

Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwick Community Council held in the Milestone Community Church and via teams on Wednesday, 13 November 2024 at 19:30

Present:

Mr D Hamilton, Mr C Kirkness, Mr G Brown, Mrs E Grant and Mrs K Ritch.

In Attendance:

- Councillor O Tierney.
- Councillor D Tullock.
- Councillor J Stevenson.
- Mr S Spence, Birsay Community Council.
- Mrs J Montgomery, Empowering Communities Liaison Officer.
- Mrs H Keveren, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies had been received from Ms H Woodsford-Deans, Mr K Groundwater and Mr G Sinclair, and Councillor R King.

Members were also advised that Ms H Woodsford-Deans and Mr G Sinclair had both submitted their intention to resign from the Community Council with immediate effect.

2. Election of Office Bearers

A. Appointment of Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr D Hamilton was duly appointed as Chair of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

B. Appointment of Vice Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr C Kirkness was duly appointed as Vice Chair of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

C. Appointment of Planning Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr G Brown was duly appointed as Planning Representative of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

D. Appointment of Health and Care Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mrs K Ritch was duly appointment as Health and Care Representative of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 28 August 2024 was approved, being proposed by Mrs K Ritch and seconded by Mrs E Grant.

4. Matters Arising

A Dounby School Play Park Fund

The meeting was advised that Mr D MacBeth from Dounby School Parent Council had given a presentation on the proposed playpark at Dounby School (replacing the existing facilities) at the joint meeting with Birsay Community Council held on 24 September 2024. The primary aim of the play park was to create a safe, engaging, and inclusive space where children could play, learn, and grow. It would feature a variety of play structures designed to cater for different age groups and abilities, including swings, slides and climbing frames.

The total estimated cost of the project was in the region of £25K, covering planning, equipment purchases, installation and initial maintenance, however if the group was able to secure additional funding, they would like to cost for better equipment. They had had positive feedback from OIC that £25k would be funded by them through the playpark fund, and they would be grateful for any funds that the Community Council could contribute.

The Parent Council had requested a representative from the Community Council attend their next meeting with a view to becoming part of the committee, and Mrs E Grant agreed to represent Harray and Sandwick Community Council at the Dounby Parent Council meeting, which was to be held on Thursday, 14 November. She agreed to provide an update at the next Community Council meeting with regards the funding still required, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Mrs E Grant would represent Harray and Sandwick Community Council at the upcoming meeting of Dounby School Parent Council.
2. To resume consideration of provision of funding at the next CC meeting on 29 January 2025.

B. Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society

It was recalled that representatives of the Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society had given a presentation at the joint meeting with Birsay Community Council held on 24 September 2024. They had enlightened members about the proposed feasibility study on the Dounby Showpark and pavilion and how the facilities could be developed to increase the use from just a few days a year to being utilised more often by both the Society and the wider community.

They explained that the current facilities were not up-to-standard and a first aid and welfare unit along with disabled toilets would be a priority in the proposed plans.

Funding for the feasibility study had already been secured from CDF and the Crown Estate to fund the majority of the feasibility study, however they had a shortfall of £2,780 which the Society was appealing for assistance with. After discussion, it was:

Resolved to support OWMAS with a donation of £200 from the General Fund towards the proposed feasibility study.

C. Orkney Quiet Routes/Local Place Plan

At the recent joint meeting with Birsay Community Council the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, had advised that all funding had been removed for the 'Quiet Routes' project. However, they would continue to collect data such as vehicle movement and speeds from the markers in place and then a decision would be made as to what to do with this data.

The Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, had also advised that a Local Place Plan had already been drawn up for Dounby and copies of maps

highlighting walking and cycling routes along with existing infrastructure were circulated to members. Some of the suggestions from members were as follows:

- Additional footpaths – Northbigging route.
- Accessible footpaths – ensure that essential routes can be accessed by all (Roads Department to review).
- Zebra crossing – (roads standards may not always fit with Orkneys requirements).
- Options to slow down traffic – raised platforms or textured areas.
- Parking – additional parking required in the village.
- Hub based approach for the West Mainland.
- Recycling Centre – use some of the additional area owned by OIC to develop and incorporate an entry / exit system.
- Walkway through Vias Moss – development of the unused land into an attractive area in the village.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note that members were encouraged to be part of Sustrans 'Friends of Dounby' and engage in the proposed development of the village.

D. Tree Lighting Update

Further to the meeting held with Birsay Community Council, all plans for the tree lighting ceremony on Friday, 6 December were discussed. It was noted that a road closure for the Hillside Road – B9037 had been requested and the cost was estimated at £1,307. After discussion members felt that, for safety reasons this year, whilst space was limited on the Market Green, a road closure should also be requested for the main road through Dounby – A986 for the duration of the tree lighting, providing the cost for both did not exceed £2,000 (which would be split equally between the Community Councils from CC Grant Scheme), and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the tree would be located on the Market Green and the tree would be funded by Birsay, Harray and Sandwick Community Councils from the General Fund.
2. That the Chairman would ask Karl Wood to cut the area at the Market Green in preparation for the tree going up.
3. That a road closure for the Hillside Road – B9037 and the main road through Dounby – A986 for the duration of the tree lighting would be requested, and that the cost would be split equally between the Community Councils from CC Grant Scheme, providing it did not exceed £2,000.
3. To note that the additional festive lights had been received and a quote had been received from E Frasers, Electricians for the cost of £1,402 to erect and dismantle the lights. The quote had been accepted and would be paid from CC Grant Scheme.

4. To ask if the braid lights could stay connected throughout the year similar to those in Stromness to save costs in future years of having to re-connect.
5. To note that two extra sets of lights had been requested.
6. That members of Birsay, Harray and Sandwick Community Councils agree to split the cost equally from their general fund for the Selection Boxes, hire of the church and the donation to the Town Brass Band who had kindly agreed to play.
7. To note that the Ministers of the Milestone Kirk had agreed to deliver the Christmas Message, children of the school had been advised of the event and would learn the songs at school, and that two members of the Dounby Boys Brigade would be asked to switch on the lights.
8. That members of both Community Councils had been asked to assist with putting the tree up on Tuesday, 3 December and also at the Tree Lighting Ceremony on Friday, 6 December.

E. Grit Bin – Sandwick Hall

Following consideration of quotes received from Roads Support with regards the cost of purchasing a grit bin at the Sandwick Hall, members felt, as the Council would not supply as it was on a P2 route with no known issues, that the information should be passed onto the Sandwick Community Association for their consideration, and it was:

Resolved to note that the quotes for supply of a grit bin and grit would be passed over to Sandwick Community Association.

F. Buses on Linday Road

Members heard that the issue which had previously been raised regarding buses using the Linday Road on a regular basis had been forwarded to the relevant department, with the request that a 'No Buses' sign be erected, and it was:

Resolved to note that a response was awaited and would be raised again via the business letter.

G. Speed Check Lights – Dounby

Following consideration of the on-going issue of speeding in the village, members felt that Dounby must be nearing the top of the list of rotation for the 'Smiley Faces', and it was:

Resolved to enquire via the business letter for an update.

H. Recycling Centre – Dounby

Members were advised that the pothole at the entrance to the Recycling Centre in Dounby had been fixed, and it was:

Resolved to note the above information.

I. NS&I CC Attendance

A request had been submitted to NS&I enquiring if they would consider coming along to the first 30 minutes of each meeting to discuss relevant issues. It was advised that they would discuss this as a team and report back, and it was:

Resolved to note the above information.

J. Lochside Viewpoint – Stoney Hill

Following consideration of replacement benches at the Lochside Viewpoint as well as various locations throughout the parishes of Birsay, Harray and Sandwick, quotes had been received and funding options discussed. It was felt that this was a project that the Community Councils could fund themselves from CC Grant Scheme and would be discussed again at the meeting in January, prior to which time the Chair would seek clarification as to whether Lochside Viewpoint was in the parish of Harray, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair would find out the location of Lochside Viewpoint.

K. Speed Limits on A986 Harray to Dounby

The ongoing issue of speeding raised by a resident on the A986 outside Dounby was discussed by members and results of counters were to be reported, and it was:

Resolved to enquire via business letter the outcome of this survey.

5. Correspondence

A. OIC Winter Treatment Contracts

Following consideration of correspondence from the Council advising members that tenders were being invited from contractors or farmers with plant equipment for hire that could assist during periods of extreme weather or for civil engineering works, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. School Crossing Patrol - Dounby

A letter had been received from a resident in Dounby expressing their concerns about the situation with children going to school having to cross the main road through Dounby. The author questioned if a School Crossing attendant could be put in place, and after discussion it was noted that this had last been questioned in October 2024 and the footfall was not sufficient to provide a Zebra crossing or a School Crossing Patrol. Members agreed that the village was busy especially at School times and perhaps this is something that Sustrans could be alerted to and also a matter that could be brought to the attention of Dounby Parent Council, and it was:

Resolved:

1. Respond to resident advising that footfall was not adequate to justify a Crossing Patrol and to bring the matter to the attention of the Dounby Parent Council.
2. To bring this matter to the attention of Sustrans who would be doing a walk around in Dounby as part of the Dounby Place Plan.

C. Orkney Community Council Conference

Members were advised that both the Chair and Vice-Chair had attended the Orkney Community Council Conference which was held on 4 October 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that it had proved beneficial for them.

D. Winter Service Plan

Correspondence had been circulated to members with the results of the consultation process held earlier relating to the Winter Service Plan along with relevant comments from the Roads Department, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Sustrans Scotland – Friends of Dounby

Members considered correspondence received from Sustrans Scotland asking for the wider community of the Dounby village to engage with them to form a group 'Friends of Dounby' to move forward the plans to develop better facilities in the village for 'Walking' Wheeling and Cycling'. The first meeting is due to be held in the Milestone Community Church on Friday, 6 December where a few of the Community Council had registered their interest to be involved, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above information.

F. Market Green Update

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated received from the Senior Quantity Surveyor from within the Council, members noted that the works had currently halted awaiting the results of a contamination survey. Discussion followed and the Planning Representative for Harray and Sandwick Community Council reported that a planning application had come in this week to remove a fuel tank. Work appeared to have resumed and the competition date has been extended from end of February to end of April, and it was:

Resolved to request another update prior to Christmas.

G. Thank you letter

Members were advised that letters of thanks had been received from Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council, Mrs K Ritch for her daughters two Netball trip, Mrs S Moar for her daughters' Gymnastic trip and Harray SWI for the contribution towards their Halloween Party, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

H. Dounby Parent Council – Meeting Invite

Following consideration of correspondence from Dounby Parent Council inviting representatives from the Community Council along to their meeting on 14 November, Mrs E Grant agreed to attend on behalf of Harray and Sandwick Community Council, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

6. Consultations

A. Highlands and Islands Enterprise – The Voice of Communities Survey

Following consideration of correspondence from Highlands and Islands Enterprise requesting community organisations share their aspirations, plans and challenge in a survey entitled ‘The Voice of Communities’, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. Scottish Government Consultation – National Care Service

Further to the recent correspondence received from the Scottish Government in relation to National Care Service members were advised of online sessions which members of the community were invited to attend, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Scottish Islands Federation – Post School Education and Skills Reform

Following consideration of correspondence circulated from Scottish Islands Federation’s consultation seeking views on the changes to the roles and functions of the three funding bodies in the post-school system, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Orkney Local Development Plan

Members considered correspondence previously emailed requesting members of the community council and wider community to complete the online survey to put forward their views for consideration in the Orkney Local Development Plan. The review was particularly interested in people’s ideas for the community, landowners wishing to be included in the plan and the opinions from young people of facilities available and facilities which could be provided, and it was:

Resolved to note that the closing date for opinions had passed and hoped that a good response had been received.

E. Orkney Towns Fund – Online Community Engagement

An invitation had previously been circulated to members advising them of an online event being held by Orkney Towns Fund requesting community engagement in helping to shape the future of our community, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had now passed.

F. Boundaries Scotland Consultation

Correspondence had been previously circulated to members advising that Boundaries Scotland had published its Further Proposals for constituency boundaries and Provisional Proposals for new region boundaries for the Scottish Parliament. Publication of the proposal was followed by a consultation period whereby comments concerning the proposals were invited, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline for comments had now passed.

G. Orkney Islands Licensing Board – Skara Brae Visitor Centre

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members advising of an application from Historic Environment Scotland requesting permission to extend the size and opening hours of the off-sale facilities at Skara Brae Visitor Centre, it was:

Resolved to note that the date for comments had now passed.

H. Voluntary Action Orkney

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated from Voluntary Action Orkney appealing for charity organisations and community groups to complete a survey to help identify how they can provide support going forward, it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline for completion of the survey had now passed.

I. Heather Anderson – University of Stirling – Research on Private Water Supplies

Communication had previously been circulated from Heather Anderson, a researcher at the University of Stirling, who was investigating private water supply quality in Scotland. Anyone in the community who currently or previously had a private water supply were invited to complete a survey relating to the quality of their water and how effective the current support is for improving private supplies, and it was:

Resolved to note that this information has been circulated to the wider community.

J. Offshore Wind Power Ltd – West of Orkney Windfarm

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated from West of Orkney Windfarm relating to the proposed offshore windfarm to be located 28km West of Hoy, it was noted that various items of additional information had been submitted by the developer which required public consultation, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline for responses was 3 December 2024.

K. Orkney Matters 2 – online conversations

Members considered an invitation from Orkney Matters 2 which followed on from Orkney Matters, a community engagement programme held in 2020-21 which saw partners from across the Orkney Partnership meet with communities across Orkney to identify key issues to these areas. Everyone was invited to take part and talk about what is most important to them and their community, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had now passed.

L. Insights on Community Resilience in Emergencies

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated from The Scottish Government Resilient Communities Team, requesting members insights and information on a range of resilience issues and how Community Councils are supporting local people through emergencies and challenging situations and what further support might be needed, it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline had now passed.

M. OWMAS – Dounby Show Park Survey

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated from Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society requesting members complete a short survey on how to enhance and develop the facilities to extend the use of the Show Park, it was:

Resolved to note that members were encouraged to complete the survey to assist the committee with their project.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Fund statement, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £15,007.16 as at 31 October 2024.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Council Grant Scheme, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining available for approval in the main capping limit was £2,814.54 and the balance in the additional capping limit was £765 as at 31 October 2024.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Development Fund, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining available for allocation was £5,000 as at 30 October 2024.

8. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Karen Ritch – Netball Trip

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members via email from Karen Ritch on behalf of her daughter who had been successful in selection to play for U17's Netball at games in both Aberdeen and Dundee, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £46 the full amount claimed from the General Fund for the trip to Aberdeen in September and £40 from the General Fund for the game in Dundee in November.

B. Harray SWI – Kids Halloween Party

Following consideration of correspondence received from Harray SWI and previously circulated to members via email for assistance towards the kid's yearly Hallowe'en Party and it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £200 from the CCGS Fund.

C. Orkney Pilgrimage – St Magnus Way

Members considered correspondence received from Orkney Pilgrimage appealing for assistance with the general upkeep and running costs incurred in maintaining the St Magnus part of which runs through Harray. Following discussion, members felt that the St Magnus Way benefits lots and was extremely popular, and it was:

Resolved to note that members agreed to award £100 from the General Fund.

D. Shona Moar – Gymnastic Trip

Following consideration of correspondence received and circulated via email from Shona Harvey requesting financial assistance for her daughter who had been selected for a Gymnastics competition in Inverness, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed via email to award £60 from the General Fund as per policy.

9. Publications

Resolved to note that the following publications had been forwarded to members:

- VAO – Newsletter – August, September and October 2024.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – September and October 2024.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – October 2024.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Remembrance Wreath – Harray and Sandwich

Members had agreed by email to fund the cost of the Remembrance wreaths to the community to be laid at both the Harray and Sandwich War Memorials, and it was:

Resolved to use Community Council Grant Scheme for the purchase of the wreaths.

B. Harray and Sandwich Community Council Vacancies

Following the resignation of two members of the Harray and Sandwich Community Council, a discussion was held on recruiting to the vacancies. Members felt they could do a campaign on Facebook to attract new members, and existing members could contact people. If there was enough interest, a public meeting could be advertised ahead of the next meeting on 29 January 2025, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That a poster be uploaded to Facebook and members would campaign to generate interest.
2. That, if there was enough interest, that Democratic Services would be advised to advertise a public meeting at least one week before the next meeting.

C. No Footpath Signs

A member suggested that the area between Dounby and Northbigging junction may benefit from 'No Footpath' signs which he had recently seen when travelling on the A9. Following discussions, members felt that the sign would be misleading as the sign would normally be between areas when a pathway would resume within a short distance, and it was:

Resolved to note that the area does need traffic calming measures but the sign was not appropriate.

D. St Peters Carpark – Sandwich

Members were advised that the road materials had still not been spread in the area of St Peters Carpark to fill in the potholes, and it was:

Resolved to note that a letter would be sent to Mr G Sinclair requesting that this be dealt with.

E. Training – Planning Representative

The Planning Representative advised that he had been invited to a training session on Thursday, 20 November and, as newly re-elected representative for Harray and Sandwich, he would be attending, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above information.

11. Dates of future meetings

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

Resolved that the next meetings of Harray and Sandwick Community Council would be held on 29 January and 12 March 2025 in the Milestone Community Church and via Microsoft Teams.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:55.