

Minute of the Meeting of Birsay Community Council held in the Birsay Community Centre and via Teams on Thursday, 12 September 2024 at 19:30

Present:

Mr R Delday, Ms D Clouston, Mr E Harvey, Mrs V Sinclair and Mr S Spence.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R King.
- Councillor O Tierney.
- Councillor D Tullock.
- Councillor J Stevenson.
- 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 for absence had been received from Miss K Coghill.

2. Annual Appointment of Office Bearers

A. Appointment of Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr R Delday was duly appointed as Chair of Birsay Community Council.

B. Appointment of Vice Chair

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Miss K Coghill was duly appointed as Vice Chair of Birsay Community Council.

C. Appointment of Planning Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr E Harvey was duly appointed as Planning Representative of Birsay Community Council.

D. Appointment of Health and Care Representative

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Ms D Clouston was duly appointment as Health and Care Representative of Birsay Community Council.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 30 May 2024 was approved, being proposed by Mr E Harvey and seconded by Mr S Spence.

4. Matters Arising

A. Local Place Plan/Quiet Routes

Following consideration of maps and correspondence, copies of which had been previously distributed, the Chair advised that a joint meeting with Birsay and Harray and Sandwick Community Councils and relevant Orkney Islands officers was being held on Tuesday, 24 September in the Milestone Community Church to discuss the matter further, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above and request a good attendance.

B. RSPB – Marwick Bay Access

Members were informed that no further updates had been received since the last meeting, and it was:

Resolved that this matter would be reviewed at the next meeting.

C. Treatment of Causeway

Members were informed that no further updates were available at present, and it was:

Resolved that the matter would be reviewed at the next meeting.

D. Speeding in Dounby

After discussion it was felt that this matter would benefit from being discussed at the joint meeting with Harray and Sandwick Community Council to be held on 24 September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the information above.

E. Birsay Whale Bone

Members were advised by Councillor Tullock that no updates were available at present, however he explained that Birsay Heritage Trust had taken on the project and would be able to provide updates to the Community Council as and when available, and it was:

Resolved to note this information.

F. Dounby School Play Park Funding

Apologies had been received from the group advising that no one was available to attend the meeting. The WMLO advised that they had been invited to the joint meeting with Harray and Sandwick to be held on 24 September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and agreed that inviting them to the joint meeting would be beneficial.

5. Correspondence

A. Annual Grants 2024/2025

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council advising members of the allocations of grants for each Community Council for the coming financial year, it was:

Resolved to note that the annual grant for Birsay Community Council was £4,039.81.

B. BT Digital Voice Roadshow

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding drop-in sessions hosted by BT relating to the change from analogue to digital phone

services that was scheduled by completed in January 2027, to be held at the Orkney Library on 23 and 24 July 2024, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Addressing Depopulation Action Plan

Correspondence had been forwarded from Scottish Islands Federation inviting members to attend a zoom session online discussing how to grow and maintain a sustainable population in the island communities, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had now passed.

D. OHAL Committee Recruitment Event

Correspondence had been forwarded to all members inviting anyone interested in becoming a voluntary member on the board of Orkney Housing Association to an open day, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event was now past.

E. Sustainable Development Goals

Correspondence had been circulated to members requesting the completion of a survey relating to Sustainable Development Goals and the impact to local community groups in Scotland, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

F. Robert Gordon University – Care robots in the home

Correspondence had been received and circulated to members from Robert Gordon University seeking volunteers to take part in a research study to be held in Orkney exploring people's views of robots designed to support older people in their home environments, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

G. Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries/E-Bikes and Scooters

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from the researcher for Lord (Don) Fostero 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.

H. Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure CC Attendance

Members considered correspondence which had been received from Corporate Director of Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, thanking members of the Community Council for the valuable work they do for the community. She advised that a member from Neighbourhood Services would no longer be in attendance at every Community Council meeting, however they would ensure that they were present for at least one meeting every year, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. Orkney Towns Fund Community Workshop

Following consideration of correspondence, which had been emailed previously, advising of workshops being held in July regarding the Orkney Towns Fund, it was:

Resolved that the date had already passed.

J. SSEN - £3M Community Fund

Correspondence had been forwarded via email from Scottish and Southern Electricity Network (SSEN) inviting applicants for its new Powering Communities to Net Zero Fund. The deadline for the funding this year had passed, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

K. Sectoral Marine Plan for offshore Wind Energy

Following consideration of correspondence from Scottish Islands Federation regarding a workshop on the Sectoral Marine Plan for offshore wind energy, it was:

Resolved to date that the date of the workshop had passed.

L. 2024 SURF Awards

Following consideration of correspondence from SURF Scotland Regeneration Forum that the 2024 SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration ah been launch at a special online event, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

M. Thank you letters

Members were advised that letters of thanks had been received from Birsay Community Association, Birsay Drama Group and Dounby Senior Citizen's Group for the contributions awarded to them, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

N. 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.

The Chairman then brought to the members attention the report on grass cutting which was under review as part of the cost cutting experience the council was undertaking. Members were advised that this would go to consultation, and they should report back any concerns they had, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the contents of the correspondence

2. That, upon receipt of the consultation on grass cutting, members should report back any concerns.

O. Orkney Community Council Conference

Members were advised that both the Chairman and Vice Chairman had been invited to attend the Orkney Community Council Conference to be held on 4 October 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note that both would plan to attend.

6. Consultations

A. Dounby Local Development Plan Event

Following consideration of correspondence circulated to members regarding a public consultation hosted by Orkney Islands Council's Marine Planning Team inviting the community to discuss the Dounby Local Development Plan, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the event had now passed.

B. Orkney Matters 2 Birsay meeting

Following consideration of correspondence received from The Orkney Partnership in relation to the Orkney Matters 2 Birsay planned community engagement exercise, requesting members of the community to engage at the planned meeting. It was felt that this event had been poorly attended by the public when they had the opportunity to put forward their opinions, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had been poorly attended.

C. Placemaking for Regenerative Tourism

Following consideration of correspondence from C Hartley who was looking for residents of Orkney's West Mainland electoral ward aged 18 years or over to complete a short anonymous survey as part of a research project, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence and that the deadline for comments had passed.

D. 20mph Engagement with Community Councils

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council advising that the Scottish Government had made a commitment to implement 20mph speed limits on all appropriate roads within Scotland by the end of 2025 and as part of this, all Scottish Local Authorities had to assess the road networks against certain criteria to establish if 20mph speed limits would be appropriate. Members were invited to provide feedback on the proposed plans. Councillors advised that the General Public consultation would be opening very soon, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline had passed for the Community Councils view but any concerns could be submitted as individuals as part of the General Public consultation.

E. Water Safety Questionnaire

Following consideration of correspondence from the Safety and Resilience Officer, Orkney Islands Council, regarding the development of a water safety policy and providing a link to their water safety questionnaire, it was:

Resolved to note the deadline had passed.

F. Survey Request from Helen Nicholson

Following consideration of correspondence from H Nicholson regarding her survey on Scottish Resilience with a more specific look into Community Preparedness within Scottish Local Authorities, it was:

Resolved to note the deadline had passed.

G. Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding the Orkney Islands Marine Region: Finfish Farming Spatial Guidance, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

H. Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan Consultation Draft and supporting assessments, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

I. National Care Service

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding the Scottish Government's National Care Services short survey for completion, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

J. Highlands and Islands Enterprises – 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.

K. 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, and it was:

Resolved to not the contents of the correspondence.

L. 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 and the deadline.

7. Financial Statements

A. Annual Accounts

Following consideration of the Annual Accounts at 31 March 2024, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the Accounts.

B. 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 £11,916.74 as at 28 August 2024.

C. Birsay Energy Fund

Following consideration of the Birsay Energy Fund, copies of which had previously been circulated, the Community Council Liaison Officer in attendance reported that a further payment of £3,000 had come in, and it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £26,598.09 as at 12 September 2024.

D. 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 £3,598.68 and the balance in the additional capping limit was £15.00 as at 28 August 2024.

E. 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 28 August 2024.

8. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Letter of Support/Funding - Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney West Mainland Agricultural Society (OWMAS) requesting a letter of support and finance assistance for a feasibility study into the development and use of the show park and pavilion and what could be done to increase it's usage, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that, due to the tight timescale, a letter of support had already been submitted.
2. To note that OWMAS had been invited along to the joint meeting on 24 September 2024.

B. Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council – Bonfire and Fireworks

Following consideration of correspondence received from Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council requesting assistance towards the Annual Bonfire and Fireworks 2024, and it was:

Resolved to award a grant of £100 and that Community Council Grant Scheme assistance should be applied for on the cost.

C. Birsay Heritage Trust – HMS Tern

Following consideration of correspondence received from both William Shearer and Elsa Davidson requesting funding towards design costs involved in developing and preserving the site of HMS Tern at Twatt Airfield, it was felt that this was an extremely worthwhile project benefiting the Community, and it was:

Resolved to advise that they had been successfully awarded a grant of £2,000 from the Birsay Energy Fund and when the funds were required they should contact the Clerk.

D. Firth Primary School – Outdoor Activities

Following consideration of correspondence circulated from Firth Primary School requesting assistance for Primary 6 Outdoor Activities for one pupil who resides in the Birsay Community, it was:

Resolved to award £25, as per policy, from the general fund.

9. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – June, July and August 2024.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – July 2024.

- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – June 2024.
- Review of OLDP Newsletter – June 2024.
- ORSAS Open Day – 7 August 2024.
- NHS Share – Needs your Support.
- Orkney Islands Council – The Digital Phone Switchover – 10 September 2024.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Dounby Tree Lighting – 6 December 2024

Members were advised by the West Mainland Link Officer that preparation was underway for the tree lighting in Dounby, and the tree had been ordered and awaiting quotes for the gifts for all pupils in the school and nursery. The Chairman of Harray and Sandwick Community Council would be seeking permission from contractors that the tree can go in its usual place and a road closure had been applied for the Hillside Road, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the total cost would be split 2/3 for Harray and Sandwick Community Council and 1/3 for Birsay.
2. That Community Council Grant Scheme would be utilised for all eligible costs.

B. Birsay Remembrance Wreath

Members were in agreement to fund the cost of the Remembrance wreath to the community to be laid at the Birsay War Memorial, and it was:

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

C. Birsay Kirkyard – Repairs

Ms D Clouston brought to members attention a loose stone facing the roadside in the shed within the graveyard. Mr R Delday also advised that a coping stone had come off the wall in the new kirkyard, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To request by business letter that the stone in the shed be inspected.
2. To request by business letter that the coping stone be re-attached.

D. Slip at Point of Buquoy, Birsay

Ms D Clouston brought up that a member of public had raised their concerns about the slip as a lot of sand had been washed away leaving a large drop at the end of the slip. After extensive discussion it was felt that this was a bigger project that could be reviewed as part of a Birsay Place Plan but in the meantime, it was:

Resolved:

1. That a letter be sent to Historic Environment Scotland to ask if they would be prepared to contribute towards repairs.
2. To enquire about possible funding available.

11. 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 Thursdays 28 November 2024 and 27 February 2025 in Birsay Community Centre and via Microsoft Teams.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:05.