

Minute of the Meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council held in the Friends Room, St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall, on Monday, 7 October 2024 at 19:00

Present:

Tom Rendall, Lynne Spence, Steven Brodie, Moyra Gordon, Barbara J M Graham, Cathleen A Hourie, Robert F Leslie, Chris J F Matthews, John R Mowat and Rosemary Rhodes.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Sandy G Cowie.
- Councillor David Dawson.
- Councillor Kristopher D Leask.
- Councillor John A R Scott.
- Lorna Richardson, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Orkney Islands Council.
- 1 member of the local press.
- Hazel Flett, Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors W Leslie Manson, Gwenda M Shearer and Ivan A Taylor.

2. Adoption of Minute

The Minute of the Meeting held on 26 August 2024 was approved, being proposed by Moyra Gordon and seconded by Rosemary Rhodes.

3. Matters Arising

A. Benches

The Vice Chair advised that an application had been submitted to the Orkney Towns Fund in respect of the provision of benches, that she had met with representatives from the Community Justice Service who were keen to assist with a maintenance programme, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should arrange for a purchase order to be sent to the Community Justice Service so that a programme of maintenance on benches could commence, starting with benches along the shoreline and in play parks, noting that the Community Council would be advised if any benches were beyond repair.

B. Conservation Verges – Review

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding the review of conservation verges, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that conservation verges were reviewed and updated on an annual basis, following consultation with Community Councils and Councillors.

C. Former Street Names

R Leslie suggested that Orkney Heritage Society be contacted to see whether they thought the project was worthwhile before any further progress was made in respect of mapping former street names, including a potential application to the Orkney Towns Fund, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

D. Local Place Plans – Your Kirkwall

The Vice Chair advised that she had contacted the Chair of the Orkney Towns Board and Councillor Leask regarding updating Your Kirkwall as a new Local Place Plan for Kirkwall, and it was:

Resolved that the Chair and Vice Chair should explore the cost of engaging consultants to undertake the work.

E. Bonfire and Fireworks at Pickaquoy

Following consideration of the Event Management Plan for the annual bonfire and fireworks display to be held on 2 November 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Event Management Plan be approved.
2. That the Community Council should make donations of £50 to each of the groups who volunteered their services as part of the event.
3. That two volunteers should go along Ayre Road requesting car owners to switch off their headlights.
4. That as many members should volunteer as marshals and stewards for the event as possible.
5. To note that an update from the Safety Advisory Group was taking longer due to extended absences, although it was not an authorisation process, but would ensure that all relevant parties were signposted and aware of plans.
6. To note that a site visit with representatives from SSPCA, NatureScot and the Police would be arranged to run through plans in person, ensuring continued close engagement with organisations responsible for animal welfare.

F. Financial Requests

Following consideration of notes of thanks received from various individuals and groups regarding financial assistance received from the Community Council, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. Consultation – National Care Service

The Clerk advised that no responses had been received via email to the Scottish Government's survey on the National Care Service and a community engagement exercise in relation to the Island Communities Impact Assessment, and therefore no response had been submitted by the deadline of 30 September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

H. Consultation – Voice of Communities

The Clerk advised that no responses had been received from members in regard to the survey organised by Highlands and Islands Enterprise to capture the unique experiences and perspectives of community groups and therefore no response was submitted by the deadline of the end of September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

I. Island Games Legacy

The Vice Chair gave an update on the proposed project to provide benches depicting the 12 sports of the Islands Games to be held in Orkney in July 2025, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council requesting permission for the benches to be permanently located in the area surrounding the Peedie Sea.

4. Correspondence

A. Campaign to increase safety of lithium batteries used in e-bikes and e-scooters

Following consideration of correspondence from Ron Bailey, UK Parliament, requesting support for a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries, used in e-bikes and e-scooters, and their disposal, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should respond indicating the Community Council's support for the Bill.

B. Membership of Scotland's Towns Partnership

Following consideration of correspondence from Scotland's Towns Partnership regarding membership, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Community Council should join Scotland's Towns Partnership, at an annual fee of £99 plus VAT.
2. That the Clerk should renew the subscription annually, unless the fee increased, in which case it should be considered by the Community Council.
3. That the Clerk should investigate whether there was potential for financial assistance in respect of updating the Your Kirkwall document.

C. Best Kept War Memorial Competition

Following consideration of correspondence from Legion Scotland regarding the Best Kept War Memorial Competition, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Kirkwall and St Ola War Memorial had won the Highlands and Islands Area award within the Large Community without Gardens category for 2024.

D. Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries

Following consideration of correspondence from Boundaries Scotland regarding the second review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Winter Service Plan 2024-2025

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council responding to comments raised by Community Councils during the consultation on the Winter Service Plan 2024-2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the contents of the correspondence, particularly in relation to the comments raised by Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, which were disappointing in that none of the requests to upgrade the priority of short sections of road and footpath had been accepted.
2. To note that individuals could request additional grit bins at any time.

F. Girlguiding Orkney

Following consideration of correspondence from Girlguiding Orkney thanking the Community Council for financial assistance towards a trip to Bergen, Norway, in July 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

5. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 23 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance as at 23 September 2024 of £13,403.16.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2024/25 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 23 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that projects to the value of £5,892.02 had been approved, of which £2,592.02 had been claimed.
2. To note the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit of £241.79.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 23 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval of £6,163.46.

6. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Athletics Club

Following consideration of an application from A Bruce requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the 30th Anniversary Shetland Athletics Championships on 31 August 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in the competition.

B. Orkney Athletics Club

Following consideration of an application from S Webb requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the 30th Anniversary Shetland Athletics Championships on 31 August 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in the competition.

C. Kirkjuvagr Dancers

Following consideration of an application from T Paterson requesting financial assistance towards her daughters participating in the Lorraine Bremner Festival of Highland Dancing held in Wick on 7 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each of the dancers participating in the competition.

D. Orkney Gymnastics Club

Following consideration of an application from L Miller requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the Scottish Classic Floor and Vault Competition held in Hamilton on 14 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in the competition.

E. Orkney Rugby Football Club U14 Team

Following consideration of an application from L Miller requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in two away games for the Orkney Rugby Football Club's under 14 team, on 21 and 29 September, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in each of the games.

F. Netball Orkney – Under 15 Junior Squad

Following consideration of an application from C Tait requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in various competitions as part of Netball Orkney's under 15 squad, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in each of the competitions.

G. Kirkjuvagr Dancers

Following consideration of an application from D Johnston requesting financial assistance towards her daughters participating in the Lorraine Bremner Festival of Highland Dancing held in Wick on 7 September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each of the dancers participating in the competition.

H. Highland Dancing Competitions

Following consideration of an application from S Campbell requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in two highland dancing competitions on 5 October and 17 November 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in each of the competitions.

I. Orkney Pilgrimage – St Magnus Way

Following consideration of correspondence from the Orkney Pilgrimage requesting financial assistance towards the upkeep of the St Magnus Way, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £300 be made.

J. Highland Dancing and Gymnastics Competitions

Following consideration of an application from T Russell requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in various highland dancing and gymnastics competitions in September, October and November 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £45 be given in respect of participation in each of the competitions, taking the total assistance provided to the policy limit of £375 for 2024/25.

K. YCS Climbing Competitions

Following consideration of an application from R McCaw requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in various YCS climbing competitions between September and November 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £60 be given, in respect of participation in each of the competitions, taking the total assistance provided to the policy limit of £150 for 2024/25.

L. Gymnastics competition

Following consideration of an application from L Allan requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in a gymnastics competition held in Garioch on 5 October 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of participation in the competition.

M. KGS S3 Berlin Trip

Following consideration of an application from K McLuckie requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in a school trip to Berlin in April 2025, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 be given in respect of participation in the trip.

7. Consultations

A. Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding a consultation on the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, for which responses were due by 25 October 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to make no comment.

B. Orkney Islands Marine Region – Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding a consultation on Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance for the Orkney Islands Marine Region, for which responses were due by 25 October 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to make no comment.

C. Impact Assessment Survey for Cold-Ironing Solutions for Ships at Anchorage

Following consideration of correspondence from Aquatera regarding a project to help advance environmental sustainability within the maritime sector, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that individuals should respond to the survey.

Councillor John Ross Scott left the meeting at this point.

8. Meetings attended by Members

A. Orkney Matters 2

Orkney Islands Council had rearranged the Orkney Matters 2 consultation event to be held in Kirkwall Town Hall on 30 September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that various members of the Community Council had attended the event, discussing issues such as transport, digital connectivity, health and wellbeing and the cost of living.

B. Orkney Towns Fund

Aquatera had arranged an online Community Engagement Event in respect of the Orkney Towns Fund held on 1 October 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Community Council had not been represented at the online event.

C. Community Council Conference

The Chair and the Clerk had attended the Community Council Conference held in the St Magnus Centre on 3 October 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that the session had provided information on how to chair a meeting, tips from other Community Council areas, reporting through My Orkney, as well as a presentation on the Island Games.

9. Publications

The following publications had been sent to the Clerk and were forwarded to members via email:

- SEPA Updates – 28 August and 18 September 2024.
- Paths for All – eNews – August and September 2024.

- VAO Newsletters – August and September 2024.
- Scottish Rural Action – September 2024 Newsletter.
- OIC – PSTN switch to digital services in 2027.
- SSEN – DSO September 2024 Newsletter.
- VAO – Training and Funding Updates – September 2024.
- Scotland's Towns Partnership – September Newsletter.
- ORSAS – Quarterly Newsletter – October 2024.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Arcadia Park

Members raised the apparent lack of work taking place at Arcadia Park, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should contact the group responsible for Arcadia Park and seek an update on future works.

B. Core Paths around Kirkwall

Members raised concerns and issues regarding various core paths in and around Kirkwall, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should arrange for the Council's Access Officer to attend a future meeting of the Community Council to provide information on roles and responsibilities in relation to core paths.

C. Temporary Closure of Junction Road

In response to a query raised by a member regarding the temporary closure of part of Junction Road for six months, which appeared an inordinate length of time for a major arterial route, the Head of Neighbourhood Services advised that the closure had been approved in order to facilitate building works at the Albert Hotel, that the detour was not particularly onerous, with pedestrian access maintained, and that the road was being used as a construction compound for the storage of materials and a site cabin, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

D. Contacting Police Scotland

A member highlighted concerns on social media regarding unacceptable behaviour by young people in Kirkwall and issues members of the public had in contacting Police Scotland, as it was not considered an emergency, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Chief Inspector Scott Robertson advising him of the concerns raised by the Community Council.

Barbara Graham and Councillor Kristopher Leask left the meeting during discussion of this item.

E. One Hour Free Parking

In response to a query from a member regarding the reduction in the months where one hour free parking applied, the Head of Neighbourhood Services advised that, following consultation, including with Kirkwall BID, the Council had reduced the number of months for one hour free parking from October to April, to January to March, in order to address the shortfall in the roads budget, noting that this would be reviewed once data was available, as it could be seen as a business incentive, and it was:

Resolved to note the current position.

F. Door on Broad Street

After hearing representations from C Hourie regarding repairs undertaken to the door at Virgin Money on Broad Street, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to the local manager, thanking her for pursuing the project to replace the door.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council should be held on Monday, 25 November 2024, commencing at 19:00.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:15.