

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 24 August 2020 at 19:00

Present:

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

In Attendance:

- Councillor R Crichton.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- Councillor M Thomson.
- S Craigie, Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of J Mowat.

2. Police Matters

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

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 15 June 2020 was approved, being proposed by P McLaughlin and seconded by J Park.

4. Matters Arising

A. Jack Renton – Proposed Plaque

After hearing an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That no response had been received from the supplier of the plaque.
2. That the Clerk would contact the supplier again for an update.

B. Heritage Guide Reprints

After hearing an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that the Heritage Guides were now stored in the Warehouse Buildings and the invoice for the work had been paid.

C. Back Road – Traffic Hazard

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Road Support Manager, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a potential traffic hazard on the Back Road, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That the Council does not permit mirrors to be placed on public roads.
2. That visibility at this junction meets the requirements for the 30mph speed limit.
3. That the mirror referred to on Christies Brae was not installed by the Council and was for a private access.
4. That there was no history of recorded accidents in this location in the last five years.
5. That the Road Support Manager had advised Stromness Community Council that if it was felt that there was an issue with traffic speeding that this should be reported to Police Scotland for enforcement.

D. Gravediggers Hut, Warebeth Cemetery

Following an update from W Mackay, it was:

Resolved that W Mackay would draft a letter to the relevant section informing them that the condition of the roof had deteriorated further and to ascertain whether it was more cost efficient to repair the hut or demolish it.

E. Stromness Bonfire Night 2020 – Fireworks

Following an update from the Chair, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That the fireworks had been purchased for Bonfire Night 2020, but as yet no invoice had been received.
2. That, at the moment, plans should be put in place for Stromness Bonfire Night 2020 to go ahead.
3. That should the actual event be cancelled due to Covid-19, it may be possible to hold a virtual event which could include the “pop” competition being online, as well as live streaming the firework display to enable the event to be watched remotely.

5. Correspondence

A. Keith Allardyce Hobbs – Proposed Public Memorial

Following correspondence received from D Stout and B Wilson, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a proposed public memorial for Keith Allardyce Hobbs, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved, that in the first instance, J Park should liaise with D Stout and B Wilson and suggest a bench with memorial brass plaque rather than a wall mounted plaque.

B. Covid-19 Lockdown Measures

Following correspondence received from Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, copies of which had been circulated, relating to issues raised by Stromness Community Council regarding specific arrangements relating to islands when planning the release of Covid-19 lockdown measures, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

C. Memorial Remediation work in Burial Grounds

Following correspondence received from the Strategic Policy and Projects Manager, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that instructions had been issued to contractors that they can recommence memorial safety throughout a number of cemeteries in Orkney, including Warebeth Cemetery.

D. 'To Absent Friends'

Following correspondence received from the Burial Grounds Officer, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That the annual festival called 'To Absent Friends' is a week in November where local communities could arrange events to remember those who have passed.
2. That the organisation 'To Absent Friends' had made available small grants of £250 to arrange and host events locally.

E. Town Centre Fund

Following correspondence received from the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. The correspondence giving an update on approved projects and raising awareness of Town Centre Fund timescales and remaining money.
2. That the Chair, Vice Chair and K Bevan would be participating in a consultation taking place on Monday 31 August at 1500 via Teams and would update members accordingly.

6. Consultation - HIAL Air Traffic Management Strategy: Impact Assessment: Local Consultation

Following consideration of correspondence received from Reference Economic Consultants regarding a consultation on HIAL Air Traffic Management Strategy: Impact Assessment: Local Consultation, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

- A. To note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 30 September 2020.
- B. To note that a one-hour virtual session for Orkney was scheduled for Wednesday, 2 September 2020 where participants would be able to ask any questions they may have.
- C. That W Mackay would respond on behalf of Stromness Community Council.

7. Publications

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

8. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS

The MARS representative informed members that various issues had been reported recently, including potholes at Mayburn Court and Downies Lane, as well as an issue at the Stromness/Sandwick end of the Deepdale Junction near the Block Factory where the junction was breaking up badly, and it was:

Resolved that the information be noted.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

The Stromness Community Business Forum member reported that there were no updates to report at this time, and it was:

Resolved that the information be noted.

C. Stromness Development Trust

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

Resolved to note:

1. That the Development Officer was no longer furloughed and had returned to work.
2. That the Trust had secured £10,000 from a Covid-19 support scheme initiative.
3. That it was hoped that the Christmas Lights would be in place by December.
4. That a new website and Facebook page were being developed.
5. That, due to Covid-19, the Yule Log event would have to be cancelled.

D. Playpark Sub-committee

The Playpark Sub-committee representative advised members that it was hoped the work would be completed by the end of this year, although LEADER had extended the funding until February 2021, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

9. Financial Statements

A. General Finance 2020/2021

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 17 August 2020, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance as at 17 August 2020 was £10,992.06.

B. Sea Haven Account

Following consideration of the Sea Haven Account statement as at 17 August 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 2020/21

Following consideration of the 2020/21 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 17 August 2020, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £3,149.25.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 17 August 2020, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,399.54.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 17 August 2020, it was:

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

10. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Yole Association

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Yole Association, copies of which had been circulated, enquiring whether the funding of £590 which had been agreed by Stromness Community Council previously could be carried forward due to delays caused by Covid-19 and requesting additional financial assistance, as a result of rising costs, towards the cost of publishing a book on Orkney Yoles and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the £590 previously granted could be carried over to the new financial year.
2. That the Clerk should contact Orkney Yole Association requesting that the Association provide updated financial information including details of the additional financial costs that were going to be incurred.

B. Orkney Amateur Swimming Club – Coaching Courses

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the costs of attending SQA Level 1 and Level 2 Coaching Courses for two volunteer coaches enrolled on the courses that reside in Stromness and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That a donation of £180.83 be given towards the cost of attending the coaching courses by two Stromness residents.
2. That, in the first instance, the Clerk should ascertain whether this could be granted from the Community Council Grant Scheme 2020/21.
3. That if the application was not eligible to be paid from the above Grant Scheme, that the donation of £180.83 should be paid from the General Fund.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Bins

Following discussion regarding bins that had not been emptied or had been moved, and the response that had been received from the Democratic Services Manager, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair should contact the relevant department raising concerns regarding:

- The provision of refuse bins around the town.
- The timescale for emptying the bins.
- The fact that the number of bins no longer met the needs of Stromness.

B. Campsite Sign

Following concern raised by a member regarding the welcome signage at the campsite, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should contact the relevant department and suggest that it may be better if the sign said “All Welcome” rather than locals in large lettering with visitors in smaller lettering.

C. Pickaquooy Centre

Following lengthy discussions regarding the Pickaquooy Centre opening as Covid-19 restrictions eased, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair write to the Chairs of Pickaquooy Centre Trust and the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee raising concern that the facilities at the Pickaquooy Centre was only due to open in November and that, if funding was an issue, efforts should be made to identify ways of supporting these facilities to open.

D. Defibrillator

Following consideration of correspondence from a member of the public, who wished to remain anonymous, who had offered to purchase a defibrillator for the Stromness Community, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That a possible site for the defibrillator was outside Stromness Swimming Pool.
2. That G Deans would initially contact Orkney Heart Support Group to ascertain running and maintenance costs of defibrillators.

E. Old Lifeboat Shed, Point of Ness

A member raised concerns regarding the safety of the Old Lifeboat Shed, Point of Ness, and queried who would be the best person to contact about it and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that, in the first instance, G Bevan should raise the matter with the Golf Club.

F. Rabbits, Warebeth Cemetery

A member raised concern regarding the number of rabbits in the Warebeth Cemetery and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant section to again highlight concerns of rabbits in the Warebeth Cemetery.

G. Garson Amenity Site

A member raised concern regarding the Garson Amenity Site. While he was appreciative that waste that was now being accepted at the site was expanding, he expressed concern regarding the fact that the staff could no longer assist members of the public and that for older members of the community this could be a problem. He also highlighted that there was a lunch hour where the Amenity Site was closed which never happened before the site was just unmanned. A member further commented that both Shetland Islands Council and Highland Regional Council had both managed waste considerably better than Orkney Islands Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments raised.

H. Access for Local Emergency Services

A member highlighted the need for members of public to park sensibly when parking on the street and use the correct parking bays which, in turn, would enable the emergency services to be able to drive through the street safely. Following discussion, it was agreed that following a plea to members of the public, if the parking did not improve, then the police should be contacted, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments raised.

I. Press and Public Communications

A member raised concern regarding members of the press and public not being able to attend meetings held via Teams and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that a press release should be issued to the press and posted on Facebook outlining matters that had been discussed at the meeting.

J. Harry the Snake

A member highlighted that Harry the Snake would need to be moved shortly due to high tides, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments raised.

K. Islands Deal

Following an update from Councillor James Stockan, regarding the Islands Deal, it was:

Resolved to note:

- That there was significant government support to look at the Industrial Strategy.
- That the campus space was booked for the next phase.
- That there were cross-cutting benefits for the Art Strategy across all three islands, with the Pier Arts Centre very much at the heart.
- That another major project was the Neolithic Orkney Interpretation Centre.

L. Benches

Following an update from a member, it was:

Resolved to note:

- That some of the benches around Stromness were in poor condition.
- That W Mackay would liaise with the Clerk to ascertain what benches were the responsibility of Stromness Community Council and which were the responsibility of the Council.

M. Public Toilets

A member raised his disappointment at public toilets at beaches still being closed, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the concerns raised.

N. Spending in Supermarkets v Local Shops

A member had heard that there was a report which compared the spending at the Tesco store, Kirkwall, compared to local shops during lockdown and queried the outcome. Councillors confirmed that they had not seen this report, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments raised.

O. Pride in the Community

A member queried whether the Council would co-ordinate events such as Keep Britain Tidy and other national events, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments raised.

P. Town House Garden

The Chair raised the issue that there were a lot of tall plants growing in the Town House Garden which could obscure the view of the stage area, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the plants in the Town House Garden should be cut back.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held on Monday, 5 October 2020, commencing at 19:00.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:20.