

# Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwick Community Council held in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams on Wednesday, 29 October 2025 at 19:30

## Present:

Mr D Hamilton, Mrs E Grant, Mr E Grieve, Mr K Groundwater, Mr C Kirkness and Mrs K Ritch.

## In Attendance:

- Councillor O Tierney.
- Councillor J Stevenson.
- Councillor R King.
- Mr R Delday, Birsay Community Council.
- Mr S Spence, Birsay Community Council.
- Mr E Harvey, Birsay Community Council.
- Mr T Parkin, Senior Urban Designer, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (via Teams).
- Ms B Woodall, Principal Project Manager, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (via Teams).
- Ms L Santana, Senior Project Manager, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (via Teams).
- Mrs J Montgomery, Empowering Communities Liaison Officer.
- Mrs H Keveren, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

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## **1. Apologies**

Resolved to note that apologies had been received from Mr G Brown, Mr S Tait and Councillor D Tullock.

## **2. Presentation – Walk Wheel Cycle Trust**

Representatives of the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust, formally Sustrans, joined the meeting via Teams to give an update on the 2024/2025 Mobility Audit and the plans for the next phase.

They advised that the Mobility Audit had included a review of the existing infrastructure and a full movement study involving the Friends of Dounby in a walk through the village identifying barriers to walking, cycling and wheeling. An open survey was also carried out to the wider community to invite their comments and build a clear picture of how people move around and a guide to improvements for the future.

The next phase in 2025/2026 would focus on developing selected proposals into concept designs, forming a masterplan for Dounby. This would include further community engagement to refine and validate the ideas. They planned to engage with local residents, the care home and the school to invite feedback from a wide section of the community.

A confirmed dates of 24 and 25 November had been arranged for a meeting with 'Friends of Dounby' along with Community engagement in the village.

The initial design solutions included new and improved pavements, improved pedestrian crossings, places to stop and rest, enhancements for the Village centre, an accessible bus shelter and measure to manage vehicle speeds.

They also planned to build on the momentum of the Market Green project highlighting how the Dounby Community Plan continued to drive positive change and advised that they were keen to keep the Community Council updated as things progress.

Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

The representatives of the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust left the meeting at this point.

## **3. Election of Office Bearers**

### **A. Appointment of Chair**

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr D Hamilton was appointed as Chair of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

## **B. Appointment of Vice Chair**

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr C Kirkness was appointed as Vice Chair of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

## **C. Appointment of Planning Representative**

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mr G Brown was appointed as Planning Representative of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

## **D. Appointment of Health and Care Representative**

Following a secret ballot, it was:

Resolved that Mrs K Ritch was appointment as Health and Care Representative of Harray and Sandwick Community Council.

## **4. Adoption of Minutes**

The minute of the meeting held on 27 August 2025 was approved, being proposed by Mr K Groundwater and seconded by Mr E Grieve.

## **5. Matters Arising**

### **A. Dounby School Play Park Fund**

Mr E Grieve updated members that the equipment was now in situ and open for the use of the Community and they hoped to have an officially open at a later date. He enquired if the Community Council would still like to donate to the facilities, and it was:

Resolved to note that Mr E Grieve would have suggestions of items for consideration at the next meeting.

### **B. Dounby Speed Tracker Information**

It was advised that the Team Manager, Roads Support, had accepted the invitation to give a presentation to members on the information gathered from the speed trackers in the village. The Chairman had suggested that he come along to the next meeting due to be held on 21 January, and it was:

Resolved to request via Business letter, that the Team Manager, Roads Support, give a presentation to members on 21 January 2026.

### **C. Sustrans – Friends of Dounby**

Members from Sustrans had given an interesting and informative presentation at the start of the meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

## **D. Market Green Update**

Various updates had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting as work progresses to near completion at the Market Green. British Telecom had confirmed that the work was complete and they did not replace a door on a telephone box if everything was waterproof within, however they were still to replace the concrete plinth. The Sustainable Tourism Officer was pursuing to see if an old-style red phone box could still be an option.

The issues raised with the grassed areas had been addressed, with the area at the front circle and the back area nearest the road being re-seeded with lawn grass and the other area left with the Wild Meadow mix.

Concerns had been raised with Orkney Islands Council after the security fencing had been taken down as all areas at the toilet block were accessible, this had also been addressed and the plant room now secured. The toilet block was now open for use which would allow for work to commence on demolition of the old facilities. Members also queried if the toilet block could be locked to avoid pranksters damaging the facilities at Halloween.

The issue with surface water lying at the edge of the road along the A965 new entrance to the Market Green had already been raised with Orkney Islands Council and they were looking into this matter.

Mr C Kirkness questioned if the area towards the entrance of the footpath to the school (off Hillside Road) was included in the project initially, as it required a kerb and path installed.

Members were also advised that the anticipated competition date would now be 10 November 2025. Discussion then followed on the suggestions for the opening of the project, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To enquire if the opening could be in Spring 2026 when the facilities would be starting to bloom.
2. To ascertain if a weekend/daytime opening would be acceptable.
3. To request that the toilet block be locked on 31 October 2025.
4. To request that the issue with surface water on the A965 be addressed.
5. To ask if a pavement and kerbs were to be installed on the Hillside Road entry to the Dounby School.

## **E. Interpretation Board – Market Green**

Following a draft version of the Interpretation Board being circulated around members, a meeting was held with the Sustainable Tourism Officer involved in the project at the Market Green. A constructive meeting was had with various points raised relating to items which should be included or discarded on the Interpretation Board being taken into consideration in the final version, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Interpretation Board had now been ordered.

## **F. Flags for Special Occasions**

Quotes had been received for the purchase of a new Orkney flag along with a Saltire which could be flown to mark various occasions throughout the year, and it was:

Resolved to note that the flags had been ordered with the total cost £208.03 eligible and payment coming from the Community Council Grant Scheme.

## **G. Dounby Woodland Project**

Further to the presentation at the last meeting from Sandy Gunn, Research Co-ordinator in the ICNZ Programme, a Facebook post had been done to gauge interest in the project to plant trees in the Community and no responses had been received from members of Harray and Sandwick parishes. A list of council own land in the area had been received from the Service Manager for Estates and circulated to members ahead of the meeting. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To suggest areas at Vias Moss and the Old Playpark in the village.
2. To supply the ICNZ Programme contact details of the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, Orkney Islands Council, as both areas had been identified in the Dounby Place Plan.

## **H. Dounby Village – Smiley Faces**

Further to the previous discussions for the purchase of five Smiley Faces for the village, as traffic calming measures, an Expression of Interest had been submitted to the Orkney Fund for potential funding. Roads Support had also advised that they had received confirmation that funding had been secured for the purchase of Smiley Faces for various areas in Orkney, orders had been placed and they hoped to have installation by March 2026, and it was:

Resolved to await confirmation if Dounby had been successful with Orkney Islands Council funding.

## **I. Village Tidy Up – Weed Killer**

Following the successful clean-up of the village held in July and the proposal to make it a yearly event, a request had been submitted to Orkney Islands Council asking if they could facilitate a spray with a pet friendly weed killer prior to the tidy up. A response had been received explaining that Orkney Islands Council do have trained operatives in using weed sprayers so this could be a possibility if given plenty of advance notice.

The Community Council could also hire a contractor however careful consideration would need to be given to the clear rules and regulations around the use of pesticides and consultation would be required with the Roads Authority if they were spraying public footpaths, and it was:

Resolved to add this item to the agenda for discussion in Spring 2026.

## **J. Harray and Sandwick Place Plan**

The Harray and Sandwick Steering Group had met again with progress being made with the Place Plan for the parishes. The draft survey had been circulated to the group and would be released to the wider community after the next meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note that the next meeting was scheduled for 5 November 2025.

## **K. Manholes – Dounby Village**

The issue relating to the raised manholes in the Dounby village which had been discussed at the previous meeting had been raised via business letter to Orkney Islands Council. The relevant department had been notified but no update received, and it was:

Resolve to note the information provided.

## **L. Projector Facilities – Milestone Community Church**

A request had been made that when using the room space in the Milestone Community Church, the use of the projector facilities would be beneficial and that they should be utilised. The Clerk had received training, and this was now possible, however there were some issues when sound was required. Discussion followed and members were advised that the Community Council only hired the back meeting room and if they required use of the projector, they would need to book the Main Sanctuary, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the discussion.

## **M. Community Engagement**

A discussion had been held at the previous meeting regarding measures to encourage the community to engage with the work of the Community Council. An interview had been arranged with 'The Orcadian' and was covered in 'The Orcadian' on 11 September and a Facebook post had also been done to capture contacts of those interested in being kept up to date with Community Council information, and it was:

Resolved to note the report.

## **6. Correspondence**

### **A. Winter Service Plan**

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from Orkney Islands Council's Roads Team with comments received during the Winter Service Plan Consultation and the comments in response from the team, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

## **B. Ron Bailey – Lithium-ion Batteries Campaign**

An update had been circulated to members from Ron Bailey advising that the Lithium-ion safety campaign had been successful and the Government had agreed to include a number of the suggestions relating to battery safety into the Act, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

## **C. Electrical Safety Fund**

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from the Electrical Safety Fund advising that it was now open for applications for grants to support keeping the vulnerable in your community safe from electrical hazards, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline was now passed.

## **D. Share your View on Tourism in Orkney**

An invitation had been received and circulated requesting one member from each Community Council attend a one-hour stakeholder interview as part of the Our Orkney, Our Story, project, an initiative to guide the future of tourism in a way that was sustainable, regenerative and rooted in community wellbeing. Mr G Brown had agreed to attend the interview and had found it very beneficial, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence and further discussion.

## **E. Islands Creative Entrepreneurship Programme**

Members considered correspondence previously circulated from Robert Gordon University to share the exciting opportunity for makers, artists and creative practitioners' resident in the islands. It advised that the Creative Entrepreneurship Programme had opened, and fully funded spaces were available for island residents, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline had now passed.

## **F. Community Right to Buy Review – Island Meeting**

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from Scottish Islands Federation advising members that the Scottish Government were hosting online meetings relating to the Community Right to Buy which was introduced in Scotland in 2003, empowering local communities to acquire land and assets, and it was:

Resolved to note that the event had now passed.

## **G. Ron Bailey – Webinar and Grant Scheme**

Correspondence had previously been circulated advising members of an online webinar relating to the safety of Lithium-ion batteries. Also highlighted in the correspondence was the Electrical Safety-First Grant Scheme, and it was:

Resolved to note that both events had now passed.

## **H. Rabbit and Wildlife Management**

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from a specialist Wildlife Management company who were in Orkney carrying out rabbit control and enquiring if the parishes had any requirement for Pest or Wildlife Management, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

## **I. Scapa Deep Water Quay Update**

An update had been received and circulated to members from the Project Team dealing with the Scapa Deep Water Quay, advising that additional information had been submitted to Orkney Islands Council and a further planning consultation period was underway, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

## **J. UHI Archaeology Institute – 10 Year Anniversary**

An invite had been received and circulated to members from the University of Highland and Island Archaeology Institute requesting attendance at an event to celebrate a decade of achievements, and it was:

Resolved to note the event would be held on 14 November 2025.

## **K. Patient Advice and Support Service**

A letter had been received and circulated from the Patient Advice and Support Service asking members to raise awareness of the service. They offered support to anyone who used the NHS to understand their rights and responsibilities as a patient in Scotland, raise concern, give feedback or comments and if required raise complaints, and it was:

Resolved to note that the poster and flyer had been displayed in the Dounby Post Office.

## **L. Orkney World Heritage Site Programme**

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Orkney World Heritage Site providing an update on their Programme and requesting a letter of support from Harray and Sandwick Community Council to demonstrate the need for the programme from parishes in which the World Heritage Sites are located, it was:

Resolved to submit a letter of support to the project.

## **M. Burial Grounds Grass Cutting**

Members considered information previously circulated from Orkney Islands Council relating to the Burial Grounds Grass Cutting. There was an obligation that Orkney Islands Council was responsible for the management of the burial grounds owned by them and the cost of grass cutting was a significant cost and they sought to find ways to reduce these costs, and it was:

Resolved to submit the following feedback and queries for consideration:

1. Can a contract be terminated as Harray and Sandwick currently have one year left of a 3-year contract?
2. That the Community Council wished to note their dissatisfaction with the proposal as this was a sensitive subject and the Community would not accept six cuts a year.
3. To question why the cost per sq./m varied considerably between burial grounds.
4. That less cuts would take longer.

## **N. Dounby Parent Council**

Following consideration of correspondence circulated to members inviting them along to the next meeting of Dounby Parent Council and also a request to be co-opted members of the parent council, it was:

Resolved to note that Mr E Grieve would be representing Harray and Sandwick Community Council on Dounby Parent Council.

## **O. Thank you letter**

Resolved to note that letters of thanks had been received from 1<sup>st</sup> Dounby Rainbows, Stenness Community School, Scottish Charities Air Ambulance, Mrs K Ritch and Mrs L Grieve for financial assistance provided.

## **7. Consultations**

### **A. Transport Scotland Community**

Correspondence had previously been circulated from Transport Scotland Ferries Teams advising members that they would be visiting Orkney talking to communities about the next Northern Isle Ferry Service 4 contract development work, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had now passed.

### **B. Orkney Coastal Change Adaption Plan Workshop**

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from Orkney Islands Council inviting members to a workshop to discuss the development of the Orkney Coastal Change Adaption Plan to improve understanding on coastal erosion and flood risk in the area, and it was:

Resolved to note that this event had now passed.

### **C. European Marine Energy Centre – Fall of Warness**

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated from European Marine Energy Centre advising members of an application to extend the construction and operation of the Fall or Warness Tidal Test Site for an additional two years, it was:

Resolved to note that responses should be submitted by 20 November 2025.

## **D. Have your Say on Tourism – Community Workshops**

Following consideration of correspondence circulated to members from Orkney Islands Council inviting residents to join workshops to help shape the future of tourism across the islands which were planned for Pickaquoy Centre with three dates in November, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

## **8. Financial Statements**

### **A. General Fund**

Following consideration of the General Fund statement, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £15,353.85 as at 14 October 2025.

### **B. Community Council Grant Scheme**

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Council Grant Scheme, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining available for approval in the main capping limit was £2,173.90 and the balance in the additional capping limit was £780 as at 14 October 2025.

### **C. Community Development Fund**

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Development Fund, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining available for allocation was £5,000 as at 14 October 2025.

## **9. Applications for Financial Assistance**

### **A. Mrs K Norquoy – Swimming Training Sessions**

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members via email from Mrs K Norquoy on behalf of her son who had been attending regular swimming training sessions off island, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £140 the full amount claimed from the General Fund for the three eligible trips as per policy.

### **B. Harray SWI – Kids Halloween Party**

Following consideration of correspondence received from Harray SWI and previously circulated to members via email for assistance towards the kid's yearly Halloween Party and it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £300 from the CCGS Fund.

### **C. Dounby 1<sup>st</sup> Guides – Glasgow Trip**

Following consideration of correspondence received from Dounby 1<sup>st</sup> Guides requesting assistance for the one-member resident in the parish to participate in an educational trip to Glasgow along with a request for a donation to the unit, it was:

Resolved to award the Guide from the parish £60 as per policy and a donation of £50 to the Unit both from the General Fund.

### **D. Mrs K Ritch – U17's Netball trip Aberdeen**

Following consideration of correspondence received from Mrs K Ritch on behalf of her daughter who had been invited to play for the U17's Orkney Netball in the Scottish Cup in Aberdeen, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £60 as per policy from the General Fund.

### **E. Mrs L Grieve – Gymnastics Competition Inverness**

Following consideration of an application received from Mrs L Grieve on behalf of her daughter who had been selected to compete with Orkney Gymnastics Club in Inverness, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £60 as per policy from the General Fund.

## **10. Publications**

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

- VAO – Newsletter – August, September and October 2025.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – September 2025.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – September 2025.

## **11. Any Other Competent Business - Dounby Tree Lighting**

The Dounby Tree Lighting was scheduled for Friday, 5 December at the newly developed Market Green. The tree, new lights and selection boxes had been ordered. The Town Brass Band had confirmed along with Friends of Dounby School hosting Santa's Grotto in the Milestone Community Church following the Tree Lighting. Discussion followed to confirm the other arrangements, and it was:

Resolved:

A. That all costs involved in the Tree lighting would be split with Birsay paying 1/3 share and Harray and Sandwick paying 2/3 share.

B. To note that a quote had been received from E Frasers, Electricians, for the cost of £1,332 plus VAT to erect and dismantle the lights and that the quote had been

accepted and would be shared as above from the Community Council Grant Scheme.

C. That the cost of Selection Boxes, Cable Ties, Ratchet Straps, all weather box, hire of the church and the donation to the Town Brass Band would all be split and paid from the General Fund.

D. To note that the Ministers of the Milestone Kirk would be asked to deliver the Christmas Message, children of the school had been advised of the event and would learn the songs at school and the oldest and youngest member of Dounby Community School would be asked to switch on the lights.

E. That members of both Community Councils had been asked to assist with putting the tree up on Tuesday, 2 December and at the Tree Lighting Ceremony on Friday, 5 December.

## **12. Dates of Future Meetings**

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

Resolved that the next meetings of Harray and Sandwick Community Council would be held on 21 January and 11 March 2026 in the Milestone Community Church and via Microsoft Teams.

## **13. Conclusion of Meeting**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:55.