

Minute of the Meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held in the North Walls Community Centre and via Teams on Tuesday, 13 May 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Mr A Clark, Mrs T Avis, Mrs I Mathieson (via Teams) and Mr A Sinclair.

In Attendance:

- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.
- Mrs K Dobrzynski, Outgoing Island Link Officer (ILO)/Clerk.
- One member of the public.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors G Bevan, L Hall and J Park.

2. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held on 7 February 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mrs T Avis and seconded by Mr A Sinclair.

3. Matters Arising

A. Lights at Moaness Pier

The Interim Clerk advised that the lights had been reported, and members reported that they were now working. It was also reported that a bike shelter had been erected at the pier, and members enquired as to whether one would be put up at Lyness, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the lights were now working at Moaness Pier.
2. That the Interim Clerk would enquire, via the business letter to Democratic Services, if a bike shelter was planned for Lyness Pier.

B. Under 22's Ferry Travel

Resolved to note that Under 22's were now entitled to free inter-island ferry travel and that this item could be removed from matters arising.

C. Graemsay Kirkyard Gate Repair

Mrs I Mathieson advised that, to her knowledge, nobody had been to look at the gate and it remained in need of repair, and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would make enquiries in order to get work done on the gate.

D. Graemsay Verge Cutting

It had been reported that the issue with verge cutting was that they could not get the equipment on to the island, and it was queried whether someone local could do this work and charge back to OIC, and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would ask, via the business letter, if a local solution could be found.

E. Graemsay Ferry Timetable

The Interim Clerk advised that there had been no change to the ferry timetable despite the community council asking that the 18:00 sailing not be "on request"

however amendments had been made to the process so that this sailing could be booked up to an hour before sailing, either by phone or online. Members advised that this was still problematic as it was not always possible to get through by phone, and passengers who had books of tickets could not utilise these when booking online. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Transport Representative should raise this issue again at the next Transport Forum.

F. Waste Bins – Longhope

The Interim Clerk advised that a works order had been raised for moving the bin to the preferred location and that this should hopefully happen soon, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

G. Osmondwall Cemetery Signage

The Interim Clerk provided an update, being that the Burial Grounds Officer was willing to look into a sign for this area of the cemetery, and that she might require local assistance to get the sign put up. Mr A Sinclair advised that he would be able to put the sign in place if the Council provided it, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Interim Clerk would advise the Burial Grounds Officer, via Democratic Services, that a sign would be welcome, and that the community council would assist with this.
2. To note that Mr A Sinclair would erect a sign, if required.
3. That further information would be passed on to the Interim Clerk in relation to the dog fouling so that the matter could be investigated further by OIC.

H. Grass Cutting Tenders

Resolved to note that three-year tenders were now in place for all cemeteries in Graemsay, Hoy and Walls, awarded as follows:

- Graemsay – Neil Mowat.
- Osmondwall – James Harmison.
- St Johns – James Harmison.
- Hoy – Rachel Thomson.

4. Correspondence

A. Local Place Plan Update

Members had previously been sent an update from Democratic Services, advising that the deadline for submission of place plan had been extended to September 2024, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Our Budget Challenge – Survey Results

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members, with details of the results of the recent OIC Budget Challenge survey and a link to the full report. 1,077 members of the community had responded to the consultation and elected members had been provided with the survey results prior to the annual budget setting meeting on 25 February. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. OIC Wind Farm Projects

Following consideration of correspondence from OIC Strategic Projects, copies of which had previously been circulated to members, which provided an update on the OIC Wind Farm Projects, it was:

Resolved to note that the project for Wee Fea in Hoy had been paused whilst a reappraisal of the project was carried out, in light of the current grid connection costs attached to the project.

D. Orkney Ferries Smart Cards

Members had previously been sent information from Marine Services which advised that they would shortly be issuing replacement Orkney Ferries SmartCards to isles residents, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. SEPA – New Surface Water Flood Maps

Members had been emailed information on new SEPA surface water flood maps on 1 April, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Improving the Cancer Journey Service

Correspondence from NHS Orkney's Public Health department had previously been circulated to members, providing information on the new Improving the Cancer Journey Service, which offered support to anyone affected by cancer with their non-clinical needs, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

G. Verge Maintenance Plan - CC Comments

Members had previously been emailed a copy of Roads Support responses to the community council comments received during the recent Verge Maintenance Plan consultation, and it was:

Resolved to note the comments.

H. MyPlace Awards

Members had been emailed on 12 April with information on the MyPlace awards, should they want to nominate

Resolved to note that the deadline had passed.

I. Changing Places Toilet Fund

Information from the Changing Places adviser had previously been emailed to members, advising of funding available to put in changing places and toilet facilities, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

J. Ferry Replacement Programme – Update

Members had previously been sent a briefing note containing information on the current status of the ferry replacement programme, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and that the outline vessel design for the Graemsay and Hoy ferries would be part of phase 2.

5. Consultations

A. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Following consideration of the consultation on the SFRS Strategic plan for the period 2025 to 2028, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

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

B. SCDC - Community Conversation - Community Benefits from Renewable Energy Developments

Members had previously been emailed information from the Scottish Community Development Centre, advising that a community conversation meeting would be held to share views in an islands focussed conversation on the Community Benefit Good Practice Guidance, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had taken place on 26 March 2025.

C. Visitor Levy Survey and Public Engagement Sessions

Members had been emailed on 1 April with details of a survey being carried out by Orkney Islands Council, in conjunction with Shetland Islands Council and the Outer Hebrides Local Authority. Information on online and in-person public engagement sessions had also been passed on, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had taken place on 25 and 26 March and that the survey was now closed.

D. Northern Isles Freight Vessels Replacement Project - Public Events and Key Stakeholder Meetings

Correspondence regarding the Northern Isles Freight Vessel Replacement programme had previously been emailed to members, advising of a public drop-in session on 20 March, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had since passed.

E. Visitor Levy - Full Islands Act ICIA Required

Members had previously been sent correspondence from Kathryn Johnson, asking community councils to consider signing a letter to Kate Forbes MSP with regards to the Visitor Levy legislation, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

F. SATE Survey

Information on a survey being carried out by 3X1 had been emailed to members on 1 April, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline to complete the survey had passed.

G. Winter Service Plan 2025

Members had been sent a copy of the winter service plan consultation for consideration, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To ask that the Rackwick Road be reinstated to a priority 2 as there was a young family in Rackwick now along with an elderly resident who required weekly doctor's visits.
2. To note that the deadline for any further comments was 30 June 2025.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the community council's general finance statement, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £19,952.92 as at 6 May 2025.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2024/2025 Community Council Grant Scheme statement, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the balances remaining for approval of £18.74 in the main capping limit, £128.38 in the additional capping limit and £59.52 in the island capping limit at the end of the 2024/2025 financial year.

2. To note that updated sheets would be circulated once new financial year figures had been confirmed.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 6 May 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for allocation of £7,876.10.

7. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Folk Festival

Following consideration of a request from Orkney Folk Festival for financial assistance towards events happening as part of this years' festival, including a concert in the Hoy Kirk on 23 May, it was:

Resolved to award £200 from the general fund towards the festival.

B. Bag the Bruck 2025

Members considered a request from the Longhope Lifeboat Guild, copies of which had previously been circulated. It was suggested that some other groups may wish to apply for the funding, and it was:

Resolved to defer this item and discuss at the next meeting.

8. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport Representative

Mrs T Avis advised that a meeting had been held between members of both Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council and Flotta Community Council, to discuss the summer 2026 timetables, however a change had been proposed to the winter 2025/2026 timetable that had subsequently been approved by OIC/Orkney Ferries, meaning that the Tuesday and Thursday morning sailings would go Lyness to Flotta. Following discussion, it was agreed that Mr E Barclay, Orkney Ferries Manager, should be invited to a future meeting to discuss ferry matters.

It was also reported that the school had put in a request for an amendment to sailings to allow pupils to take part in the Island Games opening ceremony on 12 July and return home the same evening, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the change to the winter timetable.

2. To invite the Orkney Ferries Manager to a future meeting.

3. To note the community council's support for the school's request for a later return sailing on 12 July to accommodate the pupils' participation in the Island Games opening ceremony.

4. To note that the next Transport Forum was scheduled to take place on 19 August 2025.

B. Planning Representative

Resolved to note that there was no update to provide.

C. Health and Care Representative

Resolved to note that the next Joint Isles Health and Care meeting was due to take place on 3 June 2025.

9. Publications

The following publications had been circulated to members previously and were noted:

- Orkney Ferry Statistics – January, February and March 2025.
- VAO Training and Funding Update – February and March 2025.
- VAO Newsletter – January, February, March and April 2025.
- Scottish Islands Federation Bulletin – February 2025.
- Scottish Islands Federation AGM – 27 March 2025.
- Orkney Island Games Sports Schedule.
- Isles Special Collection Rota April - September 2025.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. CC Vacancies

Following discussion in relation to the three vacancies on the community council, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the next meeting would be preceded by a public meeting to elect to the three vacancies on Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council.
2. That Democratic Services and current members would promote the public meeting and encourage new members to come forward.

B. Core Paths Work Tender

Resolved to note that nobody had come forward to do the work and that the Interim Clerk would advise Democratic Services so that the work could be arranged by Orkney Islands Council instead.

C. Graemsay Car Parking Spaces in Stromness

The Interim Clerk advised that, due to the Island Games triathlon event being held in Stromness on 13 July, all vehicles in the dedicated spaces for Graemsay residents required to be moved. Residents with cars in this area would be provided with a pass to allow them to park their vehicles elsewhere for the duration. Graemsay residents had asked for assurance that the parking area would be available to them again following the events, as previously agreed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information and for the community council to seek assurances from Marine Services, via the business letter, that the parking area would be available to Graemsay residents for parking again following the Island Games.

D. Road Scheme

It was advised that residents had been asking if the aggregate/road scheme would be operating this year. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That Hoy would receive the allocation this year.
2. That the Interim Clerk would ask for advice from the Outgoing Clerk as to how the scheme worked and would obtain quotes for material.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council would be held on Friday, 4 July 2025, preceded by a public meeting to elect to the three vacancies on the community council.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:48.