

Minute of the Meeting of Westray Community Council held in the Community Room, Westray School and via Teams on Monday, 11 November 2024 at 19:30

Present:

Mrs Elizabeth Drever, Mr Adam Baird, Mr Daniel Marcus, Mr Louis Pottinger, Mrs Ann Rendall Mrs Rosalind Rendall and Mrs Janice Rendall (via Teams).

In Attendance:

- Councillor Heather Woodbridge (via Teams).
- Mr Kenny MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities
- Mrs Jenny McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
- Mrs Edith Costie, Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated by Councillors Stephen Clackson and Mellissa Thomson.

2. Election of Office Bearers

Following discussion, and a series of secret ballots, it was:

Resolved:

A. That Mr Danny Harcus should be appointed Chairperson of Westray Community Council.

B. That Mr Adam Baird should be appointed Vice Chairperson of Westray Community Council.

C. That the following representatives were happy to continue in their roles as follows:

- Transport: Mr Adam Baird.
- Planning: Mr Danny Harcus.
- Health and Care: Mrs Rosalind Rendall.
- Westray Development Trust: Mr Louis Pottinger.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Mr Danny Harcus took the meeting and thanked Mrs Elizabeth Drever for doing such a good job in her term as Chair.

The minute of the meeting of Westray Community Council held on 16 September 2024 was adopted, being proposed by Mr Adam Baird and seconded by Mrs Rosalind Rendall.

4. Matters Arising

A. Special Collections

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that there was a special collection scheduled for 14 November 2024 and another scheduled for 3 February 2025. It was felt by the members that it would be beneficial to have a collection in January, which would give plenty time to advertise and would be an attempt to try and reduce the amount of fly tipping at the recycling area, and it was:

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would enquire if it was possible to get a date in early January for a community council funded special collection.

B. Street Lighting – Northend to Hofn

The Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities advised that the job had been up for tender, and the tender review would be happening quite soon. The Chair

expressed Westray Community Council's appreciation that this was going ahead, and it was:

Resolved to await a further update in due course.

C. Public Toilets

Members heard that there was nothing further to report, and it was:

Resolved that the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities would investigate this further and give an update before the next meeting,

D. Kirkyards

The Chair advised that there were some minor repairs needed to the sheds in both Pierowall and Rapness kirkyards. This had been assessed and was now being put out to tender. A Member asked if there was any progress being made on the extension to the Pierowall kirkyard, and that this could soon come to be urgent, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That Tender Notices would be displayed for the repair works in the kirkyards.
2. That the Community Council Liaison Officer would ask for an update on the extension of Pierowall kirkyard.

E. Howanbrek Bin Lid

Members were informed that this was still an ongoing problem, and that the Men's Shed had looked at the broken lid but had not repaired it. It was suggested that the tenants be asked to get wheelie bins from OIC rather than use the communal store, and that this would be much more convenient for the waste operative. It was further suggested that this would be the responsibility of OHAL and would be between them and the tenants to resolve, and it was:

Resolved that the Chair would write a letter to OHAL requesting that they look into this issue.

F. OIC Winter Treatment Contracts

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that the contractors had to go through Public Contract Scotland; this was to cover payment and insurance. There was the offer of assistance for contractors through Business Gateway and also on the website, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

G. Playpark Fence

Members heard that Councillor Stephen Clackson had been having discussions about who was responsible for the upkeep of the playing field and playpark border fencing, but it was still not clear. After discussion, it was agreed that the fence along the main road should remain to be a high fence because of footballs/frisbees etc

going over the dyke and possibly hitting a passing vehicle or pedestrian. Members felt the high fence was also vital for keeping children, especially smaller ones, from climbing the dyke and then falling into the main road. It was felt that the fence along the other road, up past the school, was not so dangerous and therefore could be taken down from the gate that enters the playing field. It was agreed that it would be good to ascertain ownership of the land in this area and also details of any rental agreements in place. Members agreed that the fence on the perimeter of the playpark was very dangerous as it stands, and repair should be a priority, and it was:

Resolved to ask the Community Council Liaison Officer to find out about ownership and original rental agreement for playpark.

5. Correspondence

A. Orkney Towns Fund Board

Members were advised that funding had been confirmed for the next stage. There had been a lot of different suggestions for projects for this money and the board were working through them. There would be £2 million available per year, so it was important to consider ideas for projects big and small. It was further advised that there was still time for communities to apply, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and wait for further information.

B. Charles Ann II

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Ferries, copies of which had previously been circulated, regarding the purchase of the Charles Ann II. Members agreed that this vessel was working well on the Papa Westray/Westray route, and it was:

Resolved to note this update.

C. ZEVU Update

Members noted the information provided from OIC Transport on the ZEVU trial, due to commence in 2025, copies of which had previously been circulated. It was thought that the vessel could be very useful for inter-island journeys, i.e. Westray to Sanday. The correspondence advised that there would need to be sea trials and capacity studies before any sort of timetable could be drawn up, and suggestions were welcome on how it could be utilised. It was noted that there would be two charging points, in Kirkwall and Eday, and it was:

Resolved to note this correspondence and await further information.

D. R100 Fibre Programme

Members considered correspondence, copies of which had previously been circulated, which advised that the digital switch over had been pushed back to a deadline of 2027. Concern was voiced regarding power going down, and members asked if there would be anything put in place to enable essential services to operate phones when there were no land lines. Satellite internet and battery backup systems were discussed, and it was:

Resolved to keep this item on the agenda.

E. Winter Service Plan Comments

Following consideration of correspondence from Roads Support, which responses to comments made during the last WSP consultation, a member asked if there should be a change of priority on the road to the Ness, due to the Harbour Master being on that road, and it was

Resolved to note that there was no plan to change the winter service plan for this season.

F. ONI Timetable – Summer 2025

Members had been sent the timetable for summer 2025, which had been circulated following adoption. Members noted that there had been no movement on the times that the community council had asked for, and it was:

Resolved to ask that if any changes are made to the proposed timetables going to the Transport Forum, that adequate prior notice is given.

6. Consultation Documents

A. Neven Point Wind Farm – Proposal of Application Notice

Members had previously been sent information on the PAN for Neven Point Wind Farm. There was no objection from members to the proposal, but concern was raised that the big wind farms might take away from local private turbines by using all the input, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the proposal.

B. Private Water Supply Research

Members discussed a request which had been received, asking for assistance with a survey on private water supply. After consideration, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the document but take no further action.

C. OWPL – West of Orkney Windfarm – Additional Information

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Government's Licensing Operations Team, copies of which had previously been circulated, regarding applications and an EIA report, and additional information provided by the West of Orkney Windfarm, members noted the deadline of 3 December for any comments, and it was:

Resolved to note that members had no comments to make on the applications or EIA report.

D. Insights on Community Resilience in Emergencies

Members had previously been sent a consultation by the Improvement Service to gather insights and information on a range of resilience issues. One member had

done the survey and found it very interesting. The survey had been designed to better understand how Community Councils can support local people through emergency or challenging situations and to identify what further support might be needed. Members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a plan in writing for Westray for emergency situations, taking into consideration the Scottish Government and Orkney plans on resilience issues, and it was:

Resolved to keep this issue live and discuss further at future meetings.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 30 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £42,214.96 which included £1,080 approved but as yet unclaimed awards.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme 2024/2025

Following consideration of the CCGS statement as at 30 October 2024, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the main capping limit had £1,812,85 remaining for approval and that £297 and £740 remained available in the island and additional capping limits, respectively.
2. That the Clerk would contact applicants to encourage them to claim or establish if the awards were no longer needed so that they could be cancelled.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the CDF statement as at 30 October 2024, it was:

Resolved to note that £3,452.68 remained available for allocation to projects.

8. Financial Request

A. Christmas Tree Lights

New Christmas tree lights had been bought and paid for by Mr Adam Baird at a cost of £495.40. Members agreed that he should be reimbursed from CCGS funding, and it was:

Resolved that a payment of £495.40 would be arranged, subject to CCGS approval.

B. Westray Senior Citizens Party

Resolved to note that this grant was no longer needed and that it should be cancelled.

C. History of the North Isles Sports Publication

Members had previously been sent a request from Roderick Thorne for support for publishing a book on the history of the North Isles Sports. After consultation, it was established that he did not have a cost for the proposed publication and would contact WCC again when he had appropriate figures, and it was:

Resolved that Westray Community Council would support this request in principle and would revisit this request when figures were available.

9. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Transport Representative was pleased to advise that the request for meetings to be held on a day when there is an early afternoon ferry had been put into action, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Planning

The Planning Representative advised that the procedure viewing planning applications had changed and there was to be training via Teams on 21 November 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Health and Care

The Health and Care Representative informed the members that there had not been any recent meetings, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Westray Development Trust

The WDT Representative informed the Meeting that the Old Community Hall purchase had gone through, and that photographs had been taken for future reference/documentation, and it was:

Resolved to note the update given.

10. Publications

The following publications had previously been forwarded to members and were noted:

- VAO Newsletter – September and October 2024.
- VAO Training and Funding –September and October 2024.
- Letter from School Place – September and October 2024.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Tree Lighting Event

It had been agreed that the tree lighting event would take place on Saturday, 30 November 2024 and that Mrs Elizabeth Drever would take on the organising of the event in the Westray JH School after the tree lighting. There would be no Salvation Army presence this year and Meryl Sandison would be asked if she can play carols in the hall. Mr Adam Baird agreed to organise the setting up of the tree. Mrs Rozalind Rendall agreed to arrange for the youngest school child to switch on the lights and ask if there will be school children singing at the lighting ceremony. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the arrangements for the tree lighting ceremony on 30 November.

B. Orkney Matters 2 Online Meeting – Feedback

Mr Danny Marcus and Mrs Elizabeth Drever had attended the online meeting and thought that it had been very worthwhile. They agreed that more could be achieved when the Council, Community Council, Community Association and Development Trust share ideas, and it was:

Resolved to try and get a further meeting in Westray in the New Year.

C. Planning Visit to Westray

Members noted that the Planning visit had taken place on Thursday, 7 November 2024. It was encouraging to see that the village path project might be starting to move, although it was likely that it would be done in possibly 3 sections, with the possibility of the toilet block in the village being upgraded in the process, and it was:

Resolved to await further information.

D. Disposal of Household Goods/Recycling Centre/Scrap Vehicles

Members discussed the need to upgrade the existing recycling area alongside the DLO building. There was a need for a concrete area around the bins as, at the moment, broken glass is very difficult to tidy up and make safe. If the bins are full, items just get left alongside the bins.

Members were advised that the funding allocated for scrap cars was finished. The haulier was taking scrap cars at the moment but there would be a charge if the car had to be picked up.

A member also reported that there were three public waste bins that need to be replaced; one at Rapness Pier, one at the public toilets in the village and one at WI Rendall shop, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To notify via the business letter the improvements suggested at the recycling area, asking that OIC investigate these and action any works necessary.

2. That Mr Adam Baird would look into the scrap car situation and report back at the next meeting.
3. That replacement bins be requested for the areas reported, via the business letter.

E. CC Conference Feedback

A Community Council conference had taken place on 4 October and had been attended by the Clerk and Mr Danny Harcus. Both thought the conference was beneficial and well worthwhile. It was thought that the overall feedback was better than for past conferences and it was found to give support and encouragement to the Community Councils, also the chance to meet and discuss what was happening locally. It was a mix of experiences and very helpful to new members who might feel they need guidance. It was hoped that, going forward, more events like this could be arranged, and it was:

Resolved to note the positive feedback.

F. Grass Cutting Contracts

It had been proposed that the Westray Grass Cutting contracts for the housing scheme should both be put on a three-year contract. Clarification on the tender price was required for the kirkyards before any agreement could be made, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the grass cutting tender for the housing scheme will be advertised and applicants will be asked to quote for 2025, 2026 and 2027.
2. That clarification would be sought from the kirkyard grass cutting contractor prior to final agreement.

G. Bay of Swartmill

It was brought to the attention of the meeting that the sea was almost encroaching on the public road at the Bay of Swartmill. There had been gabions put in place many years ago, but these were now disintegrating. It was agreed that the Council should be made aware of the issue so that they could investigate and carry out any works deemed necessary, and it was:

Resolved that the Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities would pass information on the Bay of Swartmill issue on to the appropriate department.

H. Local Signage

Local signposts were discussed and photographs shown of signs that were unreadable. It was agreed that these should be looked at, refurbished or replaced as necessary, as this was not helpful for tourists, and it was:

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would find out who was responsible for these signposts, but meantime members would send on any photos of bad ones.

I. Community Benefit - Faray Turbine

A question was asked about the potential community benefit from the Faray Wind Farm project. Members recalled that, when the community council agreed to support the turbine project, the then meeting was told that it was proposed that Westray would get the highest level of community benefit, being in close proximity to the turbines, especially at the south end of the island. At the time, WCC whole heartedly agreed to support the project because of what was presented to them. The funding model had since been agreed and did not propose that Westray should receive the highest level of community benefit. Members agreed that they were still unhappy about this and that it should be taken back to the Committee, and it was

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would look into this and check to see if there were minutes of those initial meetings.

12. Date of Next Meeting

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

Resolved that the next meetings of Westray Community Council would be held on Mondays 27 January and 31 March 2025 at 19:30 in Westray JH School Community Classroom and via Teams.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Meeting closed at 21:35.