that a letter of thanks should be sent to L Adamson thanking him for his work he had done in the GMB Garden this year, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send L Adamson a letter of thanks.

I. Access for Local Emergency Services

Councillor R Crichton informed members that he had been approached regarding issues of getting the fire engine through various sections of Stromness due to parked cars. Councillor Crichton had contacted a roads official regarding this matter in the first instance and would be monitoring the situation. If other members saw no improvement, they should let him know. A member suggested that as there were

press at the meeting, perhaps they could highlight the issue. Another member said that vehicle obstruction was a police matter, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

13. Date of Next Meeting

That the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held on Monday, 25 January 2021, commencing at 19:00.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:17.