

Minute of the Meeting of Birsay Community Council held in the Birsay Community Hall on Thursday, 29 March 2018 at 19:30

Present:

K.Spence, D.Scarth, R.Delday, A Spence and S Spence.

In Attendance:

- Councillors R King and O Tierney.
- One officer from Police Scotland and Mrs L Leitch, Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of Miss K Coghill, Councillors Tullock and Johnston and Sergeant Morris, Police Scotland.

2. Police Scotland Matters

After hearing an update on staffing and recruitment within the force and that there were no Police issues within the parish, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

The Police Officer left the meeting at this point.

3. Minute of meeting held on 25 January 2018

The minute of the meeting held on 25 January 2018 was approved, being proposed by S Spence and seconded by R Delday.

4. Matters Arising

A. Replacement Sign at Sand Geo

After hearing that there may be a slight delay with the replacement sign, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

B. Foreshore from Ministry Huts to Zanzibar

The Chair informed the meeting that he had asked K Garson to draw up the necessary plans, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

C. Costa Head Wind Farm

1. Update from Community Ownership meeting 19 February 2018.

The meeting heard that three members of the Birsay Community Council had met with delegates from South Ronaldsay and Burray Community Council to discuss community ownership benefit. The Community Ownership meeting, which had been arranged by Aquatera, discussed various options for ownership and the two Community Councils represented had agreed to meet and discuss the matter further. Members felt that the forthcoming Cares Conference being held in April in Glasgow would be beneficial and it was hoped that one Birsay member would be able to attend. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

2. Hoolan Energy Public Exhibition held 8 April 2018.

Hoolan Energy had held a Public Exhibition in the Birsay Hall the previous day where it was noted that the amount of turbines had been reduced from five to four with each moving position slightly from the original plan. Members discussed Hoolan's committed £5,000 per MW in Community Benefit throughout the project together with the company's commitment to fuel poverty and following discussion on how Birsay residents could benefit, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

D. West Mainland Tourist Brochure

Members heard that a further 25,000 copies of the current brochure had been printed for the tourist season ahead and that a meeting of the subcommittee would be held in November to discuss the 2019 pamphlet, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

E. Gates at Palace Kirk

Following consideration of correspondence, copies of which were distributed at the meeting and after hearing that the gates at the St Magnus Cemetery had been repaired, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

F. Dog Fouling Sign

The Chair confirmed that the 'No Dog Fouling' sign had been ordered, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

G. Stoneyhill Road end, Harray

Members considered correspondence from Democratic Services which advised that Roads Services were aware that works were incomplete and that they would be attended to when resources allowed. Members raised concern at the extra time and money wasted on leaving jobs incomplete. The meeting also discussed how the roads were in particularly poor repair. Although there had been restrictions on road repairs, Councillors advised that the work force had been redirected to other duties. As a result of restrictions, the Council recognised that there had been an underspend on the roads with the work still outstanding. The Councillors also highlighted that there were lots of additional works to be carried out due to flooding issues. With budget restraints, it was highlighted that residents of Orkney would possibly see deterioration in the roads with problems such as potholes only being patched. Given the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) members emphasised that the condition of the roads would only worsen with visitors to the islands expected to increase, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the discussion.

H. Slip at Buckquoy

Following consideration of correspondence from Democratic Services, which advised that the Slip at Buckquoy was not under Orkney Islands Council (OIC) ownership and after hearing that Councillor King was seeking further information from Historic Environment Scotland on who was responsible for the Slip, it was noted that the area was not deemed a danger at present. However, it was observed that children could crawl beneath the undercut. If any area of the Slip was deemed a health and safety issue then the necessary work would be carried out by OIC with the cost to be met by the landowner. It was also noted during discussion that the handrail on the left-hand side of the steps was being washed away. Members agreed that identifying the landowner would be a priority, so that any works could be carried out by them. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Chair would contact residents within the area in an effort to find out who owned the Slip.
2. That a letter of concern over the safety issues at the Slip should be sent to Democratic Services to pass to the relevant section.

I. Road across the Links

The Chair advised that he had spoken to the landowner at the Links to ask if the road could be scraped and had received confirmation that this could be done. Following a brief discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would ask a local contractor if they could undertake the work.

J. Falling Headstones in Birsay Kirkyard

Members considered correspondence from Democratic Services, copies of which were distributed at the meeting, advising that the Council was not responsible for the maintenance of headstones and that the obligation rests with the family who have erected the headstone. The correspondence also advised that if any headstones were deemed unsafe, the memorial would be laid flat with the inscription facing up along the length of the grave. It was also observed that previously fallen headstones had been repaired in the past and members questioned if there had been a change of policy. Members deliberated whether the Community Council could arrange for any fallen headstones to be re-erected, and it was:

Resolved for Councillor King to follow up the matter ahead of the next meeting.

K. Parking Issues at the Palace

Members heard that since the last meeting, the parking issues which had been raised had been monitored, and it was noted that there had been no occasions where vehicles were blocking the right of way, and it was:

Resolved to continue to observe the parking.

5. Correspondence

A. Orkney Islands Council – Community Council Funding

Following consideration of correspondence from the Chief Executive of Orkney Islands Council advising that the Policy and Resources Committee were proposing to reduce the Community Council funding in the forthcoming financial year, and after hearing that this recommendation had not gone through, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. NHS Orkney – Mock Up Room

After consideration of correspondence received from NHS Orkney inviting members of the public to drop in sessions to visit their purpose built Mock Up Rooms for the new hospital and healthcare facility, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

C. Point of Buckquoy Signage

Following consideration of correspondence received from Marine Services, Orkney Islands Council asking for help in determining who erected the sign at the Point of Buckquoy, members confirmed that the Community Council did not provide the signpost and that the Lighthouse Board or Historic Environment Scotland may be able to help, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the discussion.

D. Orkney Sustainable Fisheries Out Reach

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Fishery Development Manager, which advised that she would like to build relationships with local communities, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

E. Thank You Letter

After hearing from the Clerk that a thank you letter had been received from Stenness School in respect of financial assistance provided by the Community Council it was:

Resolved to note the letter of thanks.

F. Scottish Transport Awards 2018, Orkney Islands Council Airfields Service

Following consideration of correspondence, copies of which were distributed at the meeting, from the Development and Infrastructure Committee informing members that Orkney Islands Council Airfields had been shortlisted for a national award to be announced in June, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

6. Consultation Documents

A. Winter Service Plan 2017/2018

Following consideration of the Winter Service Plan 2017/2018, copies of which had been previously circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline for submission of comments was 30 March 2018 and that no further comments had been received since the previous meeting.

B. Verge Maintenance Plan Specification

Following consideration of the Verge Maintenance Plan Specification, and after hearing that one member had requested that when ditches are cleared out using small diggers that the operators are careful not to dig too close to fence stabs as it was undermining the fencing, it was:

Resolved to note that:

1. The deadline for submission of comments was 30 March 2018.
2. That it should be noted that digger operators should exercise caution when digging ditches close to fencing stabs.

C. Scottish Water – Shaping the Future

Members considered Scottish Water’s consultation on the future of water and waste water services. Concern was raised at the serious problem over the escalating number of geese, particularly on the Boardhouse Loch, and whether the water treatment was removing any pollutants left by the birds. Members heard that studies were being carried out by the NFU and Scottish Water to determine if the geese were causing a public health issue and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that:

1. The deadline for submission of comments was 31 August 2018.
2. That D.Scarth would compile a response to the consultation for the submission by the Clerk ahead of the deadline for comments.

D. Amended Core Paths Plan Consultation

Following consideration of the Amended Core Paths Plan consultation, a copy of which was distributed at the meeting, and after hearing that there had been some additions to the Core Paths map since the last consultation, it was:

Resolved to note that:

1. The deadline for submission of comments was 1 June 2018.
2. That members would check the amended map before the submission date.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

After consideration of the General Finance statement as at 21 March 2018, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £1,794.00.

B. Birsay Energy Fund

After consideration of the Birsay Energy Fund statement as at 21 March 2018, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £14,260.26.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2017/18 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 21 March 2018, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £617.41

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 21 March 2018, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £8,183.37.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 21 March 2018, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £21.64.

8. Financial Requests

A. Dounby Community School – Primary 6 Class trip to Hoy

Following consideration of correspondence received from Dounby School, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of 10 pupils who resided in the Birsay area participating in their school trip to Hoy in June it was:

Resolved that a donation of £25 be given to each of the pupils towards the cost of their Hoy trip.

B. Orkney Folk Festival 2018

Following consideration of correspondence received from the organisers of Orkney Folk Festival, copies of which had been previously circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of the 2018 event, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £250 be given towards the cost of the 2018 event.

C. NHS Orkney Fundraising Group

Following consideration of correspondence which had been received from the NHS Orkney Fundraising Group, copies of which had been previously circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of purchasing additional items of equipment, planting and furnishings for the new hospital, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £150 be given.

D. Mrs C Atkinson – Inverness Caledonian Thistle

Following consideration of correspondence received from Mrs C Atkinson, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of her son playing for Inverness Caledonian Thistle throughout the forthcoming year, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £150 be awarded towards the cost of three trips.

E. Dounby Tree Lighting – Kirkwall Town Band

The Chair advised the meeting that the Kirkwall Town Band had played at the 2017 Tree Lighting event in Dounby and usually received a donation of £100 from Birsay and Harray and Sandwick Community Councils. Members heard that the donation had yet to be made, and it was:

Resolved that a donation of £33.33 be awarded to the Kirkwall Town Band, being one third of the total amount.

F. St Magnus Way – Proposed Interpretation Boards in Dounby

Following consideration from organisers of the St Magnus Way, copies of which were distributed at the meeting, asking for a contribution towards the interpretation boards to be sited in Dounby opposite the Smithfield Hotel, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £190.40 be given towards the costs, being one third of the total amount.

9. Publications

Publications from the Orkney Partnership, Glasdo and Proludic Playground Equipment were made available to members.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Proposed Cuts by Orkney Islands Council

Members raised their concerns at the proposals by Orkney Islands Council to close the Language Unit and also at the cuts to the Support for Learning Staff. Following a lengthy discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Community Council would submit a letter of concern to Orkney Islands Council which would reinforce the continued need for the Language Unit and Support for Learning Staff.

B. Delivery of the Birsay Newsletter

The Chair noted that the Birsay newsletter had been delivered by the Birsay Drama Group on two occasions, with the Mums and Toddlers also distributing an issue of the circular. Following discussion, members agreed that ideally the newsletter is

distributed immediately after printing and certainly within a fortnight of publication. Members agreed to offer the two groups an incentive of £100 per delivery to keep their interest in circulating the newsletter and it was:

Resolved that the Birsay Drama Group be awarded £200 and the Mums and Toddlers receive a donation of £100 for their past help with the deliveries.

C. Ditch Clearings

One member reported that the ditch about Wilderness in Dounby needed attention, and it was:

Resolved to note that members can report any roads issue direct to the Council.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Members agreed that the next meeting of the Birsay Community Council would be held on Thursday, 7 June 2018 in the Birsay Hall, commencing at 19:30.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

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