

Minute of the Meeting of Sanday Community Council held in Heilsa Fjold and via Teams on Thursday, 1 May 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Gary Nickells, Ute Clackson, Liam Holly (via Teams), Bruce Stuart, Elaine Snelson and Ken Snelson.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Stephen Clackson.
- Councillor Mellissa Thomson (via Teams).
- Gavin Barr, Interim Head of Planning and Community Protection.
- Susan Shearer, Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning.
- Ross Cunningham, Service Manager, Democratic Services and Communications (via Teams).
- Gail Speers, Island Link Officer (ILO)/Clerk.

- Two members of the public.

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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Island Link Officer opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She explained that the election of office bearers would take place by secret ballot, and explained the process, and it was:

Resolved to note that apologies had been received by Andrew Wilcox and Councillor Heather Woodbridge.

2. Election of Office Bearers

A. Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Gary Nickells be elected Chair of Sanday Community Council.

B. Vice Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Bruce Stuart be elected Vice Chair of Sanday Community Council.

C. Transport Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Ute Clackson be elected Transport Representative of Sanday Community Council.

D. Development Trust Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Gary Nickells be elected Sanday Development Trust Representative of Sanday Community Council.

E. Planning Representative

It was intimated that Ms G Speers be nominated for the role of Planning Representative, as this role was integrated into her role of Island Link Officer, it was

Resolved that Ms G Speers be elected Planning Representative of Sanday Community Council.

F. Health and Care Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Elaine Snelson be elected as Health and Care Representative of Sanday Community Council.

G. Communications Officer

It was intimated that Andrew Wilcox be nominated for the role of Communications Officer. There being no further nominations, it was:

Resolved that Andrew Wilcox was elected as Communications Officer of Sanday Community Council, subject to confirmation.

H. Resignation of Mr L Holly

Following a report from the ILO with regards to a message received by Liam Holly at the beginning of the meeting offering his resignation and further confirmation from the Chair, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Service Manager, Democratic Services and Communications offered his thanks to Liam Holly for his time in the role as a member of Sanday Community Council.
2. That the election for Liam Holly's replacement would be advertised in due course.

Liam Holly left the meeting at this point.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of Sanday Community Council held on 6 February 2025 was approved, being proposed by Bruce Stuart and seconded by Ken Snelson.

4. Discussion - Planning

The Interim Head of Planning and Community Protection and the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning were in attendance at the meeting and explained their roles within Orkney Islands Council. They then opened the floor to questions from members, and a discussion followed around planning. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

- A. To note that members explained that the main issues that they had come across was the length of time it took for planning applications to be processed. The standard application should take 8 weeks. The Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, asked members to collect the case numbers of applications that were still waiting for approval and to pass on this information to the Link Officer for her to forward on to the planning department.
- B. To note that members requested that the planning application regulations and process for the Isles be more lenient to those on mainland Orkney.
- C. To note that the Interim Head of Planning and Community Protection mentioned that all planning applications over the past 5 years had been approved which included conversions.

D. To note that flooding was a huge challenge in Sanday and that the Council would be speaking with the Scottish Government within the next 2 months on these issues.

E. To note that the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, commented that the Community Council could write to the Scottish Government themselves if they wished to do so on issues in general.

The Interim Head of Planning and Community Protection and the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, left the meeting at this point.

5. Matters Arising

A. Defibrillators

The ILO advised that £1,500 had been donated from the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme (NILPS) which was ceasing and releasing the funds to donate to Community Councils for the maintenance and upkeep of the refurbished telephone kiosks. She suggested that, as the door of the Burness telephone kiosk had still not been fixed, the job be put out to tender. She advised members of the costs involved to purchase a hardwood door frame to house the inner pane of the phone kiosk door. The Chair requested that the newly installed 24hr access defibrillator, situated by the Community Centre entrance door, be added to the island's defibrillator map. The ILO also mentioned that the proprietor of 59 Degrees North had installed an unlocked AED defibrillator for the island's use, and that this AED would also be added to the map, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the ILO would order the hardwood door frame and it would be funded by the donation from NILPS.
2. That the ILO would add the newly installed defibrillators to the map.
3. To note that the ILO had been performing the monthly checks of the Cardio Caddy at Lopness Destroyer viewpoint since the defibrillator had been installed in July 2024.
4. To note that since advertising for volunteer monthly defibrillator checkers for the Cardio Caddy at Lopness Destroyer viewpoint, the ILO had trained up one new volunteer in April 2025. She had had another resident offer their services, but as they also lived further away from the Northend she would get back to them if no other offers of a resident living closer to the Cardio Caddy came forward.
5. To note that the Community Development Officer of the Sanday Development Trust, who was present at the meeting offered to become a volunteer checker for the defibrillator in the Cardio Caddy at Lopness Destroyer viewpoint. This was warmly received, and the ILO would arrange training in due course.

B. Heritage Centre

The Chair explained that the Heritage Centre lease with Sanday Community Council expired in 8 years. Sanday Development Trust had been given the funding estimate

of £2 million from the archaeologist at Orkney Islands Council for the housing of the wreck within the Heritage Centre and there were plans by the Development Trust to redevelop the Heritage Centre. He explained that he had discussed the lease options with Democratic Services, and it was agreed by members that the best way forward to secure the future of the Heritage Centre was to arrange the sale of the Heritage Centre from Sanday Community Council to Sanday Development Trust. Councillor M Thomson suggested that a clause be put in the sale agreement stating that if Sanday Development Trust decided in the future to sell the Heritage Centre, Sanday Community Council would be given first refusal on purchasing it at the same price agreed on the original sale price from Sanday Community Council to the Sanday Development Trust. It was agreed that Sanday Development Trust would have to pay the legal fees for the sale, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That Sanday Community Council were willing to negotiate the sale of the Heritage Centre to Sanday Development Trust, providing Sanday Development Trust covered the legal fees.
2. That a clause be built into the sale agreement that if Sanday Development Trust decided in the future to sell the Heritage Centre, Sanday Community Council would be given first refusal on purchasing it at the same price agreed on the original sale price.
3. That the ILO and Chair would make enquiries with the relevant officers and external parties around a sale of the property.

C. Scottish Government Funding for Changing Places Toilet Facilities

Following a report from the Chair with regards to the Scottish Government Funding for Changing Places toilet facilities, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Chair had filled in the survey applying for this funding.
2. To note that once the Community Council received further correspondence from the funders, they would contact the other community groups on the island to discuss the best place to site this facility.

D. Spurness Micro Grants

Following a report from the ILO with regards to the criteria for the Spurness Micro Grants, and further discussion explaining the history of the grants and SSE's involvement with them explained by Councillor S Clackson, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

E. Consultation – New Ferries

Following a report from the Chair and the Transport Representative with regards to the consultation on new north isles ferries, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Chair and the Transport Representative attended this consultation and were impressed with the comprehensive presentation delivered at it.
2. To note that they would be undergoing virtual sea trials on all types of weather and especially in Sanday due to the logistics involved for a vessel to navigate into Loth Pier.
3. To note that Papa Westray and North Ronaldsay would have their own boat which would be shared between the two islands, and this would free up more sailings for the other Isles.
4. To note that if all trials went well, the first boat should hit the water in approximately two and a half years.
5. To note that Councillor M Thomson would feed back the Community Councils' response to Orkney Ferries.

F. Kirkyard Grass Cutting Tenders

Following consideration of the tenders received for the kirkyard grass cutting for the period 2025, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the contract had been awarded to Mr F Tarabuta and that he had started the grass cutting.
2. To note that the ILO had previously written a letter to the successful candidate enclosing their contract to sign and sent a letter to the unsuccessful candidate.
3. To note that an application would be made to the Community Council Grant Scheme to pay for the grass cutting at the War Memorial.

G. Visitor Levy – Full Islands Act ICIA Required

Following consideration of the Highland Council Visitor Levy Consultation, it was:

Resolved to note that Andrew Wilcox had responded to the Consultation on behalf of Sanday Community Council.

H. Residents Association

Following a report from the ILO with regards to a Residents' Association that Liam Holly had been trying to set up, it was:

Resolved to note that as Liam Holly was not present, there were no updates on this item.

I. Sanday Community Council and Development Trust Surgeries

Following a report from the Chair with regards to the monthly surgeries, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that they had started off well but were now quieter.
2. That the ILO would advertise the surgeries in the Sanday Sound for every month that they are running.

J. Bag the Bruck 2025

Following a report from the ILO with regards to the Bag the Bruck 2025, it was:

Resolved to add an extra £300 from the General Fund to top up the Bag the Bruck Community Council Grant Scheme funding for groups to claim per bag for their efforts in collecting the bruck.

6. Correspondence

A. Local Place Plans

Following consideration of the review of the Local Development Plan inviting communities the opportunity to prepare a Local Place Plan for their area, with the deadline for plans to be submitted by the end of September 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that this had been completed.

B. Our Budget Challenge – Survey Results

Following consideration of the survey results from the Orkney Islands Council Budget challenge, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. SEPA – Community Council Note on Consultation

Following consideration of the latest SEPA consultation on proposals that will change how they will authorise and regulate waste management, water and industrial activities, it was:

Resolved to note that Andrew Wilcox responded to this consultation.

D. Isles Residents Concessionary Travel Scheme

Following consideration of correspondence relating to the replacement Orkney Ferries Smart Cards for Isles Residents (concessionary travel scheme), it was:

Resolved to note that members offered their thanks to Orkney Islands Council for this scheme and to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Community Conversations – Community Benefits from Renewable Energy Developments

Following consideration of the online community conversation event held on Wednesday, 26 March 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Northern Isles Freight Vessels Replacement Project – Public Events and Key Stakeholder Meetings

Following consideration of the public engagement session held in March 2025 in relation to the replacement of the Northern Isles Freight Vessels, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence

G. Island Games Sports Schedule

Following consideration of the Island Games Sports schedule, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the schedule.

H. Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Publishes New Surface Water Flood Maps

Following consideration of the new surface water flood maps published by SEPA, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) Service – Introduction and Information

Following consideration of information on the new Improving the Cancer Journey service within NHS Orkney, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

J. Verge Maintenance Plan 2025 – Community Council Comments

Following consideration of the responses to the Verge Maintenance Plan 2025 Community Councils comments, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

K. Letter from Resident

Following consideration of a letter received from a resident with regards to the public transport issues between the North Isles and the mainland, which was also shared with all the Community Council Chairs in Orkney via Democratic Services, the Sanday Development Trust and a separate query with regards to a family members travel limitations due to their mobility issues, asking what procedures would be put in place in the event of an evacuation of the boat, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that members agreed that correspondence such as this should be commended and encouraged.

2. To note that the ILO sent the separate query to Democratic Services with regards to the family members travel limitations. The Service Manager of Orkney Ferries responded, and the ILO forwarded his response to the resident.

L. My Place Awards

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Civic Trust to promote their national My Place Awards, which celebrate excellence in community-led placemaking in Scotland, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

7. Consultations

A. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Following consideration of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair would respond to this consultation.

B. Visitor Levy Survey and Public Engagement Sessions

Following consideration of the Visitor Levy survey and public engagement sessions, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair completed the survey and that the Communications Officer would write a letter opposing this levy on behalf of Sanday Community Council.

C. Winter Service Plan 2025

Following consideration of the Winter Service Plan 2025/2026, it was:

Resolved to note that the members would look at the plan and send their comments to the ILO before the deadline of 30 June 2025, which she would then forward on to Democratic Services.

D. Sustainable Aviation Test Environment (SATE) Survey

Following consideration of the Sustainable Aviation Test Environment (SATE) survey, the UK's first operationally based low-carbon aviation test centre based at Kirkwall Airport on Orkney, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair had completed the survey.

8. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. Transport Representative

Following a report from the Transport Representative noting that she would be unable to attend the next Air and Ferry Transport Forum, it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair would go in her place.

B. Planning Representative

Following a report from the Planning Representative, it was:

Resolved to note there was nothing to report.

C. Development Trust Representative

The Development Trust Representative gave a report advising members of the various projects being undertaken by the Trust at present, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

9. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 14 April 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance was £15,695.54.

B. Spurness Wind Micro Fund

Following consideration of the Spurness Wind Fund statement as at 14 April 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance was £6,624.60.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2024/2025 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 14 April 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval in the main capping limit was fully allocated, the balance remaining in the additional capping limit was £765.00 and the Island capping limit balance remaining was £259.95.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 14 April 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £10,806.34.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 14 April 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £3,689.79.

10. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Orkney Folk Festival 2025

Following consideration of an application from the 42nd Orkney Folk Festival for financial assistance towards the running costs of this year's festival, in particular towards the costs directly related to staging this event in Sanday, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £500 be awarded from the General Fund.

B. Sanday Sports Club

Following consideration of an application from the Sanday Sports Club requesting £9,710.80 to purchase sports equipment for hosting the 75th Anniversary North Isles Sports event in Sanday, it was:

Resolved that £9,710.80 be awarded from the Spurness Community Fund.

C. Ladies Cup for the North Isles Sports

Following consideration of an application from Margaret Dearness requesting £80 plus the cost of engraving for the purchase of a new Ladies Cup for the North Isles Sports, it was:

Resolved that an application to the Community Council Grant Scheme for £80 plus engraving costs would be awarded on the production of receipts.

D. Spurness Micro Grant Fund

1. Katie Jenkins

Following consideration of an application from Katie Jenkins requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £90 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

2. Maisie Sinclair

Following consideration of an application from Maisie Sinclair requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £75 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

3. Austin Asquith

Following consideration of an application from Austin Asquith requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £75 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

4. Harrison Macleod

Following consideration of an application from Harrison Macleod requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £90 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

5. Martin Hirst

Following consideration of an application from Martin Hirst requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £75 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

6. Ezra Schofield

Following consideration of an application from Ezra Schofield requesting financial assistance towards the cost of an outward-bound trip to Hoy in June 2025, it was:

Resolved that £15.20 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

7. Irene Brown

Following consideration of an application from Irene Brown requesting financial assistance towards travel and accommodation to attend the Royal Garden House tea party in Edinburgh, for her services to Sanday, it was:

Resolved that £300 be awarded from the Spurness Micro Grant Fund.

11. Publications

The following publications had been made available to members and were noted:

- VAO Newsletter – January to March 2025.
- VAO Training and Funding – January to March 2025.
- Loganair North Isles Flight Statistics for Year to Date.
- Loganair North Isles Flight Statistics for Year 2024-2025.
- Letters from School Place – January to April 2025.
- Orkney Ferries Statistics – January to March 2025.
- Foundation Scotland E Bulletin – April 2025.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. Town Twinning

The Vice Chair advised members of his history with Town Twinning between the years 1971-1978 when he lived in Fife, and his ongoing involvement with this. He advised that he felt that it was beneficial to children by giving an insight into different cultures and further discussion ensued suggesting a town twinning group, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Service Manager, Democratic Services and Communications mentioned the Norwegian Constitution Day being held in Orkney on 17 May 2025 and a suggestion that the Norwegian musicians that attend the Constitution Day visit the Northern Isles.
2. To note that it was suggested that members could invite Leslie Burgher, the Consul for Norway in Orkney, to their next meeting and that the Vice Chair advised that he would be happy to visit Leslie Burgher in Kirkwall.
3. To note that the ILO would get in touch with Leslie Burgher on behalf of the Vice Chair.

B. GP's Interviews

Following a report from the Chair with regards to the interviews to be held at Flebister house for a new GP, it was:

Resolved to note that Elaine Snelson would take a place on the interviewing panel on behalf of Sanday Community Council.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Sanday Community Council would be held on Thursday, 19 June 2025, commencing at 19:30.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:50.