

## **Item: 5**

### **Special General Meeting of the Council: 19 December 2019.**

#### **Community Conversations.**

#### **Report by Chief Executive.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To update members on progress with items raised through the Community Conversations consultation held in June 2018 and to consider next steps in respect of further community consultation.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Council is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That, during June 2018, as part of the Council's ongoing public communications regarding the budget challenge and in response to the Local Governance Review, five Community Conversation public events were held across the mainland of Orkney.

#### **2.2.**

That the event was also re-run in an amended workshop format as part of the Community Council conference in November 2018 in order to gather views from isles' communities.

#### **2.3.**

The aims of the Community Conversations engagement exercise as listed in section 3.2 of this report.

#### **2.4.**

The feedback report detailing the key themes, suggestions and concepts that emerged from the discussions, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

#### **2.5.**

The update on progress with the top issues for each service area, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

## **2.6.**

That the Leader is keen to continue the Community Conversations engagement process to assist the Council in subsequent setting of priorities, identifying areas for service change, savings or income generation and maximise community participation or involvement in opportunities for engagement on local governance developments and service delivery where appropriate.

**It is recommended:**

## **2.7.**

That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader, develops a proposal for ongoing community consultation and engagement to commence in the late Spring 2020, with the programme taking into account available resources to deliver an effective consultation and engagement process which is inclusive for all areas of the community and which will provide meaningful feedback for subsequent budget and priority setting.

## **3. Background**

### **3.1.**

During June 2018, as part of the Council's ongoing public communications on the budget challenge, and in response to local community engagement on the Local Governance Review, five Community Conversation public events were held across the mainland of Orkney (Stromness, Kirkwall, Dounby, East Mainland, and St Margaret's Hope). The event was also re-run in an amended workshop format as part of the Community Council conference in order to gather views from the Isles' communities.

### **3.2.**

The aim of this Community engagement exercise was to:

- Ensure understanding of the continuing need for savings and the difficult decisions involved in budget setting.
- Seek to avoid a public and media focus on individual cuts by highlighting the range of savings measures that will have an effect on people, groups and communities during the year ahead.
- Set these in context and help ensure the public and staff are prepared for further, and potentially, more severe cuts to services in future.
- Stress that this is not all about reductions in spending. In line with feedback to the Budget Simulator exercise, the Council is also increasing fees and charges to help offset the need for cuts to frontline services.
- Highlight the enterprising approach the Council is taking in seeking new sources of income generation and encourage those attending to put forward their own ideas for income generation.

- Engender, as far as possible, an acceptance that ‘we are all in this together’ and encourage communities to consider the potential, where appropriate, for locally-based service provision.
- Help achieve a better awareness of the importance to the Council and the wider community of the Council’s reserves, and the need to ensure their ongoing sustainability.

### **3.3.**

The five public meetings were held from 19.00 to 21.00 on a weeknight in a large community facility. There was a short presentation by the Leader and the Chief Executive which set the scene for the evening’s discussions and covered topics such as the work that has already gone into achieving a balanced budget, the role of the Council’s Strategic Reserve Fund and the purpose of these events.

### **3.4.**

Members of the public were then settled into groups at large tables. Each table was facilitated by a local elected member and an officer from the Council’s Senior Management Team and with each group working through a series of questions, leading to the generation of concepts, ideas and suggestions.

### **3.5.**

The questions posed were:

- Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don’t need to do or are providing in an ‘over and above’ fashion and could reduce?
- Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?
- If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?
- Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?
- Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?
- Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

### **3.6.**

Discussions were recorded and a report detailing the key themes, suggestions and concepts that emerged from the discussion has been produced. The top issues were recorded and are presented in the report, attached as Appendix 1, by overall top issues, Geographical area and by Service area.

### **3.7.**

The Community Conversations events proved to be an extremely positive exercise from the Council's perspective. Meaningful feedback was provided by the community and this informed new areas to explore for income generation and other measures to address the financial challenges the Council continues to face.

### **3.8.**

In addition, the exercise affirmed that the community was supportive of the judicious use of the Strategic Reserve Fund whilst ensuring that services are as efficient and effective as possible, and that the Council should continue to explore opportunities for partnership working wherever possible.

## **4. Progress**

### **4.1.**

At the end of August 2019, officers from each Service provided an update on progress with the top issues for each service area. This has been collated and is attached at Appendix 2 to this report.

### **4.2.**

The updates show good progress on most of the top issues raised at the Community Conversations events. Some of the top issues are items which were considered earlier this year as part of the budget setting process and some will be further explored for the forthcoming budget setting process.

### **4.3.**

This update document does not include the many other items suggested within the full report from the Community Conversations events and further analysis on progress of all items will be undertaken.

## **5. Next Steps**

### **5.1.**

The Leader is keen to continue the Community Conversations engagement process to assist the Council in subsequent setting of priorities, identifying areas for service change, savings or income generation and maximise community participation or involvement in service delivery where appropriate.

### **5.2.**

The Council wishes to foster a culture of an ongoing conversation with the community perhaps through more Community Conversations engagement events together with other appropriate means such as online / digital channels in order to reach out to as wide an audience as possible.

### **5.3.**

The Council is currently preparing for the next budget settling exercise however information on the financial settlement from the Scottish Government is delayed due to the General Election. It is anticipated that it will be provided in early January 2020. This limits the opportunity for meaningful community consultation and engagement for the 2020/21 budget setting process and therefore it is proposed that the next phase of consultation and engagement should commence in the Spring of 2020.

### **5.4.**

In addition, elected members have requested a detailed review of the Council Delivery Plan early next year. The Council Plan and its associated Delivery Plan detail the actions which will be undertaken to achieve the strategic priorities and outcomes, together with details of the lead service, resources, timescales, outcomes and measures of success. These actions are therefore intrinsically linked to the Council's budget setting exercise and the medium-term and long-term financial strategies.

### **5.5.**

A final, important factor is to ensure that the community does not become tired of consultations. In addition to the Council, there has recently been an extensive consultation process by the Scottish Government. This, together with the previous feedback gathered, provides the Council with a good steer about the important issues the community feels strongly about. A future Community Conversations exercise would therefore have to focus on some specific topics and be proportionate.

### **5.6.**

It is therefore proposed that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader, develop a proposal for ongoing community consultation and engagement to commence in the late Spring 2020. This programme will take into account available resources to deliver an effective consultation and engagement process which is inclusive for all areas of the community and will provide meaningful feedback for subsequent budget and priority setting.

## **6. Links to Council Plan**

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in all of the Council Plan strategic priority themes, namely Connected Communities, Caring Communities, Thriving Communities, Enterprising Communities and Quality of Life.

## **7. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan**

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

## **8. Financial Implications**

The proposals within this report in themselves do not have any financial implications however the Community Conversation events and any subsequent programme will incur costs such as staff time and venue hires.

## **9. Legal Aspects**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **10. Contact Officers**

John W Mundell, Interim Chief Executive, extension 2101, Email

[chief.executive@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:chief.executive@orkney.gov.uk)

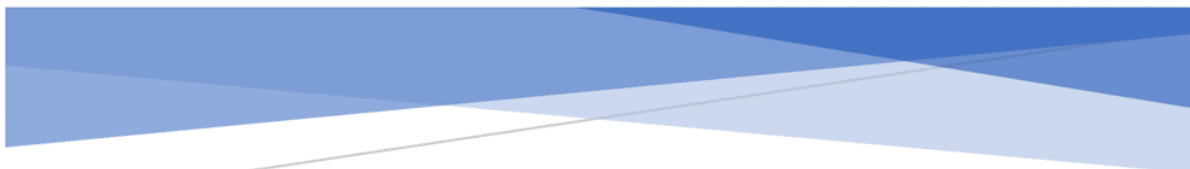
Karen Greaves. Head of Executive Support, extension 2202, Email

[karen.greaves@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:karen.greaves@orkney.gov.uk)

## **11. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Community Conversations – Feedback Report.

Appendix 2: Community Conversations – Update Report.



# **Orkney Islands Council Community Conversations**

## **Feedback Report**

A summary of the main issues raised by local people during Orkney Islands Council's Community Conversation meetings held in June 2018.



## Contents

Introduction.....	3
Format of the meetings.....	4
Findings – top issues across Orkney.....	4
The 12 main issues or budget saving/income generation ideas raised were as follows:.....	5
Other issues which came up frequently, although not as often as those above were:.....	5
Findings – top issues by geographical area.....	6
Overall top 5 issues – Community Council Conference.....	6
Overall top 5 issues – Kirkwall.....	7
Overall top 5 issues – Stromness.....	7
Overall top 5 issues – West Mainland.....	8
Overall top 5 issues – East Mainland.....	8
Overall top 5 issues – linked South Isles.....	8
Findings – top issues by service area.....	9
Overall top 12 issues – Development and Infrastructure.....	9
Overall top 5 issues – Education and Housing.....	10
Overall top 3 issues – Orkney Health and Care.....	10
Overall top 3 issues – Corporate Services.....	10
Overall top 4 issues – Chief Executive’s Service (Executive Support).....	11
Overall top 5 issues – Chief Executive’s Service (Finance).....	11
Findings by question areas.....	11
Next steps.....	13
Appendix 1 - West Mainland Meeting, Milestone Church, 4 June 2018.....	14
Appendix 2. Linked South Isles Meeting, Hope School – 5 June 2018.....	18
Appendix 3. Kirkwall Meeting, King Street Halls – 11 June 2018.....	22
Appendix 4. East Mainland Meeting, Tankerness Hall – 12 June 2018.....	30
Appendix 5. Stromness Meeting, Stromness Town Hall – 18 June 2018.....	35
Appendix 6. Community Council Conference – 20 June 2018.....	41



## Introduction

In June 2018, as part of Orkney Islands Council's (OIC) ongoing public communications on the budget challenge, five Community Conversation public events were held across the mainland of Orkney (Stromness, Kirkwall, Dounby, East Mainland and St Margaret's Hope). The event was also re-run in an amended workshop format as part of the Community Council (CC) conference in order to gather views from our isles communities.

Orkney Islands Council has an ongoing commitment to continue to raise awareness of the financial pressures we face, how these are being addressed, the likely impact on services, jobs and the Orkney community – and the proactive steps being taken to find additional sources of income.

A communications plan was developed around this and central to this plan was 'Community Conversations', events designed to update the public on the financial pressures and how these are being addressed, as well as giving the public the opportunity to actively engage with this process by identifying areas where communities could take more ownership of services or where income could be generated.

A detailed press release was issued on 23 April setting the context and outlining the savings agreed for 2018 - 2019 that will have an impact on the public, groups and communities. Through this community engagement exercise we hoped to:

- Ensure understanding of the continuing need for savings and the difficult decisions involved in budget setting.
- Seek to avoid a public and media focus on individual cuts by highlighting the range of savings measures that will have an effect on people, groups and communities during the year ahead.
- Set these in context and help ensure the public and staff are prepared for further, and potentially, more severe cuts to services in future.
- Stress that this is not all about reductions in spending. In line with feedback to the Budget Simulator exercise, we are also increasing fees and charges to help offset the need to cuts to frontline services.
- Highlight the enterprising approach the Council is taking in seeking new sources of income generation and encourage those attending to put forward their own ideas for income generation.
- Engender, as far as possible, an acceptance that 'we are all in this together' and encourage communities to consider the potential, where appropriate, for locally-based service provision.
- Help achieve a better awareness of the importance to OIC and wider community of the Council's reserves, and the need to ensure their ongoing sustainability.

The following report describes the format of the meetings and then details the key feedback that was gathered from those attending. The report ends with details on the next steps that the Council will be taking as we incorporate the information gathered into next year's budget setting process.

## **Format of the meetings**

The public were invited to attend a meeting in one of the areas described above, held from 19:00 – 21:00 on a weeknight in a large community facility.

The set-up of the meeting was that of a relaxed conference style, rather than a more formal audience and panel style. There was a short presentation by the Political Leader and Chief Executive which set the scene for the evening's discussions and covered topics such as the work that has already gone into achieving a balanced budget, the role of the Council's Strategic Reserve Fund and the purpose of these events.

Members of the public were then settled into groups at large tables. Each table was facilitated by a local elected member and an officer from the Council's Senior Management Team and with each group working through a series of questions, leading to the generation of concepts, ideas and suggestions.

The questions posed were:

- Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?
- Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?
- If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?
- Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?
- Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?
- Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

Discussions were recorded on flip chart papers for collation after the meetings. Following the meetings, this report detailing the key themes, suggestions and concepts that emerged from the discussion has been produced.

## **Findings – top issues across Orkney**

Although the Community Conversation events were taken to five different areas in Orkney, all with their own distinct identities, analysis of the information gathered quickly found that there were key themes or suggestions common to all of the areas.

With these issues appearing in some form across the board, Orkney Islands Council is now well placed to give consideration to progressing these as part of their ongoing budget setting process.

## **The 12 main issues or budget saving/income generation ideas raised were as follows:**

- Community Councils would need a link officer if they were going to take on services and staff management, help with funding applications and other jobs on the isles. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual community – reuse and recycle projects were very common. It was suggested that funding for these posts could come from the reserve fund.
- Introduce a tourist tax.
- Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help, then they will.
- There was support for Council-run income generation projects for community benefit - including a wind farm.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.
- All communities wanted to see improvements to Orkney's campsites by not allowing wild-camping, introducing more paid for sites/on-site services and ensuring there was more marketing of the sites that are available – therefore increasing income.
- People wished to see Council staff empowered to be more creative in their jobs by reducing bureaucracy. Many suggested expansion of the Council's internal Grand Idea Scheme.
- The public wished to see consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.
- It was suggested that the Council should do more to dispose of empty properties or streamline the process for renting them.
- The public thought it would be better if there were smaller buses on some of the bus routes (many perceived that the buses were too big for actual demand) and more bundling of contracts to aid efficiency.
- People asked that the Council made it easier to recycle by introducing more community recycling points and incentivising people to recycle by publishing league tables of where the most recycling was done. It was also felt that more support was needed for businesses to help them recycle more.
- Attendees said that they felt the Council's Capital Programme was beneficial in providing local jobs but needed to be done in a staggered way that didn't overheat the sector and allows local firms to benefit. There was also a view that more of the work needed to be done in partnership with the community by letting folk know about upcoming projects earlier and help them to become more involved - this view was expressed particularly in Stromness Research Campus project.

## **Other issues which came up frequently, although not as often as those above were:**

- The costs of salaries for staff, including Distant Islands Allowance.
- Questioning the need for the Council to sign up to part-funded capital projects like the Kirkwall harbour front improvements, placemaking.

- Reducing the running costs of OIC buildings by cutting down on heating.
- It was suggested that the Council or the community councils could introduce community noticeboards, computerised skills match systems or task list with jobs that need doing locally.
- There was a view that the Council should charge for areas that are currently free parking and charge for electric parking / charging.
- Some felt that areas of grass being left uncut weren't such a bad thing– these could be fenced off and used for grazing, vegetable growing or to sow flowers.
- The Council should cut down on street/building lighting costs – lights off in the summer or not all areas lit.
- Orkney Ferries should be transferred to the Scottish Government.
- We need to challenge the Scottish Government more on our cuts and tackle disparity of funding between us, Shetland and the Western Isles.
- The Council should invest in care and education services now to save money in the long term by creating self-healing communities.
- The Council should save money by introducing more paperless systems like email and online payments.
- There should be more joint services between NHS (National Health Service) Orkney and the Council.
- There should be more coordination between OIC care bus services and those from voluntary sector too.
- An ethos should be built through the young people in our schools of volunteering, helping out the community and civic pride.
- There should be a review of Junior High School provision on the isles including looking at more digital learning.
- We should charge tourists an entrance fee for our museums and the cathedral.
- We should introduce a car club or community car using a council vehicle, particularly at the airport or on the isles.
- The Council should do more to become plastic free through the development of an official policy and reusable bags or cups.
- The Council should investigate district heating system powered using our household waste - new facilities for this could be funded from the proposed wind farm.

## **Findings – top issues by geographical area**

Although as described in the previous section there were key commonalities across the five areas, there were differences in which of these issues mattered most by community. The key issues identified at the Community Council Conference have also been included below.

### **Overall top 5 issues – Community Council Conference**

- Community Councils would need a link officer if they were going to take on services and staff management, help with funding applications and other jobs on the isles. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual

community – reuse and recycle projects were very common. It was suggested that funding for these posts could come from the reserve fund.

- Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help then they will.
- There was support for Council-run income generation projects for community benefit - including a wind farm.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.
- Increase council tax and service charges.

### **Overall top 5 issues – Kirkwall**

- Improvements to Orkney's campsites by not allowing wild-camping, introducing more paid for sites/on-site services and ensuring there was more marketing of the sites that are available – therefore increasing income.
- Consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.
- There should be a review of Junior High School provision on the isles including looking at more digital learning.
- People asked that the Council made it easier to recycle by introducing more community recycling points and incentivising people to recycle by publishing league tables of where the most recycling was done. It was also felt that more support was needed for businesses to help them recycle more.

### **Overall top 5 issues – Stromness**

- Improvements to the Council's Capital Programme including ensuring that local firms to benefit. There was also a view that more of the work needed to be done in partnership with the community by letting folk know about upcoming projects earlier and help them to become more involved - this view was expressed particularly on the Stromness Research Campus project.
- Council staff should be empowered to be more creative in their jobs by reducing bureaucracy for example through expansion of the Council's internal Grand Idea Scheme.
- Community Councils would need a development officer if they were going to take on services. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual community – attendees in Stromness described ideas for taking on the recycling facility, a community asset transfer of the old St Peter's and a cardboard shredder.
- A district heating system using household waste – the facilities could be funded from the wind farm.
- Introduce a tourist tax.

## **Overall top 5 issues – West Mainland**

- It was suggested that the Council should do more to dispose of empty properties or streamline the process for renting them.
- The need for the Council to sign up to part-funded capital projects like the Kirkwall harbour front improvements, placemaking.
- Orkney Ferries should be transferred to the Scottish Government.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.
- Planning conditions should be amended to allow more houses to be built in the country or for people to make alterations to their home so that elderly can live there longer.

## **Overall top 5 issues – East Mainland**

- The Council should cut down on street lighting costs – lights off in the summer or not all areas lit.
- We should charge tourists an entrance fee for our museums and the cathedral.
- Some felt that areas of grass being left uncut weren't such a bad thing– these could be fenced off and used for grazing, veg growing or to sow flowers.
- People asked that the Council made it easier to recycle by introducing more community recycling points and incentivising people to recycle by publishing league tables of where the most recycling was done. It was also felt that more support was needed for businesses to help them recycle more.
- We should introduce a car club or community car using a council vehicle, particularly at the airport or on the isles.

## **Overall top 5 issues – linked South Isles**

- Community Councils would need a development officer if they were going to take on services. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual community.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of.
- There was support for Council-run income generation projects for community benefit. - including a wind farm.
- The public thought it would be better if there were smaller buses on some of the bus routes (many perceived that the buses were too big for actual demand) and more bundling of contracts to aid efficiency.
- Consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.

## Findings – top issues by service area

### Overall top 12 issues – Development and Infrastructure

By far the most comments or suggestions were made about services provided by the Development and Infrastructure Service. This could be due to this area being responsible for some of the most 'visible' services or due to the fact that all people in Orkney will be affected by these services in some way, whether it's through transport, through our roads or through the upkeep of the public areas around us.

The top issues identified were:

- Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help, then they will.
- There was support for Council-run income generation projects for community benefit - including a wind farm.
- There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.
- Introduce a tourist tax.
- The public wished to see consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.
- There was a view that the Council should charge for areas that are currently free parking and charge for electric parking.
- People asked that the Council made it easier to recycle by introducing more community recycling points and incentivising people to recycle by publishing league tables of where the most recycling was done. It was also felt that more support was needed for businesses to help them recycle more.
- Attendees said that they felt the Council's Capital Programme was beneficial in providing local jobs but needed to be done in a staggered way that didn't overheat the sector and allows local firms to benefit. There was also a view that more of the work needed to be done in partnership with the community by letting folk know about upcoming projects earlier and help them to become more involved - this view was expressed particularly in Stromness Research Campus project.
- The public thought it would be better if there were smaller buses on some of the bus routes (many perceived that the buses were too big for actual demand) and more bundling of contracts to aid efficiency.
- Questioning the need for the Council to sign up to part-funded capital projects like the Kirkwall harbour front improvements, placemaking.
- Some felt that areas of grass being left uncut weren't such a bad thing– these could be fenced off and used for grazing, veg growing or to sow flowers.
- The Council should cut down on street lighting and building lighting costs – lights off in the summer or not all areas/buildings lit.

## **Overall top 5 issues – Education and Housing**

There was a very broad range of suggestions made around how we could create savings or generate income in the Education, Leisure and Housing Service – some were what could be termed as ‘quick-wins’ i.e. increasing charges, whilst others were more around investing now, for a long-term gain.

The top five issues raised were:

- All communities wanted to see improvements to Orkney’s campsites by not allowing wild-camping, introducing more paid for sites/on-site services and ensuring there was more marketing of the sites that are available – therefore increasing income.
- The Council should invest in care and education services now to save money in the long term by creating self-healing communities.
- An ethos should be built through the young people in our schools of volunteering, helping out the community and civic pride.
- We should charge tourists an entrance fee for our museums and the cathedral.
- There should be a review of Junior High School provision on the isles including looking at more digital learning.

## **Overall top 3 issues – Orkney Health and Care**

There were very few suggestions made around how money could be saved in how we provide health and care services, which perhaps could suggest that people feel these services should be maintained at their current level. The top suggestions related to this service area were:

- The public wished to see consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.
- The Council should invest in care and education services now to save money in the long term by creating self-healing communities.
- There should be more coordination between OIC care bus services and those from voluntary sector too.

## **Overall top 3 issues – Corporate Services**

The Council’s Corporate Services are responsible for the internal services of the Council – for example looking after our staff and our buildings. The suggestions that were made in these areas were:

- It was suggested that the Council should do more to dispose rid of empty properties or streamline the process for renting them.
- People wished to see Council staff empowered to be more creative in their jobs by reducing bureaucracy. Many suggested expansion of the Council’s internal Grand Idea Scheme.
- There should be more joint services between NHS Orkney and the Council.



## **Overall top 4 issues – Chief Executive’s Service (Executive Support)**

The Council's Chief Executive Service (Executive Support) are responsible for liaising with the local community councils. As some of the questions posed at the Community Conversations events related directly to the role of the community councils, it is not surprising that a number of issues and suggestions were raised around community councils. The service is also responsible for communications and customer services. The top issues raised for this service were:

- Community Councils would need a development officer if they were going to take on services. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual community.
- It was suggested that the Council or the community councils could introduce community noticeboards, computerised skills match systems or task list with jobs that need doing locally.
- The Council should save money by introducing more paperless systems like email and online payments.
- It was suggested that improvements needed to be made in communicating to the public what the role of the Community Councils were and what they achieved. Many people were unaware of how the relationship between the Community Council and Orkney Islands Council worked and so felt unable to suggest where improvements could be made.

## **Overall top 5 issues – Chief Executive’s Service (Finance)**

The Council's Finance team are responsible for looking after the Council's budget, our investment strategies (including what we do with the reserves) and for other financial issues like insurance. The top issues that related to that service were:

- Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help then they will.
- The costs of salaries for staff, including Distant Islands Allowance.
- We need to challenge the Scottish Government more on our cuts and tackle disparity of funding between us, Shetland and the Western Isles.
- The reserves should be used to generate income to then protect some of our most valued services like the library.
- The Council should consider increasing Council tax and service charges – or introduce a second home tax.

## **Findings by question areas**

As well as asking three questions that were designed to gather suggestions or ideas, the events posed three questions that were based around developing a model or defining a direction of travel that the public would want the Council to take. The responses to these questions are summarised below.

If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised, i.e. where from and who by i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

In general, the responses to this question were fairly limited and it may be that the Council would need to work up some more definite proposals or models for people to comment on. One of the main suggestions that came out in these discussions was that of introducing a central community noticeboards or task list with jobs that need doing locally, that could be placed in these new hub areas. Other points raised were that a community hub system might just add another layer to things rather than saving money and that each hub would need to be different as a one size fits all approach wouldn't work here.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

The overwhelming response to this was that for Community Councils or Development Trusts to take on additional work, they'd need funding from the Council for a link officer or development officer. That development officer could then be used not only to coordinate some local services, but to help the community complete funding applications or develop income generation projects. The suggestion was that the initial funding for these posts could come from the Council's reserves. This was particularly the case for community councils who did not currently have their own income generation through wind turbines.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

As part of the introductory presentations at the events, attendees were provided with figures for what has spent from the Council's reserves over the last ten years and where that money has been spent. What came across at all five meetings was that attendees were surprised by these figures - suggesting that there is a common misconception that the Council doesn't spend any of its reserves.

The main learning point from this is that the Council should be more proactive in publicising how the reserves are spent especially in terms of the level of spend that is already coming from them, where this goes to and the reasons why a spending floor has been set and why it was set at that level.

In general attendees felt that the Council had been managing the reserves well up to now – that they were 'doing a good job', particularly where they could see that investing the reserves was generating income. Across the board, there were concerns raised around the Scottish Government's view of Council reserves – did having the reserves draw attention to the Council and should the Council spend it now so that the Scottish Government were required to provide us with additional funding.

However, there was general consensus that the 'rainy day' was here, that the Council now needed to look at using the reserves to 'pace change' and cushion some of the cuts with the biggest impact. It was felt that the Council should be

looking at more high-risk investments and projects, from which the returns could then help to fund some priority projects for Orkney – like infrastructure, taking care of the vulnerable, helping to deal with fuel poverty and funding some of the services that make Orkney what it is i.e. money to continue to keep Orkney attractive and provide high quality cultural and sports provision.

## **Next steps**

Orkney, Scotland and the UK as a whole are entering unprecedented times with uncertainty around BREXIT and continued austerity.

The Council is now challenged to further develop its financial strategies for the short, medium and long-term future and this engagement with our community through the Community Conversations meetings has been invaluable.

A key priority in these times is to sustain confidence and stability locally where possible and the Council will now carefully consider all the feedback and ideas in order to make measured decisions during the forthcoming budget setting exercise. A combination of measures, many suggested by the community, will be required to provide some stability to our local economy whilst still being judicious with the reserve fund, ensuring services are as efficient as possible and pursuing opportunities for working together with the community and partners wherever possible. We will continue to explore ambitious income generation projects and lobby the Governments to support our innovative 'Islands Deal' proposals.

Where possible we will endeavour to continue to deliver, or find new ways to maintain delivery of, those services in Orkney which make our community what it is and invest in preventative services where we can to reduce demand in the future.

Further consultation and engagement with our Communities will be required and we look forward to continuing these discussions.

## Appendix 1 - West Mainland Meeting, Milestone Church, 4 June 2018

Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?

- Distant Islands Allowance – does this need to be paid to staff?
- Inter-island ferries – transfer them to the Scottish Government.
- Which Council services are discretionary, and which are statutory?
- Recycling: what does this cost? Could we just landfill? Why are red bags delivered 40 at a time?
- Kirkwall harbour front improvements – did we need to do this? Was this a waste of money?
- Did we get funding for the flood prevention scheme?
- Numbers of school staff in some schools could reduce, as long as children's needs are met.
- We don't want to see council properties like the Commercial Hotel stand empty for years.
- If properties are empty, get rid of them. Empty buildings are a waste of money.
- A resident artist at the Lifestyles Centre isn't needed. I would rather see funding going into the care budget.
- Place-making is a waste of money.

Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?

- A locally run recycling centre.
- Give someone local the contract to cut the verges and ditches. Take out the bureaucracy to make it cost effective.
- Community Councils could tender services such as grass cutting and snow clearing.
- Are council contracts for food supplies let locally?
- Roadside maintenance should be carried out locally as it was done 60 years ago.
- A stock of signs – such as Flood Warning – should be held at schools so that they can be locally deployed and recovered.
- A skip for plastic silage wrap.
- A community bus and taxi service.
- Locally organised snow clearing of local roads would be good.
- The car park and toilets in Dounby could be run by the Community Council or a development trust.
- Local care centres such as Smiddybrae.

If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

- A community hub would help lonely people. Sheltered housing should be built around a central hub, as had been done in some places already. A warden service could be voluntary.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

- This might cost more than it saves.
- The Community Council and local folk would need to be willing and able to run services.
- Communities lack someone to plan this kind of work. There should be a local development officer funded from the council's reserves.
- The number of older people in some areas may limit the capacity 'to do' things.
- Local knowledge would mean local services being provided more effectively.
- Community Councils would need more funding to provide more services. Some already have separate sources of money.
- I am unsure about what Community Councils do. Awareness needs to be raised about what they are and what more they could do.
- Local communities could set targets and define terms of reference for a project – then carry this out as a three-year pilot.
- Development Trusts could take on things that Council can't do itself.
- Community Councils are run by volunteers – this needs to be taken into account.
- Community Councils could be funded to tender local services from local contractors.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

- Reinvest the reserves in order to make more money.
- We need more feedback on what the council does with the reserves.
- I would like to see more spent on investment in staff, which would result in more spending in the local economy. But the reserves must not be allowed to run out.
- A good job is made on investments and we need to keep doing this.
- More high risk/return investments.
- Hydrogen projects are a good investment.
- Feels like the reserves are being managed well, because they are making money.
- Having big reserves draws attention to Orkney by the Scottish Government – needs watching.
- Reserves should be spent in ways that help the vulnerable.

- Protect the isles.

Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

- Create a lagoon at the Churchill Barriers – and use tidal turbines to generate energy and an income.
- Charge more for cruise ship visits. Are we at saturation point?
- Reign in spending on renewables. Copland's Dock was a waste of money and Lyness is not being used to its full potential.
- Spend more on services rather than invest in land-based wind turbines. Ask people for their views on this.
- Investment in wind turbines is a missed opportunity so far.
- Reduce spending on consultants - e.g. for work on 2nd Barrier.
- The council could lay fibre optic cables to every home and become a phone company.
- Reduce staff/reduce bureaucracy/do less.
- Would it be counter-productive to impose a tax?
- Could we save money by having fewer councillors? Senior management has been cut by 50% already.
- RET will bring many more visitors – you should bring in a tourist tax.
- Tourism tax? It could put people off from coming – but we will get an influx of tourists and campervans when we get RET.
- Charge a levy on visiting campervans and/or coaches.
- Should we tax people who have their own wind turbine?
- I don't agree with charging – I pay council tax.

#### General comments:

- We need to resolve the per-head Government funding disparity with Shetland and the Western Isles.
- This conversation should have come earlier.
- What progress has been made on decommissioning rigs at Lyness?
- What about the underground oil tanks? There has already been a lot of interest in this, with many different ideas put forward.
- Has the container port idea been put on the backburner? Things are changing in the world, and it makes more sense to do this – worth encouraging.
- Insurance should be provided for voluntary service provision by members of community.
- Disused cars are a hazardous eyesore. Is there anything we can do to address this – a scrappage payment, for example.
- We need to address fuel poverty. Some folks are too proud to ask. Get more information out and encourage people to seek help and support.
- We should be encouraging and supporting community or neighbourly care – community spirit – as a way to help people.

- Preventative care and befriending can help people live in their own home for longer.
- Home care co-ordinators have no idea of distance staff have to travel, so carers do not have enough time with the people they support.
- There should be no wild camping in the World Heritage Site area. People should be encouraged to use camp sites instead.
- You should look at ways to make it easier to build in the countryside.
- We need more passing places in the Swannay area. It's important to maintain roads and verges – and deal with ruts at the side of roads.
- Local need should be prioritised when allocating council housing.
- More use should be made of the Hatston lay down area.
- Planning conditions should be relaxed to allow building alterations that enable older people to continue to live at home.
- We need a new abattoir. The one we have should be sold.
- Ditch clearing is important and needs to be improved.
- I'd like to see a monthly community newsletter from the council – in paper and online form.
- More treatments should be carried out in Orkney – e.g. for seasonal affective disorder (SAD).
- Advertise the good things the Council does.
- We want more discussions like this.

## Appendix 2. Linked South Isles Meeting, Hope School – 5 June 2018

Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?

- It would be good to know about the statutory services the council has to provide – could we have a breakdown of those services?
- Are there more cost-effective ways to provide public services? Should we be doing things differently, e.g. a single public authority sharing functions such as finance, HR and admin.
- Joint services between NHS/OIC – but would these end up being run from Edinburgh?
- We need better frontline services for less money. Rather than being centralised further south, services should be devolved 'up' the country, rather than to central belt.
- An increase in regulations has led to an increase in costs.

Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?

- Employ local road workers to save on travel and time.
- Try to get local contractors to do ditch clearing and snow clearing.
- Encourage community efforts for short-term projects, e.g. a garden project.
- Make older people's meals locally.
- Empowerment of communities is a good idea – we need to look at how we bring the community together.
- Folk don't want to do things for themselves anymore – they want to be paid.
- Not that many people are available to do smaller jobs – people are working longer.
- People doing Community Service to do some jobs, e.g. grass cutting.
- Local roadman.
- Grounds maintenance – community could do that themselves.
- Allotting areas for people to use, e.g. vegetable patch.
- Explore how local businesses could help with travel.
- Park and ride – trial project?
- We need bigger sized skips at the recycling centre. Fewer lorries would save money. Is this something community could do – community involvement in recycling.
- Generate a local fund from legacies etc.
- Local services for people who live locally.
- Cruise passengers use the Cromarty Hall. Association cleans up afterwards – so already doing some things locally.



If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

- St Margaret's Hope Townscape Heritage Initiative bid?
- Central hub for St Margaret's Hope – toilets, bus park, development worker office, Tourist information. A THI opportunity?
- We need a paid Development Worker to look at the possibilities for local services.
- Re-constitute South Ronaldsay and Burray development trust. But we would need volunteers to be involved.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

- Are Community Councils still useful – does the Council listen to them?
- Community Councils are not set up to provide most Council services.
- More recognition for volunteers – do the Council actually know what communities are already doing i.e. Bag the Bruck, toilets.
- Frustration that Community Councils aren't listened to. Council needs to listen and act on Community Council views – Barriers are an example.
- Community halls are at capacity and working with volunteers who are constantly struggling.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

- We need more information about the different impacts of using and investing the reserves.
- Is the rainy day here? Should we review the huge amount of money being kept for the future?
- Will the government take the money?
- Invest in things that provide a return.
- Why is £175 million described as the 'floor' for the reserves? What is it? How did we calculate that amount, and do we need to review?
- Investing to save – predict where there's a long-term saving/or income.
- Not sure about investment in windfarms (based on what's happened in Shetland).
- Take a bit extra from the Reserve Fund to tide us over until our community investments start to pay off? OK to take a little bit extra in the short term, but don't run down the reserves. Be 'judicial' about this.
- Should we be more like Shetland and spend more of our reserves, so the Government will give us more?

## Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

- Save money by using passive infrared sensors to control toilet lights at the Sands o' Wright etc.
- Kerbside recycling collections and/or recycling centres. Do we need to do both?
- An incinerator would save on the cost of shipping waste.
- Recycling glass – used for the Barriers at the moment. Are there other options?
- Generate funding from the Barriers.
- Run the Hoy wind farm like Hammers Hill (it is well managed).
- A tourist tax – but care not to discourage visitors. Manage tourism better and encourage tourists to spend more.
- Cut down on lighting of OIC buildings at night. Is there an insurance risk in doing this?
- Why send letters when email would save money?
- Could savings be made if carers were co-ordinated to make home visits more locally? They seem to be travelling many miles – as do teachers.
- Employ fewer consultants.
- Transactions with the council need to be as paperless as possible. You should encourage more online or direct debit payment of bills – and make improvements to the council website to help us to do this.
- Give sports pitches to the people/clubs who use them – so they can look after them.
- Invest to save money. Long term savings can be made by early investment – e.g. in services that help prevent family breakdowns.
- If we invest in certain areas (i.e. preventative work) will we save money in the long run? We need 'self-healing' communities.
- Bus contracts should stipulate smaller buses - many have nobody on them. The council also needs to ensure they are running at the times people would use them.
- Reduce the number of staff involved in road repair work – use traffic lights rather than people to control traffic.
- Council vessels should operate at the speeds that give the best fuel economy.
- If we continue to cut, there's consequences; every decision needs more money spent down the line.
- Harbours are giving us income – we need more services to do this.
- Burwick terminal is sitting there waiting to be used. Renting this out would generate income.
- A multi-storey carpark.
- Why free car parking in the winter? Charge for parking all year round.
- Look at generating income from archaeology.
- Maximise the economic impact of the Island Games.

### **General comments:**

- Allow the Burwick Terminal to be used by the local ferry operator – different views were expressed on this.
- I worry about the level of responsibility placed on home carers – pay them a bit more.
- More parking is needed in the Hope.
- Buses for care centres could be better co-ordinated.
- Promote the diversity of local tourist attractions to spread out the visitors.
- Make more of war heritage and other less-visited places.
- Provide grants for self-catering businesses.
- Provide accommodation for seasonal staff.
- Make more of local produce at tourist venues.
- The well-being/self-care of staff needs to be incentivised and financed.
- There needs to be improved communication amongst staff, with better integration of internal and external communications.
- Remote working would cut travelling and office costs.
- Can we challenge statute/regulations following Brexit?
- Building contracts should always start in the spring.
- There is a dangerous exit at Smiddy corner – even a mirror here would help.

## Appendix 3. Kirkwall Meeting, King Street Halls – 11 June 2018

Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?

- How many people does the Council employ – DIA – introduced to get people to come here – do we still need it? Phased out – how much is DIA – provided by SG – too much of this.
- Collaborative Spirit - Departments spending up money to use up the budget at the end of the year – would end up with less money next year.
- We expect too much from the Council in snow and ice – we've been spoon fed – clearing up our own pavements.
- Unnecessary wastage in school kitchens.
- Kids being given a choice –too much choice – kids choose dinner didn't reduce what they're buying in – i.e. storing of rolls.
- Transport – Council owned vehicles more sharing of vehicles – mini buses – could these be used.
- Why not plan very sheltered housing and supported accommodation for people with other needs adjacent – more cost effective “hub” approach.
- More flexible care workers doing additional tasks maybe pay less?
- Why not one manager for all 3 care homes for older people (registered manager) check this out.
- Too many middle managers/senior managers – what do they do?
- Gold plating based on EU Standards – e.g. not spending related - private hire licence recommended for tour guides – too high standards.
- Licencing fees were reduced – should be higher.
- Quick/rush to implement requirements from Scottish Government – take time to see – Islands Bill/Island Proofing.
- Sometimes numbers of people in specific roles too high – e.g. admin in early years education.
- Role of Council in relation to funding college.
- Too much consultation where external money is involved.
- Twinning with Norway questionable.
- College bursary support – review scheme/eligibility.
- Free parking – charge for Council parking.
- Private sector comparisons for wages.
- Role of DIA as additional wage for public sector staff – Scottish Government give DIA to all work: But note money stays in Orkney and need to attract people to live in Orkney.
- Re-evaluate eligibility Scottish Government role in this – e.g. over 60's volunteer fares to fund other trips.
- Hostel – half full – charging for Papdale Halls of Residence.
- No. of public bodies – reduction in managers.

- Picky Centre – Subsidy should be reduced.
- Music in school/extra-curricular?
- Leisure activities Vs Social/Mental Health.
- Junior high schools on isles – How long can we have them (important for primary schools to be remote there).

Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?

- Maintenance at schools/college – has to be done through the school – 10% added on? Why does this happen – would be better if departments worked better with departments.
- School buses (5 children on the buses each morning for a 52 seater bus). Some in a taxi at night.
- Community pay-back scheme – what do we use them for? Could they be used for more.
- Tankerness Garden – good example (Blide Trust).
- Always considered more efficient to have a centralised service, but costly on travel, etc – ask local communities to take this on.
- Desire for more Services on a local basis, but make sure this isn't more expensive.
- More working from home, digital opportunities. Don't need to localise frontline services.
- Can we develop a voluntary system for people to pay extra to keep certain services. Council match for community contributions?
- Re-evaluate potential work for community payback schemes.
- Community Council task list for community groups to do.
- More to third sector who can do things cheaper.
- Health and Social Care – Crossroads.
- Connecting people: e.g. community transport: but note some risks to vulnerable people.
- Once a month – Community comes out and cleans up area around them – weeding/litter/grass.
- More bins to help keep area clean.
- Need more pride in Community – like 'bag the bruck'.
- Encourage young people to do work and give them credit/praise for this.
- Verge cutting – but told they can't do it legally.
- Grass cutting/graveyards – if anything happens – member of the public insurance – contractors have to double public liability insurance.

If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

- Would community hubs duplicate what the Council already do?
- Community Councils should definitely not take on Council Services maybe on isles? – Will wear out volunteer effort – let's hear from the Community Councils.
- Support community initiatives rather than pass it on – so have skills – build community support.
- Hubs need to be carefully organised.
- Careful with building in more layers e.g. BID/Community Councils.
- More involvement between Council and Community Councils e.g. Prioritising work according to need.
- More conversations with Community Councils on issues.
- Don't know the Kirkwall Community Councillors and work that they do – communication needs improving.
- Difficult to get right model for size of Kirkwall – one model doesn't suits all.
- Glaitness – pick up 3 – everyone take responsibility.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

- Community Council should be involved more in decision making – should they have to do this – more democratic role. Allocate a member of staff to the Community Council – who liaises with the Council. Clerk of Works for each area?
- Risk local politics.
- Balance what kind of services can be delivered locally.
- Small things – can award money – risk bigger projects.
- Lack of info feedback from CC to citizens – interaction with people. Important if more funding to go to CC.
- Issue of knowledge of being 'allowed' to do stuff – people would do more if now able to do stuff.
- Information to new householders on what can do?
- Need knowledge of what CC do already before can say what more folk can do.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

- Should the Council be using more – what's the interest on the reserve fund? Variable.
- Some money should come out to it to tidy up Kirkwall – but some shops should be looking after it themselves.
- Promote more apprenticeships – get to schools and encourage 'difficult to fill' trades.
- Taxis should be adapted – keep our electricity in Orkney – sell it to people in Orkney more cheaply where otherwise it would be wasted.
- Invest in energy development.

- Council Funding to top-up HEEPS/ABS grants for fuel poor who can't meet the personal contribution.
- Judicious use of reserves.
- Solar PV?
- Balanced approach – all of above.
- Rainy day now so use it to invest.
- Wind farm good idea but so long as another linkspan project.
- Reserve fund to support farmers as an option – e.g. as a result of Brexit – support uncertain future – balance with other industries.
- Reserve support bringing people in to Orkney, e.g. northern isles.
- Fixed links to northern isles – bridges/tunnels.
- Might move if job/young adults move to north isles.
- Feel north isles isolated – not same large community (e.g. Kirkwall).
- Happy that the Council invests in wind farms/projects but need to be very careful.
- Level of Council tax – rise it to Scottish average.
- Island Games – How much putting in? - £1M -> Will this make money? Islands Games Vs services, e.g. dial-a-bus and play scheme.
  - It will generate economy for businesses.
  - It's a one-off expenditure.
  - Quality of life aspect.
  - Will there be a legacy?
- Does the public expect the Council to do too much now? Need to pay a bit more?
- Leisure/free transport.
- Floor' is sensible – only use the interest.
- Invest in local enterprise.

Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

- Car Parks – half them you pay for, half they don't – every car park should be a paid for car park – camper vans especially parking for long periods of time.
- Agricultural vehicles for commercial purposes – can't use them – so farmers couldn't come and cut verge/clear farm roads of snow.
- Cleaning up Kirkwall – should it be volunteers – Edinburgh street cleaning – two vehicles – would it work in Orkney when rubbish in fences over roads.
- Folk littering – more education in the schools on this? Litter left – do folk expect too much from the Council.
- Too much consultation!
- Too many consultants.
- More use of third sector greater efficiency in third sector.
- Ask Education Minister for freedom to do things differently.

- Electric charging points – don't pay for them at the moment – should be charging.
- Multi-storey car park – with solar panels on the roof.
- Tourist tax levy – collected ferries/airlines – low amount per night has big impact.
- Pay to get in to Cathedral.
- Ban overnight parking – overnight campervans/caravans – result use sites.
- Charge for toilets – risk just use shops/cafes.
- Tourist levy even distribution of income.
- Pressure will increase and increase infrastructure costs so levy offsets.
- On land data centre.
- Local income tax.
- Local sales tax.
- Half number elected members.
- Directed elected leader.
- Staff campsites better to ensure capture all campers.
- Terms and Conditions for employees – focus on statutory/private sector comparators.
- In looking at savings need deeper consideration of impacts on individual groups of people – also lead in to changes; and wider impacts on family employment opportunities e.g. summer play scheme and other services/consequences.
- Councillors/Officials attending meetings south – travel needs to reduce and more use of video-conferencing.
- If have to travel –but careful on how long journeys are. Don't need to meet face to face every time – e.g. UHI set good example.
- Improve IT to help this e.g. in Chamber.
- Keep primary schools in communities? What happens elsewhere? Community Schools dual purpose.
- Renationalise buses – Council run them.
- External companies might want to bid for companies.
- Transfer responsibility of Orkney Ferries to Scottish Government (wouldn't like that – a lot of problems with Cal Mac) – would they retain the service to the standard.
- Community helping with gardening services.
- Community Notice Boards – Jobs that need doing.
- Ask if people will clear weeds from side of roads.
- Wind turbines that benefit Council.
- Tourist tax -? Is this covered by Harbour's fees? Critical that this looked at - Destination Orkney.
- Internal savings? – reduced management by ½ - what about consumables – heating etc are we spending too much on them – rule nothing in and nothing out.
- Review how approach Change Programme in Council.
- Make Orkney inclusive – include external folk so that they can offer advice (non-biased) – not just in-house – self-employed business folk.



- More work – based training.
- Expansion of digital learning for children in the isles etc – saving on travel and time.
- Offer more languages to children e.g. Spanish using digital means.
- Less the many quangos – Spend less on expensive projects “like to have” and spend more on vital services. Explain why this is happening.
- Need to recycle more – need information to people on what can recycle in Orkney – reduce waste going to Shetland – notices at the recycling centres/leaflet to household, Orcadian going green initiative.
- Give option to pay for services rather than lose them e.g. summer play scheme – over more time to prepare. Look across savings for broader impacts.
- Zero hours contracts for Councillors?
- Cost/higher rental for OIC properties - process put off potential tenants and property stays vacant – more flexibility on rental needed.
- Encourage/support migrants by using vacant property to get people to move.
- Key workers housing – subsidised housing to encourage people to move and work.
- Maintain community conversations – important to maintain contact and broader awareness of what is happening at the cold face.
- Management of waste recycles – rather than send to Shetland e.g. Wind turbine income to fund new facilities.
- Members of public to be able to invest in wind projects.
- Alternatives for kerbside collections? May suit some and save collection cost.
- Commercial waste plans for all businesses.
- Local recruitment processes costs lower than national agencies.
- Staff the campsites better to ensure capture all campers.
- Terms and Conditions for employees – focus on statutory/private sector comparison.
- Need more reliable accessible buses and drivers/Buildings/Glaitness, etc – often late.
- Equality of pay based on gender biased roles.
- Combining systems of NHS/Council.
- Tourism tax – the new “bedroom tax” for nights of stay, charge for entrance to Cathedral, best source of income = tourists, RET will bring more tourists.
- Less waste to Shetland.

### **General comments:**

- Speak to staff and not managers.
- International shortage of care workers – need to address this.
- Need to spend to save (preventative spending) – Education – Special Needs (Impact of cut).
- Should challenge why we are getting cuts – push back to Scottish Government.

- Thought – Is reserve costing us because we have it – get more in line with Shetland/Western Isles.
- Discussion around profitability of Flotta/Harbours – Is Flotta profitable overall?
- Fairness of renewables make profit for landowners when high levels of fuel poverty.
- We should challenge if there should be cuts.
- Cost of decision making/abortive costs if schemes dropped too late – stick to projects at end rather than dropping at end.
- Language assistants shouldn't have been cut as important for future.
- Contractors prices are hugely high.
- Community Service folks do work? What do they do?
- More financial data e.g. how much – Annual income from reserve investment – How much is pension funded 100%.
- Staffing figures from 2009 – to compare with now.
- What is the Council is statutory obliged to do?
- What do we still do which other Scottish Councils have stopped?
- Active Life -> Will this improve health in future.
- Where is the community?
- False economy to not keep verges down – ditches clear – safety issue also.
- Size of bus doesn't make a difference West Mainland buses are mini buses.
- Stagecoach breaking down.
- Volunteering not always effective but need to encourage civic pride.
- How big should Kirkwall grow? Is there enough schools to support “suburb villages?”
- Careful about where we build as remote housing not wanted.
- CC well placed to get value for money.
- Example of Dementia services delivered in Doctor's surgeries.
- If done by Community can be safety risk – training and equipment (e.g. grass cutting); insurance and liability.
- Within families should help look after own family – parents/kids – caution based on above.
- CPD in schools – community support.
- Institutional environment opposed to community – e.g. pre-school/nursery.
- Risk management – who liable/skills – Control measures.
- Risk not best placed to govern project delivery – project governance.
- Know the community.
- If we keep spending out of the oil fund, will Scottish Government reduce our funding i.e. use reserve funds for ferries.
- Some Development Trusts have millions of ££ - Ask them to put something back – restrict this.
- Hoy wind farm is not going to earn money (one view).

- Let the public know how much OIC have been spending from reserves.
- We shouldn't have to remind people we have been spending them.
- 'Sell' the story – 'simplify' how much we make - can we afford to subsidise ferry and bus.
- Spend interest on 'all above' – don't spend the capital – only the interest/income.
- Need to know what return each year is – Easy to access facts.
- Risk adverse – Officials/Councillors} /Culture – need to sometimes take a risk.
- Communication of what Council does.
- Concern that Scottish Government will penalise us for having reserves.
- Generate the money before you plan to spend it.
- Surpluses goes into the reserve fund.
- Money for liners – goes into the reserve fund – surpluses come back out.
- Nobody sees the officials enough, officials not held to account in the same way – i.e. Level of paperwork piled on contractors – health and safety legislation.
- Only in certain departments that officials hinder rather than help – fundraising – nail in the bale story.
- Some of the legislation has gone too far.
- Panel members want proof something will happen.
- Books of tickets – not everyone can buy fifty at a time – needs reviewing.
- Why is Orkney Ferries a separate company – accounting – Council uses its own funds for the North Isles boats.
- Budgets should be set at an earlier stage – WG to SG – three or five year budget would be better.

## Appendix 4. East Mainland Meeting, Tankerness Hall – 12 June 2018

Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?

- There should be one big care home, not several. This would save a great deal of money. Or there should be a care home for each community adjacent to supported accommodation and amenity housing.
- I value the Picky Centre and the library. Which would be more unpopular - cutting services the Council doesn't have to provide – or services that it has to provide?
- Risk assessments/equality assessments are important to help us assess planned budget reductions.
- Hoy windfarm. Council is investigating feasibility. Is it an earner?
- Vast majority of Orkney folk are happy with services and, for example, the care they get.

Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?

- Two views – centralised services to save money; or distributed services in local communities for quicker response.
- Lots happening using funding sources like the Community Development Fund – for hall extensions etc. In country areas, communities are doing a lot already.
- Play park and community hall grass cutting.
- Bins are often full at the Barriers – local emptying using a skip.
- Communities could run Council recycling sites – encouraging upcycling and reuse.
- Communities could run local Council facilities such as recycling sites, with a community rota to manage the site. Local trades and craft producers could be encouraged to work on site.
- Green cones at community centres to encourage more collection.
- Lamp post maintenance.
- Reusing more in Orkney – communities can access funding to do this.
- We need to know who runs/looks after each of our community facilities to give us a better idea of who could do what in future.
- Community run services – the roles need to be clear/defined.
- Maintenance of public areas such as kirkyards.
- Kirkyard maintenance – already done in other areas.
- A range of small jobs.
- Running the recycling centres.
- Public convenience cleaning.
- Pavements/verges – ice clearing etc. – people used to do this locally!
- Need to make public aware that they “can do” things – with no fear of liability.

- Men's Shed for folk to do things.
- Is there a risk of payments changing the dynamic for people doing things for their community?
- You could pay a charity/community central pot rather than individual volunteers.
- We should appeal for ideas for things people could do for their community in the East Mainland.
- It's important to keep verges/drains in good order. If folk know they 'can do' this themselves – more verges would just be done.
- Local folk know where things need fixed – we need to capture this knowledge.
- Can communities/individuals 'buy' services from Council?

If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by. i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

- Role for St Andrew's school? There could be links to halls and other community facilities. Services like internet/wi-fi could be provided. We need to look at options.
- Website/Orkney skills/job sharing system – folk could volunteer services and match skills with local needs.
- Stimulate work parties to bring community together to do things together: quick induction for new folk in community.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

- Yes – Community Councils are closer to the public. They would not have taken decision to stop cutting grass.
- Important to remember that community councillors are volunteers.
- Council vehicles should be provided for people to use for community purposes.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

- We should spend the reserves in case the Scottish Government gives us less funding or takes it away.
- Current reserves policy makes sense.
- What would you spend it on? Essential services – or on what makes Orkney special?
- Ferries with renewable energy as fuel (hydrogen) – example of using reserves as a 'spend to save'.
- Hub and spoke arrangement for smaller ferries, using hydrogen fuel.
- Modern electric and hydrogen buses like Aberdeen.
- Anything that generates income.
- Replace tugs.

- Hoy wind farm is a good idea in principle – money stays in Orkney.
- Build wind farm somewhere else in Scotland, e.g. Caithness – open flat land.
- Privatised internal ferries or give back to Government.
- A balanced approach is important in deciding how best to use the reserves.
- Need to keep pressure on government for funding and not just spend Orkney's reserves.
- Spend a little more to invest? Mixed views on this. It could seem as odd, if also cutting services, but good to fund ways to generate and retain jobs.
- Islands Bill and Our Islands Our Future campaign critical to keeping jobs and young people – need to use OIC money to keep diverse economy and campaign for Government funding and job creation.
- Need to challenge Government and big companies to ensure services/investment in Orkney is beneficial to Orkney.
- Need to continue to stimulate academic/education activity – for young people to aspire to. We need young people to see opportunities here.

Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

- Left luggage service – and charge £8 a time.
- Fees for leisure services went down. It is important that membership schemes cover the costs involved.
- Voluntary annual contribution from parents to school funds?
- Community fund for people to pay into – linked to specific fund-raising events.
- Blue Door model. To support school funds.
- Supported accommodation to assist young folk with transition to 'standard' Council housing, as a spend to save.
- Taxi vouchers rather than scheduled bus services?
- All street lights off in summer?
- New lights are good. Are they all necessary?
- Review all lighting – reduce light pollution.
- Generate income by expanding campsite facilities, attracting more visitors.
- Cuts will always be an issue, so develop revenue streams:
- Onshore wind in Hoy – folk are up for it.
- Charge visitors for Cathedral entry (for example) - local folk get an Orkney card.
- Self-financing Council – charging for more services, e.g. waste collections.
- Car parks – approach fast food vans to tidy up in their area.
- Charge for Council car park at Guide Hall.
- Charge for School Place parking.
- Increase charges across the Council. Increase parking penalties from £30 to £100.

- Don't buy any more diesel vans/lorries as they will be phased out – hydrogen etc please.
- Run smaller taxi buses on demand, with disabled access, picking up and dropping off passengers at their own homes.
- The Council should not run buses; use a good private provider instead.
- Museum/Cathedral - charge tourists for visiting.
- Use contractors for the seasonal work of clearing snow - why use dedicated Council lorries for this? Put a gritter on the back of a contracted lorry.
- Tourist tax for cruise ship visitors - £1.50 per person. Money raised should mainly be spent on harbours.
- Tourist tax – possibly a 'bed' tax.
- Differentiate between 'traditional' tourists and liner tourists.
- Charge for entry to landmark sites?
- Outsource more Council services, saving on the costs of staff, vehicles etc.
- Hot water in public toilets is a waste of money.

### **General comments**

- Changed domestic arrangements mean that many more people are living alone – not easy to care for them.
- Difficult to recruit carers. Problem of uncertainty with temporary hours. Need everyone to have fixed contracts.
- We would like to know the cost of providing bus services and bus passes.
- Is staff absence increasing?
- There should be shared car clubs at the airport and in the isles.
- Publicise facilities for camping.
- Future availability of fossil fuels is an issue it is important to consider.
- Community responsibility to care for folk – build into education/expectation that kids do things for their community.
- Council should support volunteers – provide insurance, etc.
- East Mainland recycling facility is important to the local community.
- Reducing and re-using waste should be a priority.
- Engagement with shops and wholesalers to reduce waste – ban polystyrene!
- Council could provide re-usable cups etc linked to retailers.
- Council could provide bags (re-use) for veg/consumables.
- There should be a policy/encouragement for Orkney to be 'throw away plastic' free.
- Reduce food waste – encourage people to use green cones etc.
- League tables to encourage people to recycle for their community – payback for recycling.

- Council needs to give more information on what it is doing – using Facebook, for example. There should be positive information about all of Orkney – but narrowed down to local areas as well.
- There should be a local marketing/tourism focus for the East Mainland – highlighting what is there.
- Access to Wi-fi/internet is important for access to services/knowledge in rural areas.
- Wi-fi hotspots around the East Mainland?
- There should be a time and motion study on refuse collecting – it seems to be very inefficient.
- Bring back the post bus.
- Use 'Big Belly Bins' in more places.
- Roadside recycling – should we do it when the wind can cause so many problems? Central Recycling Points or Community Points instead?
- Design services for the isles or we will have more de-population.
- Support for children with dyslexia and help with reading using volunteers (subject to checks).
- Grass cutting ideas
- Fence off and put sheep on it.
- Sow flowers/meadow and have parts of it mown for paths.
- I want place to look cared for.
- Who would be responsible if there is injury from tripping on uncut verges?



## Appendix 5. Stromness Meeting, Stromness Town Hall – 18 June 2018

Is there anything the Council is doing now that you think we don't need to do or are providing in an 'over and above' fashion and could reduce?

- Capital programme? Good to spend if local jobs, need to pace development to prevent overheating of sector which impacts everyone.
- More efficient processes for people to do Council work, providing H&S etc is covered, find ways to engage communities safely e.g. local Clerk of Works/Trainers.
- Recycling don't recycle what doesn't bring money in – but different views on this – no to landfill.
- Staff at recycling centre can be great - should train everyone else as recycling advice and attitude help so much. 'Personal empowerment' –celebrate good staff's approaches.
- Ensure central belt organisations have good VC services to reduce travel.
- Deliver services smarter e.g. single Stromness officer who empties parking meters instead of trips from Kirkwall.
- Steam room at pool.
- Signs – at your own risk (footpaths).
- Council shouldn't have to pay for airport bus.
- Regulated charges – e.g. Heathrow.
- Integration of air service and bus service should be better.
- Bundled bus services.
- Smaller buses – mini buses.
- Stagecoach – should pay something towards subsidised services from Commercial Service.
- Library Service – strong feeling against cuts.
- Boxes of books rather than Isles mobile van.
- Books in isles shops – mini library in the shop – pay them what OIC spend on isles van.

Are there any services which you think could be provided by your community for less cost?

- Playparks. But what about insurance and inspection?
- Need to spend money to empower the community to do things for themselves.
- Someone within the community who is able 'to do' e.g. Development Officer role – capturing external opportunities and identifying who best to do what.
- Unlock potential to hold more events in Stromness and to do more things.
- Final ways to provide services here that than people having to go away.
- Recycling: there must be a more efficient way for Stromness!!

- Vary specification of grass cutting and engage community to establish what matters, e.g. varied height of Peedie Sea different areas.

If you were to provide some local services, how would this be organised i.e. where from and who by, i.e. by parish, from a community hall or through a community hub - for example Dounby providing a centre for the West Mainland?

- Good to have people working in community – base jobs in communities, rather than centralise.
- Need to value and support broad learning experience and diverse professional/vocational training.
- Need to prepare folk for ‘living’ – pass on experience and skills for life and community role.
- Prepare folk for a global outlook – gain life skills and experience and bring back into community.
- Development Trusts require funding and paid staff.
- Development Trust Day/Conference.
- Isles Trusts have paid staff – Volunteer fatigue.

Do you think there is a greater need for Community Councils or Development Trusts to be allocated funding from the Council to provide services?

- Limitations over time in terms of money as to what CC can really do – utilise CC/Dev Trust vehicles and unlock more ‘things’ that can be done locally – specific talks for CC’s.
- Roles in outsourcing/avoiding service duplication or complimentary/voluntary try not to replicate.
- Need to be clear that any changes to services are really introducing savings.
- Identify opportunities for organisations to do things – to ensure will save money.
- Fund local Development Officers for Local Development Trust. Do not cascade responsibilities to Community Councils – they are volunteers.
- Needs to be sustainable – through turbines etc.
- Communities elsewhere run islands/hotels etc – use this income to invest in-services Community Asset Transfers.
- CDF works very well; LEADER & CDF working in partnership.
- Look at future revenue raising through community-owned resources, e.g. campsite.

Should the Council use more of its reserve funds and what for? Is it providing every day services, providing more of the services that make Orkney what it is, helping our economy grow and creating jobs or investing in projects that will make money for us?

- Before we stop doing things need to think what we can do instead, e.g. role of reserves to pace change more to cushion transition over next few years – slightly more risk/balance as austerity cannot last.

- Need to understand may be need to spend more for specific purposes ‘take a little bit more for worthwhile things’.
- Limitations to more employment as have such low unemployment – need to build industry as well.
- Squeeze reserves a bit more.
- Put it into infrastructure – charge for caravan parking public toilets.
- Spend more on emergencies and priorities.
- Procure locally where we can.
- Don’t be so previous about spending.
- Reserve fund – invest in businesses here in Orkney. – partnering and supply chain – could result in smaller return than investment portfolio but brings community development and benefit.
- Use SRF to fund to stimulate growth – Fund the Development Trusts.

### Do you have any other ideas for us to make money, to charge for things or to save money?

- Visitors – charges for visitors to heritage sites/car parking etc – monetarise the assets, e.g. toilet charges and cathedral tours?
- Need to build facilities for tourists and charges for services and volume management.
- Explore mechanisms for tourists to pay also to spend money when they are here.
- Maximise value of all tourists and understand costs of wear and tear.
- Maximise ways to get more out of cruise visitors.
- Value rather than volume. Harbour dues are spent.
- Need to manage Brodgar better, as Orkney’s assets.
- Need forum for people to leave ideas and receive information about the Council.
- Is there a better way to support people locally who need specialist help – lose a lot of time going away.
- Charge for shuttle bus from Hatston – “no brainer”.
- Council website – old fashioned – get more services online, e.g. book pick up of large waste – item online “book a slot” but streaming is good (audio-casting).
- Are revenue-making services designed to make money effectively? (Held back by bureaucracy). Need to liberate the creativity of staff to generate more revenue.
- Good idea scheme – for staff.
- Don’t start with cuts to services – look at income generation first to try to preserve great services such as libraries.
- Could the Council’s corporate services be available to other organisations/SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises)? Cost-sharing-reduced cost base.
- Economic Development Services – draw on collective knowledge of public/private sector to enrich knowledge in Orkney “team Orkney”. Needs trust. Check who else is going to conferences across other organisations and ensure feedback (good community empowerment).

- Give Old St Peter's to Development Trust – turn it in to accommodation.
- Cardboard shredder – money maker – replace straw.
- Big shed for Orkney Zero Waste.
- Plastic waste to fuel for heating – District Heating.
- Provide a service for buses to empty chemical toilets.
- Wool for insulation.
- Industrial starter units – starter kitchen for local producers.
- Low rent for empty properties – Commercial Hotel – Visitor Centre on ground floor.
- Old Abattoir – manufacture hydrogen boilers; Training for hydrogen engineers.
- Develop the Technical Standards for Hydrogen.
- Tourist Tax – some for/some not.
- Passenger charge.
- Signage for tourists – where to walk.
- Conservation charge.
- Donation box.
- Cathedral donation box.

#### **General comments:**

- Community expressing dismay about hard decisions on particular people – want compassionate and caring communities: perception is important.
- Need to understand overall costs of providing services, e.g. care: are Orkney costs comparable/proportionate.
- Support staff in Education are scared for their jobs if on short-term contracts.
- Don't give people short-term contracts if you can avoid it – makes people feel less valued.
- Understanding of Support for Learning following the child.
- Young teachers on short-term contracts makes it difficult to get a mortgage '8.5 claim rule – last Council in Scotland to have this – some protection. Puts pressure on the staff makes leaders wonder if they want to continue.
- View that young teachers aren't being treated well due to continual temporary contracts – can't buy a house – so ambitions are being pushed back.
- Need flexibility in Support for Learning.
- OAP concessions – there are none on Active Life!
- Airport consultation committee – there isn't one.
- No idea is too small – cumulative effect.
- Need Economic statistics to be published again so we can measure inward return on investments.
- Keep projects smaller – more chance of local bidders.
- Need to empower staff to take decisions and remove bureaucracy – give staff more confidence: - allow the Council to fail (only way to get good ideas going).

- Law society expects detailed paperwork – identify team strengths and give individuals responsibility for those tasks they are good at – take responsibility and ownership.
- Preventative/early intervention work saves greater spend down the line – don't take the "easy" cuts.
- Capital Programme – get it out there to give Orkney advance notice. Not just procurement more about being able to take ideas and shape them in partnership! Communication should be better.
- Well-developed knowledge – based sector in Orkney, so could have public/private partnership to employ teachers when not in schools. Gives children and teachers a taste of private sector and enterprise.
- Openness and transparency – work harder at this; listen to our public, e.g. hydrogen – powered boat – only heard about this today.
- Campus project. Is it a building or the people in it? Need to refocus on people. Not working well – no community involvement.
- Bring expertise in early – don't develop in isolation.
- More understanding and knowledge of the companies in Stromness – share this with Council.
- Make most of the talent across Orkney – inside and outside the Council.
- Re-cultivate 'municipal confidence'.
- Be aware of social cost of workers being brought in for building projects, etc – can bring problems.
- Community provision for less cost.
- Loch Lomond Conservation Trust - £3.
- Canadian Teachers Pension Fund – Willing to invest.
- We need to be sure that services provided by communities/others are good enough/meet standards.
- Finding out about Council Property is too difficult Council Estate Management.
- Council PR is poor e.g. St Magnus Lane Toilets – Need to spread more knowledge of where harbour dues are spent.
- Italian Chapel – now charging.
- Need to spread knowledge of what Council does – the facts e.g. use of reserves.
- Communications is key to perceptions need more direct OIC communication/newsletters – forum for information.
- Open and transparent and ensure better knowledge of what is really going on.
- Always a stigma – it is the local authority – need to be accessible.
- Need more knowledge of matters held in public as perception more than reality and why some things need to be carefully handled.
- Need more accountability for failure – more private sector approach to people management, noting things have changed in last few years, Council has changed in last ten years.
- Plain English/information important.

- Disappointing that the feedback on this is going to be so slow – should be much quicker. Email all this round in next two to three weeks.

## Appendix 6. Community Council Conference – 20 June 2018

- More recycling units available and less often collections especially in isles, run by OIC staff rather than contractors from other areas.
- Also get OIC staff to cut grass – including school janitors, etc.
- Contractors load prices for OIC so tenders are much higher to OIC than other folk.
- Sanday organised a drop-in session in Sanday Feedback is that locals can't make realistic suggestions as they don't know what services cost.
- More flexibility in commissioning as the plumber or electrician can't do any extra work on island as they don't have authority for that extra task. Not cost effective to contractor to do extra work.
- Business waste is more of an issue in Stromness. Business dump waste as facilities not available in Stromness. Waste has to go to Kirkwall.
- Combine recycling Steptoe's Yard idea with recycling.
- Look at business/recycling/Steptoe's Yard.
- CCs could co-ordinate some men's type shed scenario. Take usable stuff out. New system at Chinglebraes may improve option.
- Grass cutting – put all areas cut in one pot and ask Communities to decide which areas are prioritised. Communities were not aware what bits were not going to be cut so tell CCs which is going to be left uncut.
- Picky Grass – happier if ad hoc to CCs as Public Liability in place.
- The idea to pass on grass cutting responsibilities to CCs is gaining traction. There is an appetite amongst CCs to take on some staff management and services management if a Link Officer is in place.
- Roads maintenance – where done.
  - Ditching could be done locally
  - More engagement to identify areas for priority would like the Municipal and Roads Services representative (MARS rep) back as public are not reporting municipal and roads defaults.
- Link Officer – helps as public go to them – good link for communication.
- Gritting in winter – over the top sometimes – blanket policy? Can this be delegated? Would all over done be a saving as areas treated when no need.
- Verges – used to be locally done – machine sent out.
- Frequency of collecting recyclates – once/month and waste collection: Recycling centres – e.g. Stronsay and Papay glass crushing & paper handling locally – roads – make use locally e.g. briquettes for burning.
- North Ronaldsay – white goods disposal costs picked up by CC to stop fly-tipping in Community - old cars – scheme 3/week.
- School – itinerant teachers – more resident teachers would be better.
- Difficult to delegate services due to rules/regulations.
- Nurseries – skills not being developed and need more learning support earlier to help later in school.

- Community Association – usually entertainment.
- Development Trust work – a lot/too much to add on to Community Council – most have a full time Development Officer. No merit in merging obvious.
- Community Development Officer and Link Officer could work closely together.
- Community Development Officer – helps funding for groups.
- Island Link Officer – CC projects and where CC needs their skills – would Island Link Officer free up liaison office time too?
- Right number of CCs on mainland – can't see how it could be reduced.
- Need Councillors at CC meetings – especially in isles.
- Community benefit projects – making use of income to benefit all.
- School maintenance, etc. could be done locally, e.g. good handyman.
- Get message out to contractors that simpler process.
- Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) testing done locally.
- Can Contractor insurance for public liability be done through CC in same way it is done for events.
- Council employees on isles could be doing different roles on isles.
- More research info demand. For services and better implementation/direction of funding e.g. library services – look at options, ferry services demand/free tickets for elderly, etc/means tested.
- Improve efficiency in Council service delivery?
- Amalgamation of primary/secondary schools.
- Community Councils – not particularly in position take on more – but can do some things – grass cutting, verge cutting, etc. We have limited capacity. Link officers – positive, there is scope.
- Council could better use local contractors – possible smaller procurement threshold for local companies.
- Generate income? Wind farms – but long timescales/harbour infrastructure, renewables, oil and gas.
- Use of reserves?
- Skills and employment – lack of people to employ?
  - Courses/education/media campaign? – Who do you want to attract?
  - Target schools/universities in the UK: media campaign linking in with Orkney College.
  - Incentives.
- Islands Bill – derogation for tenancy/gateway houses.
- Second home tax? Reconfiguration of Council Tax with rebate for employed persons.
- Possible increase on service charges.
- Tourist tax – 50p per night? Research income possible from tax.
- Public Areas – upkeep – Community ownership – offload to Developer?
- Split Council budget into areas so CC's can allocate? – Verge cutting – Kirkyards.



- Machinery for maintenance – Plan of boundaries on Mainland.
- Lack of Rentable properties – Are ‘gifts’ really a gift if costs/maintenance involved in future? – responsibilities.
- Abattoir – Keep ‘local’ to Orkney.
- CC’s have to be listened to and action taken.
- Transport – bus services community controlled – HIAL (Highlands and Islands Airports Limited) car park £ towards buses.
- Link Officers.
- Recycling, county wide solution, budget to be cut – find local solutions rather than take it back to Kirkwall – Cursiter? – monthly collections? – glass imploders – aggregate – cardboard shredder/briquettes – Keep it and do something with it here.
- Second Homes – Council tax.
- Electric Car – Charge for charging.
- Grass cutting – Consultation/decisions made by CC/Community on what needs cut and how often - £ comes out of different budgets – Local groups bid to do works and get funding for their group – liability/H&S (Health and Safety) gets in the way. Need to find a way round.
- Recycling – Restart – swap shop! Plastic – district heating system.
- Airfield Huts? – Consultation on changes/upgrades.

## Community Conversations – Progress Update

### Overall Top 12 Issues – Development and Infrastructure

By far the most comments or suggestions were made about services provided by the Development and Infrastructure Service. This could be due to this area being responsible for some of the most ‘visible’ services or due to the fact that all people in Orkney will be affected by these services in some way, whether it is through transport, through our roads or through the upkeep of the public areas around us.

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
1.	Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help, then they will.	<p>Orkney Islands Council values the contribution made by volunteers to the fabric of the Orkney community. They have a vital role in adding value to many of the services we provide, including social and community care, housing, community development, environmental improvement, economic development and job creation, education, advocacy and community engagement.</p> <p>During the summer of 2018, it became clear that the public in Orkney wished to undertake volunteering in areas which had not been considered as volunteering opportunities in the past.</p> <p>As these activities were not covered by the Council’s existing Volunteering Policy, and there was a desire to support and encourage community volunteering, an officer group reviewed the Volunteering Policy and drafted some amendments to ensure that volunteering continues to be encouraged by the Council within the national legislative framework in these new areas.</p> <p>Subsequently a new volunteering policy was agreed by Councillors in March 2019 and is available via the Council website  <a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/volunteering-policy.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/volunteering-policy.htm</a></p>
2.	There was support for Council-run income generation projects for community benefit – including a wind farm.	Orkney Islands Council announced in April that it was intending to investigate an additional two sites for potential community wind farms in the county to add to the project already under investigation on Hoy.

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
		<p>The new sites under consideration are located at Faray, in the North Isles, and at Quanterness, St Ola.</p> <p>Consultation sessions were held with communities in Kirkwall, Westray, Eday and Rendall during May/June 2019. A planning application is due to be submitted to the planning authority in January 2020 for the Quanterness site with pre-application consultation currently underway with the public and community councils.</p> <p>The aim of the project, which is being led by the Council's Strategic Projects team, would be to generate significant income and community benefit for Orkney.</p> <p><a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Scoping-Reports-Published-for-Orkneys-Wind-Farm-Projects-and-Westray-Date-Announced.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Scoping-Reports-Published-for-Orkneys-Wind-Farm-Projects-and-Westray-Date-Announced.htm</a></p>
3.	<p>There was support for some 'council services' to be taken care of locally either by volunteers or the community councils, roadside maintenance like verge cutting, weeding and ditch clearing were key examples of this.</p>	<p>Through the 'Empowering Communities' project we hope to develop several opportunities where local volunteers can make a big impact in areas the Council could struggle to deliver in future years. It should be noted that some work associated with the roads network will require a certain level of training and qualification and are therefore less suited to a volunteer-based approach.</p>
4.	<p>Introduce a tourist tax.</p>	<p>We have made representations to the Scottish Government's recent consultation on a 'tourist tax' and we are monitoring developments in this area. If a tourism levy was to be established for Orkney, we would hope to ensure a direct link to tourism investments and have also suggested that a levy could be collected as a transportation surcharge, rather than a charge on accommodation. We will continue to discuss this further through the Destination Orkney Partnership.</p>
5.	<p>The public wished to see consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.</p>	<p>Community Payback Orders are not allowed to replace paid staff activity (CPOs) such as suggested here. CPOs continue to contribute to the wider community through other activities.</p> <p>There are many examples of community payback orders enhancing local communities in other ways, e.g. Burray Bus Shelter / CLAN garden.</p>

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
6.	There was a view that the Council should charge for areas that are currently free parking and charge for electric parking.	Orkney Islands Council began 'charging for charging' so a charge for EV from May 2019: <a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/EV-charging-fees-due-soon.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/EV-charging-fees-due-soon.htm</a> Car parking charges are part of the annual budget review process and will be considered again in preparing for the 2020/21 budget. As part of this we will consider introducing charges on currently free locations and review the first year's implementation of EV charges noted.
7.	People asked that the Council made it easier to recycle by introducing more community recycling points and incentivising people to recycle by publishing league tables of where the most recycling was done. It was also felt that more support was needed for businesses to help them recycle more.	A pilot project has brought plastic recycling facilities to Stronsay. The project saw community groups on the island and the Council's Waste Team teaming up earlier to improve recycling facilities on the island, with recycling facilities for household plastic bottles made available for the first time. As the recycling point is now manned, the Council agreed to provide, on a one-year trial basis, a skip for household plastic bottles which is to be collected four times a year and then weighed and checked for contamination. In the first quarter over 140kg of plastics was collected, with just 2.9kg of this non-recyclable plastics – just 2% of the overall collection rate. The pilot project will run for a year with the data then used to consider the case for continuation of the Stronsay scheme and potential further roll out to the other isles. There has also been a push to support businesses in 2018/19 and 2019/20, reaching out to over 1,400 local firms to explain why they need to comply with the current legislation and help them improve their recycling performance. Subsequently we have seen a significant uptake in the number of firms now complying with the change in legislation and setting up contracts with the Council. Recycling rates increase progressively from 17.4 % to 22.6%.
8.	Attendees said that they felt the Council's Capital Programme was beneficial in providing local jobs but needed to be done in a staggered way that did not	The Council's capital programme is set broadly in 5-year periods, with the current one running from 2018 to 2023. The capital programmes are agreed through the Council's committee processes and therefore available for anyone to look at when they are in the public domain.

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
	overheat the sector and allows local firms to benefit. There was also a view that more of the work needed to be done in partnership with the community by letting folk know about upcoming projects earlier and help them to become more involved – this view was expressed particularly in Stromness Research Campus project.	All the major schemes that we control seek to ensure the local market gets a chance to bid. We work within the rules and constraints set by procurement legislation and by our Council's Contract Standing Orders. For the last financial year ending in March 2019, a total of just over £45 million was spent on supplies, services and works. Of this 47% of the spend over £1,000 was with local suppliers.  Our Procurement Team work actively each year through a "Meet the Buyer" event to engage with local firms to ensure they are able to tender for larger projects This offer of support is always available for any company experiencing difficulty in the procurement process.
9.	The public thought it would be better if there were smaller buses on some of the bus routes (many perceived that the buses were too big for actual demand) and more bundling of contracts to aid efficiency.	The existing contractors have been progressively introducing smaller buses on some routes. A dialogue will be maintained with future contractors on this subject, noting the multiple use of individual buses in Orkney for different routes (including school routes where larger buses are required) makes it difficult to focus only on a smaller fleet.
10.	Questioning the need for the Council to sign up to part-funded capital projects like the Kirkwall harbour front improvements, placemaking.	Funding any scheme is a challenge given the pressures on the Council's capital programme. When we are looking to deliver a Council priority from the community plan, if we can secure external funding this reduces the burden on the Council to fund or borrow to pay for the scheme. This was the case with Sustrans support for the harbour front and SEPA support for the harbour flood resilience measures.
11.	Some felt that areas of grass being left uncut were not such a bad thing – these could be fenced off and used for grazing, veg growing or to sow flowers.	The Council announced in April 2019 where grounds maintenance work would be focused over the months ahead. Following representation from the public to Elected Members, the grass in some areas was cut more frequently in 2019 than it was during 2018. These included the Peedie Sea and the Bignold Park in Kirkwall, the Market Green in Stromness, the Firth School pitch in Finstown and the St Colm's Quadrant play area in Longhope.  In other areas there was less frequent grounds maintenance than a year ago. Full press release here:

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
		<a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Grounds-maintenance-update-for-2019.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Grounds-maintenance-update-for-2019.htm</a> A full review of grass cutting priorities will be undertaken during 2020 for introduction in 2021.
12.	The Council should cut down on street lighting and building lighting costs – lights off in the summer or not all areas/buildings lit.	Over the last three years we have progressively replaced street lights with new low energy LED units. These lights last much longer meaning that previously, where we had to use our resources to replace the lights on a regular basis, we may now only need to do it once up to 25 years. Our energy bill will reduce by around £87,000 per annum once the programme is complete. A programme is also in place within our buildings to replace fluorescent tubes and bulbs with LED equivalents.

## Overall top 5 issues – Education and Housing

There was a very broad range of suggestions made around how we could create savings or generate income in the Education, Leisure and Housing Service – some were what could be termed as ‘quick-wins’ i.e. increasing charges, whilst others were more around investing now, for a long-term gain.

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
13.	All communities wanted to see improvements to Orkney’s campsites by not allowing wild-camping, introducing more paid for sites/on-site services and ensuring there was more marketing of the sites that are available – therefore increasing income.	Work to create 12 new hard standings and a road was completed at the Point of Ness Campsite in May 2018, resulting in visitors to the site being able to use pitches in all weather and allow the season to be extended where there is demand. New fencing was also put up at the site. There is an online booking system for campsites that allows customers to book and pay online. Marketing and promotion is something that the Sport and Leisure Service is continually seeking to improve for all its facilities. The Sport and Leisure Service is currently in discussions with a local designer about them producing promotional material for its campsites as well as its other facilities.
14.	The Council should invest in care and education services now to save money in the long term by creating self-healing communities. (This suggestion is also included in OHAC section).	Community Led Support programme advocates for a co-production approach. Communities identify the support they need and solutions are identified as part of ‘good conversations’ that utilises the resource wheel to identify where solutions can be found – personal resources, people resources (ie neighbours), community resources and, finally, statutory / paid support are considered.  Children’s Services have recently completed a review of services to children in need of care and protection which recommends a decisive move to early intervention.
15.	An ethos should be built through the young people in our schools of volunteering, helping out the community and civic pride.	The Education Service, through its schools and the Community Learning and Development (CLD) team, has a highly developed offer to our young people through supporting them in a variety of worthwhile activities including Duke of Edinburgh, Police Scotland Youth Volunteers, Saltire awards and many more – evidenced through the annual youth awards event and schools/CLD plans.
16.	We should charge tourists an entrance fee for our museums and the cathedral.	We are bound by the Public Libraries Consolidation (Scotland) Act 1887 which does not allow for charging for access to public collections

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
		<p>so it is not possible to charge entry to Council run museums.</p> <p>In terms of the Cathedral we are looking into options which could include an entry charge or the potential to set up a pro-active, simple and visible card payment donation points for visitors.</p>
17.	<p>There should be a review of Junior High School provision on the isles including looking at more digital learning.</p>	<p>Development of the Orkney Offer for the senior phase of the school curriculum will include a review of how we deliver education to the isles. This will form part of the Orkney's Learning Landscape transformation review/development.</p>



## Overall top 3 issues – Orkney Health and Care

There were very few suggestions made around how money could be saved in how we provide health and care services, which perhaps could suggest that people feel these services should be maintained at their current level. The top suggestions related to this service area were:

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
18.	The public wished to see consideration given to community justice workers carrying out some manual work on behalf of the Council, like grass cutting.	Community Payback Orders (CPOs) are not allowed to replace paid staff activity such as suggested here. CPOs continue to contribute to the wider community through other activities. There are many examples of CPOs enhancing local communities in other ways, e.g. Burray Bus Shelter / CLAN garden.
19.	The Council should invest in care and education services now to save money in the long term by creating self-healing communities.	Community Led Support programme advocates for a co-production approach. Communities identify the support they need and solutions are identified as part of 'good conversations' that utilises the resource wheel to identify where solutions can be found – personal resources, people resources (ie neighbours), community resources and, finally, statutory / paid support are considered. Children's Services have recently completed a review of services to children in need of care and protection which recommends a decisive move to early intervention.
20.	There should be more co-ordination between OIC care bus services and those from voluntary sector too.	The Community Led Support programme is linking with services from Orkney Islands Council, NHS Orkney and the Third Sector to see how these challenges can be addressed.
	<b>Further Comments from OHAC</b>	
	We are continually looking for ways to engage with individuals and communities. We have been trying to get out to the places where people naturally are – Tesco, Agricultural Shows etc to have good conversations with people. We have refreshed our Strategic Plan and been out to consultation on this.	

## Overall top 2 issues – Corporate Services

The Council's Corporate Services are responsible for the internal services of the Council – for example looking after our staff and our buildings. The suggestions that were made in these areas were:

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
21.	It was suggested that the Council should do more to dispose/get rid of empty properties or streamline the process for renting them.	<p>Orkney Islands Council agreed in January 2018 under its revised Scheme of Delegation to delegate powers to the Executive Director of Corporate Services to make operational decisions around the buying, selling, leasing and use and allocation of land and property – removing the need for individual reports to Council committees on these matter, therefore speeding up the process and helping prospective tenants in getting a quicker decision.</p> <p>Delegated decisions on these matters have been used 38 times since then, including five decisions taken to sell Council properties or offer them for sale, eight new tenancies and 16 renewed leases of existing tenant.</p> <p><a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Local-Businesses-and-Organisations-Benefitting-from-Quicker-Decisions-on-Properties.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/Local-Businesses-and-Organisations-Benefitting-from-Quicker-Decisions-on-Properties.htm</a></p>
22.	There should be more joint services between NHS Orkney and the Council.	<p>In addition to the existing joint health and care services governed through the Integration Joint Board, we have been exploring the case for a wider approach to integrated services, possibly through a single authority model.</p> <p>Since the last Community Conversations sessions, Orkney Islands Council now also provides an information governance service to NHS Orkney, and fulfils the role of Data Protection Officer for NHS Orkney.</p>

## Overall top 5 issues – Chief Executive’s Service (Executive Support)

The Council’s Chief Executive Service (Executive Support) is responsible for liaising with the local community councils. As some of the questions posed at the Community Conversations events related directly to the role of the community councils, it is not surprising that a number of issues and suggestions were raised around community councils. The service is also responsible for communications and customer services. The top issues raised for this service were:

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
23.	Community Councils would need a development officer if they were going to take on services. They could then organise income generation projects for their individual community.	The Council has provided funding through the Economic Development Service and the LEADER fund for a development officer for Stromness. They will be supporting the Stromness Community Development Trust in sustaining the wellbeing of Stromness and working in partnership with key stakeholders to support delivery of a range of community projects in the town.  Some island areas have Link Officers as part of the Empowering Communities project. We are reviewing this project to see how best to support Community Councils to take projects forward which may include the trial of Link Officers in new areas.
24.	It was suggested that the Council or the community councils could introduce community noticeboards, computerised skills match systems or task list with jobs that need doing locally.	We have discussed better ways of working with the Community Councils at the Community Councils conference. Many Community Councils already have community noticeboards and / or newsletters. The Empowering Communities project is committed to further exploring ideas which will facilitate local solutions to local issues.
25.	The Council should save money by introducing more paperless systems like email and online payments.	We are working on our Customer Services Platform project which is streamlining processes and automating them thus reducing emails and paper. The Council’s website will also see additional functionality to allow customers to access and pay for services online.
26.	It was suggested that improvements needed to be made in communicating to the public what the role of the Community Councils were and what they achieved. Many people were unaware	We will explore this with the Community Councils as part of their next conference.

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
	of how the relationship between the Community Councils and Orkney Islands Council worked and so felt unable to suggest where improvements could be made.	
27.	People wished to see Council staff empowered to be more creative in their jobs by reducing bureaucracy. Many suggested expansion of the Council's internal Grand Idea Scheme.	<p>In terms of expansion of any internal ideas scheme, that was already open to all staff within the Council. Externally, the Community Conversations themselves and other consultations are the public's opportunity to provide ideas and feedback on future provision of Council Services.</p> <p>Reducing bureaucracy and encouraging creative thinking is absolutely something that the Council wants to work on with its staff, however there are often constraints and 'must do's' put upon the Council by legislation or national requirements and so balancing these aspects can be a challenge. In the Council's Workforce Plan approved in April 2019, finding new ways of doing things, working more flexibly, and introducing greater use of digital and electronic means of providing services have been included as priorities in order to reduce staff time required on routine tasks or administration.</p>

## **Overall top 5 issues – Chief Executive's Service (Finance)**

The Council's Finance team is responsible for looking after the Council's budget, our investment strategies (including what we do with the reserves) and for other financial issues like insurance. The top issues that related to that service were:

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
28.	Enable communities to volunteer to do services by clarifying insurance provision and health and safety issues. If communities can step in and help then they will.	<p>Orkney Islands Council values the contribution made by volunteers to the fabric of the Orkney community. They have a vital role in adding value to many of the services we provide, including social and community care, housing, community development, environmental improvement, economic development and job creation, education, advocacy and community engagement.</p> <p>During the summer of 2018, it became clear that the public in Orkney wished to undertake</p>

	<b>You Said</b>	<b>We Did/Are Doing</b>
		<p>volunteering in areas which had not been considered as volunteering opportunities in the past.</p> <p>As these activities were not covered by the Council's existing Volunteering Policy, and there was a desire to support and encourage community volunteering, an officer group reviewed the Volunteering Policy and drafted some amendments to ensure that volunteering continues to be encouraged by the Council within the national legislative framework in these new areas.</p> <p>Subsequently a new volunteering policy was agreed by Councillors in March 2019 and is available via the Council website:  <a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/volunteering-policy.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/volunteering-policy.htm</a></p>
29.	The costs of salaries for staff, including Distant Islands Allowance.	Management Teams keep staffing levels under review and staff salaries are reviewed when job descriptions change. Distant Islands Allowance is determined and funded by the Scottish Government and recognises the cost of living on remote islands. Scrapping it would reduce the income coming into the local economy.
30.	We need to challenge the Scottish Government more on our cuts and tackle disparity of funding between us, Shetland and the Western Isles.	Orkney Islands Council continues to lobby the Scottish Government on our funding, particularly around funding for the internal ferry service: <a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/OIC-makes-urgent-call-for-fair-ferries-funding.htm">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/OIC-News/OIC-makes-urgent-call-for-fair-ferries-funding.htm</a>
31.	The reserves should be used to generate income to then protect some of our most valued services like the library.	The Council already uses its reserves to generate income and protect valued services. For example, the Council generated £9.1 million of income from its portfolio of stock and shares, investment properties and local investments held through the Strategic Reserve Fund. Of this, £4.4 million was applied to support the provision of Council services, while a further £0.3 million was allocated to the Community Development Fund.
32.	The Council should consider increasing Council tax and service charges – or introduce a second home tax.	The Council has reviewed its charges on empty properties and second homes.