

Minute of the Meeting of Birsay Community Council held in Birsay Community Centre and via Teams on Thursday, 30 May 2024 at 19:30

Present:

Mr R Delday, Miss K Coghill, Ms D Clouston and Mr S Spence.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R King.
- Councillor O Tierney.
- Councillor D Tullock.
- Mr K MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
- Mr A Leitch, RSPB.
- Mr J Wells, RSPB.
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
- Ms J Smith-Saville, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk (via Teams).
- Mrs H Keveren, Incoming West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

Order of Business

1. Apologies	2
2. Discussion – RSPB - Marwick Bay Access.....	2
3. Presentation – RSPB – Peatland Restoration	2
4. Adoption of Minutes	2
5. Birsay Kirkyard Grass Cutting Tender 2024	2
6. Matters Arising.....	3
7. Correspondence	3
8. Consultations	5
9. Financial Statements	7
10. Applications for Financial Assistance.....	7
11. Publications	8
12. Any Other Competent Business.....	9
13. Dates of Future Meetings	10
14. Conclusion of Meeting	10

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies had been received from Mrs V Sinclair and Mr E Harvey and Councillor J Stevenson.

2. Discussion – RSPB - Marwick Bay Access

Members held an in-depth discussion with RSPB representatives concerning the Marwick Bay Access, and concerns regarding dumping of waste materials in the vicinity and proposed barriers to restrict access. Members felt that a single bollard would not be popular, and that there was requirement for further discussions regarding this. The “NO THROUGH ROAD” sign, that was already in place, was discussed. Members stated that the sign was too far down the road, resulting in vehicles having to reverse back along the track, or reverse into a private driveway.

After further discussion, Councillor R King suggested that a coordinated approach between a few interested parties would be the best way forward (Roads, RSPB, Environmental Health, Planning). Members were in favour of this idea, so the RSPB representatives agreed to speak with the Service Manager, Environmental Services. Members were also informed that a new Access Officer was due to start in July, so could also be included in these discussions, and it was:

Resolved to await an update once RSPB had completed discussions with further interested parties.

3. Presentation – RSPB – Peatland Restoration

The RSPB representatives then informed members that, following a view from Peatland Action, it was decided to pause the original peatland restoration plans for January to March 2024 and instead work on restoring a larger area starting in Autumn 2024. This would include the area at Black Moss of Evrigert as was previously planned, but now extends further North and East. The works would also include some maintenance works to the access track up to Fibla Field to allow access by diggers. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

The RSPB representatives left the meeting at this point.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 was approved, being proposed by Ms D Clouston and seconded by Mr S Spence.

5. Birsay Kirkyard Grass Cutting Tender 2024

Following a re-advertisement of the Birsay Kirkyard Grass Cutting Tender for 2024, members had agreed, via email, that the tender be awarded to Mr B Brass for the 2024 season, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

6. Matters Arising

A. Quiet Routes

Members were informed that data collection posts had been placed around dedicated areas in order to collect traffic information to establish quiet routes. The Community Council Liaison Officer stated that a special meeting was to be arranged between Birsay Community Council and Harray and Sandwick Community Council to discuss this, and maps of the areas and an email invite would be forwarded to members, and it was:

Resolved to note the information of above.

B. Treatment of Causeway

Members were informed by the Community Council Liaison Officer that no update had been received from Historic Environment Scotland, and that she will chase this, and it was:

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would chase Historic Environment Scotland for an update.

C. A Poke – Whitemire Farm Track

Members had previously received confirmation from Democratic Services, via email, that the track in question was in the Birsay district, but as Birsay CC did not operate a scheme at this time, members agreed to decline the request for financial help for the track repair. Members asked that A Poke be informed of this decision, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would write and inform A Poke that her request had been declined.

D. St Magnus Church Gate

The Chair stated progress was underway. Ronald Alexander had agreed to fabricate the hinges for the gate, and Alan Norquoy would renovate the gate, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

7. Correspondence

A. Volunteering for Island Games 2025

Correspondence had been previously forward via email requesting the Community Council to promote volunteering for the Island Games, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. Mapping progress towards island decarbonisation

Following consideration of correspondence from SIF, which was currently doing some work to support Community Energy Scotland (CES) and the Carbon Neutral Islands (CNI) project in building up a picture of progress towards decarbonisation across the islands, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Disrupting Criminal Dumpers

Following consideration of correspondence from SEPA outlining that the number of adverts on digital platforms promoting illegal waste collection services had hit an all-time high, SEPA, Scotland's environmental regulator was tackling environmental criminality in the online world, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. SEPA – Scottish Waste from All Sources

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) outlining their publication of the Scottish Waste From All Sources 2022 Official Statistics, which provided details on waste from Scottish households, businesses and public services, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. SSEN PSR Digital Toolkit

Following consideration of correspondence from SSEN requesting Community Councils help in reaching people who may need extra support during power cuts, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Local Place Plan

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from Orkney Islands Council inviting communities the opportunity to prepare a Local Place Plan in their area. The Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure informed members that this was a similar exercise to the Dounby Plan.

Councillor R King stated that a suggestion was put forward to have a special meeting with Harray and Sandwick Community Council to discuss this, along with Quiet Routes. Once a date was set, an invite to the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, would be sent, so that she could attend the meeting and help with discussions, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and to await notification of the special meeting with Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

G. Scottish Ministers – Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from the Scottish Government stating that the Scottish Ministers had granted the variation to the Pentland Floating Offshore Wind Farm consent. The Scottish Ministers had also varied the two associated marine licences under section 30(7) of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010., and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Webinar - Designing Homes for Cognitive Ageing

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from NHS Healthcare Improvement Scotland, regarding a webinar on 17 April 2024 where presenters would talk about 'Designing homes for healthy cognitive ageing: a co-productive approach', and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Why Not Scotland? - Independent Screenings

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from SCOTLAND: The Big Picture, inviting communities to have their own screenings on their new feature-length documentary, Why Not Scotland?, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

J. Island Connectivity Plan - Orkney events this week

Following consideration of correspondence from SIF outlining Transport Scotland events taking place in Orkney this week to discuss the Islands Connectivity Plan, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

K. Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from the researcher for Lord (Don) Foster asking for support for their campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

8. Consultations

A. The future of the universal postal service

Members had previously been sent information from SIF concerning a consultation from Ofcom outlining a number of possible changes for the universal postal service, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

B. SEPA - review of areas most at risk of flooding across Scotland

Members had previously been sent information from SEPA concerning the launch of a consultation reviewing areas most at risk of flooding across Scotland, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. OIC Housing Survey

Members had previously been sent information from Orkney Islands Council who had been analysing the results of a recent housing strategy, and note that there was

a gap in data, in that they had not received any responses from local community councils, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Transport Scotland - Islands Connectivity Plan Events

Members had previously been sent information from Transport Scotland regarding Islands Connectivity Plan consultations to be held in Orkney, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service National Public Consultation

Members had previously been sent information from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service outlining the first stage in their engagement with communities, staff, representative bodies, partners, elected members as they consider changes to the emergency service they deliver across Scotland, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Cross-Party Group on Islands and NIP Review consultation analysis

Members had previously been sent information from SIF concerning a National Islands Plan meeting with members of the Young Islanders Network (YIN) who sit on the NIP Delivery Group, followed by Francesco Bertoldi, Islands Team Leader in the Scottish Government. SIF also shared the analysis of the NIP review consultation, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. Review of the Orkney Local Development Plan

Members had previously been sent information from Orkney Islands Council informing members of a survey where members can get involved to help shape Orkney's towns, villages and rural areas and suggest where development should and shouldn't happen, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Review of Gambling Policy - Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board

Members had previously been sent information from Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board as they were carrying out a review of its Gambling Policy in terms of the Gambling Act 2005 during 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Invite to attend a focused discussion group - The SFRS National consultation

Members had previously been sent information from The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service which launched their National Consultation on the future of the Fire and Rescue Service on 30 April, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

9. 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 £8,321.13 as at 21 May 2024.

B. Birsay Energy Fund

Following consideration of the Birsay Energy Fund, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £23,598.09 as at 21 May 2024.

C. 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 £295.68 and the balance in the additional capping limit was £743 as at 21 May 2024.

D. 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 £9,831.09 as at 21 May 2024.

10. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Milestone Community Church – Bag the Bruck

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Milestone Community Church for a donation towards Bag the Bruck, which had already been circulated and agreed by email, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £150 be given.

B. Dounby Football Club – Bag the Bruck

Following consideration of correspondence received from Dounby Football Club requesting a donation towards Bag the Bruck, members agreed to a donation, but agreed that the collection must be completed and the form submitted by the end of the year, or the donation would be awarded to the Milestone Community Church, as their application was received first, and it was:

Resolved that a donation of £150 be given, but the clean-up must be done by the end of the year, the form submitted, or the donation would be allocated to the Milestone Community Church.

C. Birsay Youth Drama Group

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Birsay Youth Drama Group, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards a trip to the SCDA Scottish Youth Final in Bathgate, it was:

Resolved that a general fund donation of £50 each be given to Molly Dick, Ava Moar, Orla Spence, Ruby Scarth, Norah Flett, Molly Gray, Abbie Gray and Archie Schofield.

D. Dounby Senior Citizen's Group Summer Lunch

Following consideration of correspondence received from Carolyn Kirkness, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards the cost of a summer lunch trip for the Dounby Senior Citizens Group, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of up to £300 be given to the Dounby Senior Citizens Group, subject to CCGS approval.

E. Dounby School – Play Park Fund

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Dounby School Parent Council, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting funding towards the school play park, it was:

Resolved that members were willing to donate but wished to discuss the matter further and invite a representative from the parent council to attend the next Birsay Community Council meeting.

F. Birsay Community Association

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Birsay Community Association requesting funding towards the cost of grass cutting at the park and the pitch at Birsay Hall, it was:

Resolved that a donation of up to £1,000 be given to the Birsay Community Association, subject to CCGS approval.

11. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – March and April 2024.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – March, April and May 2024.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – March 2024.
- Scottish Water Spring Newsletter 2024.
- Do you have your parish ready for D-Day?
- Farm Diversification Drop in Event – 2 May 2024.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. Signage at Birsay Cliff Edge

Members considered correspondence received from DC Joseph Hall, Police Scotland, requesting that signage be displayed following the tragic death of Brody Mace-Hopkins. Brody had been on the coastal path which passed Garson, Birsay. He unfortunately fell from the cliff top near Hamar Rowe and drowned. His father wondered if there had been any thought to more overt signage regarding the risks at the cliffs. After a discussion, it was agreed that this matter would be better placed with Orkney Islands Council, and that the Clerk would write to DC Hall and ask him to contact Orkney Islands Council, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact DC Hall and ask him to contact Orkney Islands Council concerning signage and the risks at the cliffs.

B. Speeding in Dounby

The Chair had been approached by a member of the public with concerns of speeding cars passing in Dounby, whilst walking with a pram. The member of the public had requested a possibility of a pavement being installed up to the 30mph sign. The Chair asked when the speed indication devices were due to be in place in Dounby. The Community Council Liaison Officer said she would check when Dounby was next on the rota for this to be installed, and it was:

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would contact the Roads Department to see when the speed indication devices were due to be installed in Dounby.

C. Whale Bone - Birsay

Members were informed that Kenny Ross could make a replica of the whale bone, but it would need planning permission, as it isn't the original bone. The Heritage Trust would be willing to front the installation, but this would require fundraising to produce the replica. There was also the issue surrounding the disposal of the original bone, which would require further discussion, and it was:

Resolved that the item remain on the agenda for further discussion.

D. Primary School Outdoor Activities

Members questioned as to why Dounby Primary School no longer attended off-island outdoor activities for the P7 year group. The Chair explained that this was a school decision due to staffing issues, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

13. Dates of Future Meetings

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

Resolved that the next meeting of Birsay Community Council would be held on 12 September 2024 at 19:30 in Birsay Community Centre and via Microsoft Teams.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:44.