

Minute of the Meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council held in the Friends Room, St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall and via Teams on Monday, 11 March 2024 at 19:00

Present:

Tom Rendall, Robert F Leslie, Steven Brodie, Moyra Gordon, Cathleen A Hourie, Chris J F Matthews, Rosemary Rhodes and Lynne Spence.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Sandy G Cowie.
- Councillor Steven B Heddle (via Microsoft Teams).
- Councillor W Leslie Manson.
- Councillor Ivan A Taylor.
- Hayley Green, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, Orkney Islands Council (for Items 1 to 6(f)).
- Susan Shearer, Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning), Orkney Islands Council (for Items 1 to 3).
- Tom Hadley, Community Engagement Manager, Orkney Native Wildlife Project (for Items 1 and 2).
- Hazel Flett, Clerk.
- 1 member of the public.
- 1 member of the local press.

Chair:

- Tom Rendall.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Barbara J M Graham, Rikki A Lidderdale and John R Mowat, and Councillors David Dawson and John A R Scott.

2. Orkney Native Wildlife Project

Following a presentation from the Community Engagement Manager providing an update on the Orkney Native Wildlife Project, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the presentation.

The Community Engagement Manager left the meeting at this point.

3. Orkney Quiet Routes

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding a proposal to pilot quiet routes, delivering active travel network connections in rural areas, where segregated path infrastructure was not feasible or would be cost prohibitive, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a presentation from the Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning), Orkney Islands Council, it was:

Resolved to note the proposal to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity of the “Edge of Town Strategic Active Travel Route” established in the Your Kirkwall Local Place Plan 2018, by piloting a Quiet Route on Berstane Loan and Inganess Road, which then improved connectivity to the surrounding core path network.

The Service Manager (Development and Marine Planning) left the meeting at this point.

4. Adoption of Minute

The Minute of the Meeting held on 22 January 2024 was approved, being proposed by Chris Matthews and seconded by Steven Brodie.

5. Matters Arising

A. Benches

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council in response to the specific questions raised by the Community Council regarding the provision and maintenance of benches, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that, as a result of the challenging financial position faced by Orkney Islands Council over the coming years, there were no identified funds for the replacement of benches within the Leisure and Culture Services budgets.
2. To note that, given both budgetary and staffing constraints, it was not possible to carry out inspections on all of the public benches, although, when an issue with a bench was raised, action was taken to ensure the safety of the public.
3. That L Spence should contact the Criminal Justice service and the Men's Shed to determine whether or not they could produce and/or maintain benches.
4. That L Spence, together with R Leslie, should continue to populate the spreadsheet with the location of benches around the Kirkwall and St Ola area, including photos, and consider a grading system for replacement and/or maintenance.

B. Bonfire and Fireworks at Pickaquoy

The Chair reported that a full and frank discussion was held with representatives from Team Swan on 29 February 2024, including various options for a community bonfire and fireworks event, and it was:

Resolved to defer consideration, to the next meeting, to enable further consideration of various options as well as liaising with the Rotary Club.

The member of the public left the meeting at this point.

C. Financial Requests

Following consideration of notes of thanks received from various individuals and groups regarding financial assistance received from the Community Council, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Conservation Verges

The Clerk advised that no response had yet been received from Orkney Islands Council in relation to when the conservation verges contained within the Verge Maintenance Plan were last reviewed, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should again write to Orkney Islands Council.

E. Former Street Names

R Leslie advised that he had taken some photos of street names in Lerwick and would put together a sample for discussion at the next meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

6. Correspondence

A. Glaitness Parent Council – Glaitness Play Area Renewal

Following consideration of correspondence from Glaitness Parent Council requesting assistance towards renewal of the central enclosed playground that was mostly used by the additional needs classes at Glaitness School, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Glaitness Parent Council seeking clarification on whether the playpark would be for the sole use of pupils during school hours or whether it would be available 24/7 for members of the public following refurbishment.

B. King's Portrait Scheme

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding a government funded voluntary scheme through the United Kingdom which allowed public authorities to apply for a free, framed portrait of His Majesty King Charles III, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to take no action.

C. Best Kept War Memorial Competition

The Clerk had received correspondence from the Kirkwall branch of the Royal British Legion querying whether the Community Council wished to enter the Kirkwall and St Ola war memorial in the best kept war memorial competition for 2024, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should enter the war memorial in the large community without garden category.

2. That the Clerk should ask the Royal British Legion whether it was solely war memorials which were eligible for the competition, or whether gardens such as the Royal Oak memorial garden at Scapa might qualify.

D. Kirkwall Airport Community Engagement Forum

Following consideration of correspondence from the Kirkwall Airport Manager regarding the provision of a suitable forum that would provide an opportunity for the exchange of information and ideas between users of the airport, partners and the local community, including draft Terms of Reference for the Kirkwall Airport User and Community Engagement Forum, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Chair should attend the first meeting of the Forum scheduled for Thursday, 14 March 2024 via Microsoft Teams.

E. Scottish Empty Homes Partnership

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council advising of a free webinar on 20 March 2024, organised by the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that R Leslie and C Hourie should attend the webinar.

F. Gate in Bignold Park at Meadowbank end

Following consideration of correspondence from M Allan regarding health and safety issues with the gate at the Meadowbank end of the Bignold Park, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council requesting that the area in the immediate vicinity of the gate be tidied up and the hinges and closing mechanism of the gate checked and made safe.

Hayley Green left the meeting at this point.

G. Cruise Liner Income

Following consideration of correspondence from B Graham requesting information relating to cruise liner income, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. That, although the Clerk had sought a detailed answer from Orkney Islands Council in advance of the meeting, it was advised that income raised from cruise liners was mostly harbour dues which accrued to the Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours account and must, by law, be spent on maintaining harbour infrastructure and therefore could not be spent on General Fund Council services, such as improving toilet or litter facilities for tourists.
2. To note that the programme of harbour infrastructure maintenance and improvement works funded through harbour reserves was determined annually by the Elected Members of Orkney Islands Council.
3. To note that Orkney Islands Council was investigating the possibility of utilising reserves, accrued through harbour activities, to maintain existing infrastructure in order to enhance the tourist experience.
4. To note that a cruise liner passenger levy, similar to the visitor levy, was being actively considered at a national level.

H. Kirkwall Airport Aeronautical Ground Lighting

Following consideration of correspondence from the Kirkwall Airport Manager advising of work on the energy efficient replacement of the airport's Aeronautical Ground Lighting, commencing in April 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

Councillor Steven Heddle left the meeting at this point.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 27 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance as at 27 February 2024 of £17,795.08.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2023/2024 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 27 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that projects to the value of £4,978.02 had been approved, of which £4,978.02 had been claimed.
2. To note the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit of £679.19.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 27 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval of £7,163.46.

8. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Rugby Football Club U14 Squad

Following consideration of an application from L Millar requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in the Orkney Rugby Football Club's under 14 squad in competitions in Caithness on 28 January and 11 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each competition, subject to confirmation of participation.

B. Orkney Gymnastics Club

Following consideration of an application from L Millar requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the Fyrish Floor and Vault Competition on 17 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

C. Move Orkney Highland

Following consideration of an application from D Johnston requesting financial assistance towards participating in the UKA Dance Annual Highland Gathering held in Aberdeen between 9 and 11 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that no assistance be provided.

D. Orkney Gymnastics Club

Following consideration of an application from A Bruce requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the Fyrish Floor and Vault Competition on 17 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

E. Orkney Islands Junior Golf Partnership

Following consideration of an application from S McAlister requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in the Links Golf Academy at the Royal Dornoch Golf Club, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each eligible trip, subject to confirmation of participation.

F. Just Dance Orkney

Following consideration of an application from T Blowfield requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in a dance competition, Destinations 2024, to be held in Greenock on 16 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

G. U13 Intercounty Badminton

Following consideration of correspondence from L Kinghorn requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in the under 13 Intercounty badminton competition in Shetland on 8 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

H. U13 Badminton and U13 Netball

Following consideration of an application from J Cooper requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in the under 13 Intercounty badminton competition in Shetland on 8 March 2024 and an under 13 netball festival in Aberdeen between 1 and 3 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each competition, subject to confirmation of participation.

I. Orkney Folk Festival

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Folk Festival requesting financial assistance towards the 41st festival, to be held in May 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £500 be given.

J. Kirkwall Boys Brigade – Annual Camp 2024

Following consideration of correspondence from the 1st Kirkwall Company Boys Brigade requesting financial assistance towards their annual camp to be held in the Aviemore area between 12 and 16 August 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £375 be given, subject to confirmation of participation by all 16 members.

K. Papdale Primary School

The Clerk had received correspondence from Papdale Primary School requesting financial assistance towards the P7 school trip to Lagganlia Outdoor Education Centre, and it was:

Resolved that a donation of £375 be given.

L. Move Orkney Highland

The Clerk had received an application from D Johnston requesting financial assistance towards her daughters participating in the Mina Mackay Festival of Highland Dance in Caithness on 2 March 2024, and it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each dancer, subject to confirmation of participation.

9. Consultations

A. Winter Service Plan

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding the annual review of the Winter Service Plan, for which responses were required by 29 March 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should submit the following requests to Orkney Islands Council:

- That King Haakon Street, from its junction with Clay Loan, through Warrenfield Crescent and joining up with Craigie Crescent, be upgraded from Green P3 to Blue P2.
- That the pavement from the junction of Easdale Loan heading up the Deerness Road, to the second junction on the right (Watson Drive?) be upgraded from Green P3 to Blue P2.
- To check why Blackhill Road, St Ola, was P2.

B. SEPA – Integrated System for Environmental Regulation

Following consideration of correspondence from SEPA regarding a consultation on a more integrated system for environmental legislation, for which responses were required by 12 April 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should submit a response advising that, where an operator had more than one licence, depending on the services, which were to be combined into one, this should be at no extra cost, unless a change was requested.

10. Meetings attended by Members

A. Scottish Islands Federation

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Islands Federation regarding various meetings, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Community Council had not been represented at the following meetings:

- National Improvement Framework for Adult Social Care Support and Community Health – Online Meeting, 6 February 2024.
- SIF AGM, 8 February 2024.
- Cross Party Group on Islands in the Scottish Parliament – 28 February 2024.

B. NHS Orkney Listening Event

Following consideration of correspondence regarding consultation events organised by NHS Orkney on 14 February 2024 (online) and in the Pickaquoy Centre on 19 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that S Brodie had attended the event in the Pickaquoy Centre.

C. Scottish Forum of Community Councils

Following consideration of correspondence from the Scottish Forum for Community Councils regarding their annual conference – Democracy Matters 2 – held online on 2 February 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that R Leslie had attended the online conference.

D. Community Council Chairs' Meeting

The Chair had attended an online meeting of Community Council Chairs on 28 February 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that the resilience groups established during the Covid pandemic had been reconvened, with a proposal that meetings be arranged two or three times per annum to discuss matters of mutual interest.

E. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

SSEN had requested an introductory online meeting with members of the Community Council ahead of Community Information Drop-in events in Shapinsay and Kirkwall, to be held on 12 and 13 March 2024, to provide information on the installation of a new subsea electricity cable connecting customers on Shapinsay to the Mainland Orkney network, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Chair, C Hourie and C Matthews had met representatives of SSEN on 7 March 2024.

Councillor Sandy Cowie left the meeting during discussion of this item.

11. Publications

The following publications had been sent to the Clerk and were forwarded to members via email:

- NHS Healthcare Improvement Scotland – Good to Share.
- Accounts Commission report on Orkney Islands Council.
- Scottish Rural Action – January, (Mid) February 2024, February Newsletters.
- Paths for All – eNews – January and February 2024.
- VAO Newsletters – January and February 2024.

- Scottish Islands Passport – What’s New for 2024?
- SEPA Updates – February 2024.
- VAO – Training and Funding Updates – February 2024.
- Scotland’s Towns Partnership – Newsletter – February 2024.
- SEPA – Record number of Flood Alerts and Warnings issued this winter.
- ORSAS – Quarterly Newsletter – March 2024.

12. Any Other Competent Business

A. Orkney Heritage Society – Request for Green Plaque

The Clerk had received correspondence from Orkney Heritage Society requesting whether the Community Council would supply a green plaque to mark the centenary of Orkney’s first public electricity supply, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should obtain a quote from the company who had previously provided the green plaques and advise Orkney Heritage Society accordingly.

B. Application for Variation of Premises Licence – Kirkwall Hotel

The Clerk had received correspondence from Orkney Islands Council seeking representations on an application for variation of the premises licence in respect of the Kirkwall Hotel, requesting access by children and young persons to the public bar from 11:00 to 17:00 Mondays to Fridays, with an accompanying responsible adult, and it was:

Resolved not to make any representations.

C. Levelling Up Funding awarded to OIC

The Clerk had received correspondence from B Graham seeking further information on the £20M Levelling Up funding awarded to Orkney Islands Council from the Westminster Government, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council requesting that the Community Council be represented on the body established to consider awarding the funding.
2. That the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council seeking an up-to-date map of Common Good land and the current balance and make-up of the Common Good Fund.

D. Request for Public Toilet at Inganess

The Clerk had received correspondence from B Graham requesting the provision of a public toilet at Inganess, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council requesting that public toilet facilities be provided at Inganess, given the increasing public activity in the area, and which could also contribute to the proposed quiet route within the core path network.

2. That the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council seeking an update on the public toilets at Scapa and when they would be open to the public.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council should be held on Monday, 13 May 2024, commencing at 19:00.

14. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:40.