

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in the Town House, Stromness, on Monday, 25 November 2019 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, E Knight, K Bevan, G Deans, K Donald and J Mowat.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R Crichton.
- Councillor J Stockan.
- G Burton, Sport and Leisure Services Manager (for Item 2).
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- One member of the press.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of J Park, W Mackay and Councillor M Thomson.

2. Sport and Leisure Services Manager

A. Advertising Boards at Market Green

The Sport and Leisure Services Manager circulated samples of materials that could be used for the advertising boards. He went on to explain that at Kirkwall Grammar School they were fixed by means of a hole drilled through and cable tied on fences. The proposed size would be roughly 6x3ft, with the annual cost being in the region of £200-£250.

He then went on to explain that, if members were in agreement, draft letters would be sent to all local businesses in Stromness detailing the proposal. If take up of the proposal was poor, businesses out-with Stromness would then be contacted to see if they were interested. Take up would be on a first come first served basis. Space would be reserved near the roundabout for a “community notice board” type area where casual signs could be erected and, following further discussion, it was resolved:

1. To note that Stromness Community Council were in favour of the proposal.
2. That the Sport and Leisure Services Manager would progress the proposal and keep members informed of progress.

B. Hillside Road – Play Space

With reference to the Minute of the Meeting held on 7 October 2019, paragraph 5b, the Sport and Leisure Services Manager informed members that he had confirmed with the Estates Manager that the Council were in ownership of the land where the rope swings had been erected and would therefore be liable should an accident occur. He felt that there were two options which could be explored:

- That the Community Council take on liability for the area.
- That the Community Council or a community group take ownership of the area by way of a Community Asset Transfer.

Councillor J Stockan queried whether it would be feasible for a 3rd party to have insurance for an area of land that they did not own. A member thought it would be hard to get insurance, but it may be possible to get public liability insurance.

A member queried what the incremental cost would be to the Council to insure that area. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager was unsure but stated that at the moment the area came under public liability insurance, but now with the addition of the rope swings this would now be classed as a “different use”. He went on to advise that the Council could not guarantee the safety of the rope swings and asked what would happen, for example, if an adult were to use the swings and a branch were to snap causing injury.

The Chair stated that at this time of year the area was being used less than it had been and, whilst not against the play area, felt that perhaps 8 buoys were too many. The buoys were clearly visible now that the leaves had fallen off the trees and concern was also raised that “steps” which had been nailed into the trees may cause damage to them.

A member stated that if the Community Council were to take responsibility for the area, that would be shifting the problem rather than resolving the issue.

Another member also raised concerns regarding the safety of the ropes and stated that careful consideration should be given to the risk of the ropes rotting and a member of the public being injured. He also queried who would be liable if there were no rope swings and a member of the public injured themselves while climbing one of the trees. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager was unsure and stated that he would investigate that scenario.

Following further discussion, it was:

Resolved that, in the first instance, the Sport and Leisure Services Manager should:

1. Approach the residents who had erected the rope swings, proposing the option of a community group taking ownership of the area by way of a Community Asset Transfer.
2. Raise the issue of insurance and liability with the above-mentioned residents.

C. Stromness Town Hall - Update

1. Heating

The Chair referred to the email received from Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, confirming that an upgrade of the oil heating system was planned for 2020. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager also confirmed that he would contact the relevant department and ask for a specific timeframe when the work would be done, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

2. Piano Cupboard Leak

The Chair asked the Sport and Leisure Services Manager whether there was an update on the leak in the piano cupboard. The Sport and Leisure Services Manager was unaware that there had been a leak but would look into it, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

3. Town Centre Fund

Following a query in relation to what progress had been made regarding the Town Centre Fund, a member stated that the Trust and Community Council had identified that the Community Centre should be improved.

The Chair informed members that following confirmation that the Town Hall heating would be updated in 2020, she had met with Alister Brown and discussed providing access to the upstairs of the Community Centre via the entrance from Franklin Road. However, she had subsequently received an email from Alister Brown deeming the proposal unlikely to be taken forward in this year's fund.

The Sport and Leisure Services Manager confirmed that he had met with Alister Brown who had discussed the access, as well as the possibility of the nursery room upgrade. Costings for this work had been done a number of years ago and was in the region of £70,000, and following further discussion it was:

Resolved that the Chair should write to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure requesting that the Nursery Room at Stromness Community Centre be upgraded and refurbished from the 2019/2020 Town Centre Funding.

3. Police Matters

No police representative was present at the meeting but had intimated that any queries or concerns members had should be emailed in, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 7 October 2019 was approved, being proposed by P McLaughlin and seconded by E Knight, subject to the following amendments:

1. Paragraph 4K, the 7th paragraph starting "K Bevan informed members" be deleted.
2. Paragraph 5C – that the following be added:
 - a. To note that the opening times at Stromness Pool and Fitness Centre had been raised with the Sports and Leisure Services Manager.

5. Matters Arising

A. Jack Renton – Proposed Plaque

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

1. To note that a scale map of 1:1250 had been sourced at a cost of £15.60.
2. That the Clerk would query the advertisement consent which had been quoted at £202.50.

B. Stromness Town Hall

Resolved to note that this item had been discussed at paragraph 2C above.

C. Right of Way Access – Warebeth Road/Gaudiesback

Following an update from the Councillor R Crichton, it was resolved:

1.To note that Councillor R Crichton had met with the relevant official at the area concerned and were unsure of what the issue was.

2.That Councillor R Crichton would liaise with the member who had raised the issue.

D. Trees/Shrubs – Outertown

Following an update from Councillor R Crichton, it was:

Resolved to note that the issue was now resolved.

E. Heritage Guides Reprint

Resolved to note that no progress had been made on this item.

F. Town Centre Fund

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved to note that this item had been discussed at Item 2c3 above.

G. Housing

Resolved to note that this item would be considered at Item 10b below.

H. New Ferry Contract

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Ferries Policy Officer, Transport Scotland, copies of which had been circulated, regarding Serco Northlink Ferries Stromness to Scrabster route, it was resolved:

1. To note that prior to Scottish Ministers introducing reduced fares on ferry services to Orkney and Shetland, legal certainty needed to be established regarding the official State Aid Complaint that was made to the European Commission before the Scottish Government could implement the preferred policy.

2. That Scottish Government officials were engaged directly with the European Commission to establish an agreed mechanism for delivering RET for Orkney and Shetland.

3. That until the complaint was resolved, no fare changes to the Pentland Firth services would be made.

4. That regarding continuity of service, Serco NorthLink Ferries would work hard to ensure that travel demands be met between Orkney and Caithness during the upcoming dry dock of the MV Hamnavoe, achieving minimal impact on passengers.

5. That while the new contract for the Northern Isles ferry services had been awarded to Serco, this was a live procurement which was currently within the standstill period, therefore there was a limit on what could be said at this time.

6. That it was believed that the tender would deliver the best possible ferry service that met the needs of the communities of Orkney and Shetland and provided value for money to the taxpayer.

7. That the new contract included flexibility for additional tonnage, routes and sailings to reflect prevailing market conditions.

8. In order to comply with State Aid rules, the services provided must be proportionate to need.

9. The need for additional sailings would be closely monitored throughout the contract.

I. Rackwick Pylons

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would contact W Mackay to see if a letter had been sent indicating support for the use of underground cables in Rackwick, and if not, the Chair would email Councillor J Stockan to add Stromness Community Council's support to his correspondence.

J. Bench, South End

Following an update from the Chair, it was:

Resolved that as this issue was a landowner dispute, the Community Council would not get involved.

6. Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony 2019

Following discussion regarding the tree lighting ceremony, it was:

Resolved to note that the final arrangements for the tree lighting ceremony were now in hand.

7. Intergenerational Opportunities

G Deans had nothing to report at this time, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

8. Stromness: Pride in Our Community

E Knight had no update to report at this time, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

9. Correspondence – National Lottery Community Fund

Following consideration of correspondence received from the National Lottery Community Fund, copies of which had been previously circulated, and following further discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair should submit an application to the National Lottery Community Fund for funding towards equipment/implementation costs for the Stromness: Pride in Our Community Tidy Up project.

10. Consultations

A. HMPA Scapa Flow and Queen of Sweden

Following consideration of the consultation documents on Historic Marine Protected Areas Scapa Flow and Queen of Sweden, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 27 November 2019.

B. Draft Development Brief for Upper Sunnybank, Stromness

Following consideration of the consultation documents on the draft Development Brief for Upper Sunnybank, Stromness, copies of which had been circulated, it was resolved:

1. To note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 12 December 2019.
2. That the Chair should respond on behalf of the Community Council.

C. Boundary Commission

Following consideration of the consultation documents on the Review of Electoral Boundaries by the Local Boundary Commission, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 2 December 2019.

D. Draft Planning Policy Advice – Amenity and Minimising Obtrusive Lighting

Following consideration of the draft Planning Policy Advice – Amenity and Minimising Obtrusive Lighting, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 19 December 2019.

E. Verge Maintenance Plan Consultation

Following consideration of responses from the Roads Support Officer regarding the previously circulated consultation on the Verge Maintenance Plan, copies of which had been circulated, it was resolved:

1. To note the response from the Roads Support Officer.
2. That the Verge Maintenance Plan would be forwarded in due course for consideration.

F. Winter Service Plan Consultation

Following consideration of responses from the Roads Support Officer regarding the Winter Services Plan, copies of which had been circulated, it was resolved:

1. To note the response from the Roads Support Officer.
2. That the final Winter Services Plan and relevant Maps were available from <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/W/Winter-Service-Plan.htm>.

G. Mental Health Strategy

Following consideration of the draft Mental Health Strategy, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 29 January 2019.

H. Burial Grounds Code of Practice

Following consideration of the Burial Grounds Code of Practice, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that comments to the consultation should be received no later than 15 January 2020.

11. Publication: Scottish Water – Newsletter

Following consideration of the Scottish Water Newsletter, October 2019, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the publication.

12. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS

Resolved to note that, as there was no MARS representative present, there was nothing to report.

B. Stromness Community Business Forum

The Stromness Community Business Forum representative was not present but had previously circulated the Minute of the Meeting of the Business Forum held on 25 September 2019, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Development Trust

1. Christmas Lights Proposal

The Development Trust representative gave a quick summary as to where the Trust was regarding the Christmas lights proposal. The Trust have the capital funds to purchase the Christmas lights which would be the type that hang from a lamppost

and would be erected along Ferry Road. However, as there were considerable recurring costs associated with the installation and removal of the lights on an annual basis, plus costs associated with insurance, without any form of income stream to support these costs, the Trust were unable to proceed further with the project in its current form.

He went on to say that the Council had been clear that they were only responsible for installing and removing the existing lights, and due to budget pressures, were not able to add any additional lighting without charging.

A member stated that from the Community Council's point of view, there was a responsibility to the group that had raised funds to go towards the lights, to try and see this proposal through to a conclusion. Regarding the recurring costs, he queried the cost quoted for the insurance and wondered whether this would be covered by the Council's public liability insurance as they would be erecting the lights. He also wondered what had happened in other areas such as Finstown where additional lights had been added over the years.

Regarding the ongoing costs he wondered whether businesses in Stromness had been approached and asked whether they would contribute something towards the costs associated with the annual costs.

A member queried whether the lights that were erected around the Pier Head were also to be replaced. The Development Trust representative stated that those lights were not part of the current proposal. He went on to say that if the current proposal could not be progressed, another idea was that buildings could be lit throughout the town which may have fewer recurring costs.

A member also raised that Kirkwall had lights that were not specifically "Christmassy" and therefore were able to keep them up throughout the year and wondered whether this may be an option. The Development Trust representative thought potentially this may be an option, but ongoing repair and maintenance costs would need to be factored in if looking at this proposal.

Following further discussion, the Development Trust representative confirmed that he would speak to the Community Business Forum and the Trust regarding comments raised by the Community Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

2. Development Officer

The Development Trust representative informed members that the Trust now had an office within the Commercial Hotel for the Development Officer, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

3. SCD Minutes

As Stromness Community Business Forum had circulated their minutes to Community Council members, the Development Trust representative wondered if it would be worthwhile that, in terms of transparency and to enable Community Council

members to get a feel for the ongoing work, the Development Trust do the same, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

4. Stromness Website

The Development Trust representative informed members that as the Stromness Orkney website was due to be replaced, the Development Officer was working on a new Stromness website, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Playpark Sub-committee

The Playpark Sub-committee representative informed members that work was ongoing at the new playpark and it was hoped that it would be ready by Spring 2020.

He also informed members that a new Orkney Play Area Strategy had been issued which included an annex giving examples of stages and responsibilities when developing a play area. Under ongoing maintenance, it stated that there would be a requirement for the group to fund raise annually in order to contribute to ongoing maintenance costs. He felt that this was open to interpretation. Councillor R Crichton confirmed that he would check this point with the Sport and Leisure Services Manager.

The Playpark Sub-committee representative also noted that communities had not been involved in the review of the Strategy, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

13. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

After consideration of the General Finance statement as at 1 November 2019, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £6,681.16.

B. Sea Haven Account

After consideration of the Sea Haven Account statement as at 1 November 2019, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £9,824.62 of which:

1. £3,607.90 would be held to be released once the Christmas lights had been purchased for the town.
2. £5,000 which was ring-fenced for redevelopment of the playpark at Guardhouse Park.

3. £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.

4. £1,050.72 to be solely used for the upkeep and maintenance of the stage.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2019/2020 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 1 November 2019, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £576.40.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 1 November 2019, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £3,699.54.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 1 November 2019, it was:

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

14. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Amateur Swimming Club – North District Open Aberdeen 9/10 November 2019

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of one Stromness resident attending the North District Open in Aberdeen on 9/10 November 2019, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 be given towards one Stromness resident attending the North District Open in Aberdeen on 9/10 November 2019.

B. Orkney Amateur Swimming Club – North District Age Group Inverness 23/24 November 2019

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Amateur Swimming Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of two Stromness residents attending the North District Age Group in Inverness on 23/24 November 2019, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £13 to each of the two Stromness residents, totalling £26, be given towards the cost of attending the North District Age Group Inverness on 23/24 November 2019.

15. Any Other Competent Business

A. Ferry Road Toilets

Following a recent Business Forum meeting, a member had raised concerns with the Community Council regarding the condition of the Ferry Road toilets. Councillor R Crichton had raised the concerns with the relevant department who had confirmed that the toilets would be inspected, following which a works order would be raised. The priority was to have the facility freshened up for the Summer. The facility may need to be closed during the works to assist with the drying processes, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Hamnavoe Bus Shelter

Following correspondence received from the Transport Department regarding a complaint from a member of the public concerning the bus shelter at Hamnavoe being very dirty and used to smoke in by school children, and following discussion, it was resolved:

1. That the Chair would write to the Head Teacher at Stromness Academy highlighting the concerns raised.
2. That Councillor R Crichton would raise with the relevant department of the Council that there was no bin situated at the shelter.

C. Harbour Clock at Pier Head

A member highlighted that the Harbour Clock at the Pier Head was not working, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that Councillor R Crichton would raise the matter with the relevant department of the Council.

D. GMB Garden

A member raised that a letter of thanks should be sent to L Adamson thanking him for work carried out in the GMB Garden, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should send L Adamson a letter of thanks.

E. Bushes at GMB Garden

A member raised concern that the bushes at the GMB Gardens were now growing into the wall and would need to be pruned early in the New Year, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Stone Benches

A member raised concern regarding two stone benches at the bottom of Well Park which were crumbling and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that Councillor J Stockan would contact the relevant department to try to ascertain who was responsible for the stone benches.

G. Stromness Shopping Week Committee

1. Bunting

The Chair informed members that the bunting was in the possession of a former Shopping Week Committee member. She was in the process of contacting him to arrange to pick it up and would then store the bunting either with the stage or in the cupboard in Stromness Town Hall, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

2. Abandoned Raft

The Chair informed members that she had previously been in touch with a member of Stromness Shopping Week highlighting that there was still a raft in the marina that had not been removed from the Daft Raft Race during Shopping Week. As the raft had still not been removed, she had since emailed the new Chair of Stromness Shopping Week highlighting the issue, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

H. Responding to Emails

The Chair asked that when emails were circulated that required a response, all members could respond ensuring that everyone was copied in, and it was:

Resolved to note the request.

I. Hand Rail – Boy's Lane

Councillor J Stockan informed members that a hand rail was to be erected from the top of Boy's Lane to the steps, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

16. Date of Next Meeting

That the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held on Monday, 20 January 2020 in the Town House, Stromness, commencing at 19:00.

17. Conclusion of Meeting

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