

Minute of the Meeting of Orphir Community Council held in Orphir Community School and via Teams on Tuesday, 17 March 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Mr M Clouston, Mrs B Clubley, Mr J Mackay, and Mr N Sclater.

In Attendance:

- Councillor L Manson.
- Councillor S Cowie.
- Councillor I Taylor.
- Mr K Kazakov, Assistant Harbour Master.
- Ms F Troup, Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness (via Teams).
- Mr A Hamilton, Service Manager, Resources (via Teams).
- Ms C Kelday, Community Council Liaison Assistant/Interim Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mr A Marwick, Mr S Pyke and Councillor K Leask.

2. Discussion – Plans for Houton

The Assistant Harbour Master presented a plan of the area at Houton showing the area of land purchased by OIC for redevelopment of the marshalling area as the current layout is not fit for purpose especially in peak season. He advised that the Council had already been in discussions with other landowners, and that a public consultation would hopefully take place later in the year, which Community Council members said they would be happy to facilitate a public meeting for.

The Assistant Harbour Master left the meeting at this point.

The Head of Strategic Housing, Housing Operations and Homelessness and the Service Manager, Resources, answered questions from members on the housing plan in Orphir and at Houton, including the housing collaboration with SSEN and the legacy projects, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To note the content of the report

B. That Housing would share the links to the 5-year housing plan with the Interim Clerk to share with members.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of meeting of Orphir Community Council held on 20 January 2026 was adopted, being proposed by Mr M Clouston and seconded by Mr J Mackay.

4. Matters Arising

A. Bus Shelter, Smoogro Road End

It was advised that the bus shelter would be unlikely to happen this year, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and keep the item on the agenda.

B. Orkneyinga Saga Centre Refurbishment

The Chair advised the building warrant was due to expire and required renewing. Members were advised that the information boards for the centre would now be unlikely to happen until Autumn and discussed alternative ideas of what to include in the centre for this summer. Members were also looking into funding opportunities for projects at the Centre. In addition, members agreed to increase the donation awarded to the caretaker to £120 per week, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Interim Clerk should look into renewal of the building warrant.

2. That members would meet at the Saga Centre to discuss options for the summer.
3. That the Chair would investigate funding opportunities to include the reinstatement of the Viking Longship.
4. That the Chair would liaise with the Excursions team regarding the opening of the centre for the summer.
5. That the Chair would speak with the caretaker regarding the position this year, and that the members would increase the donation awarded to £120 per week from the Community Council Grant Scheme, subject to approval.

C. Local Place Plan for Orphir

Mrs B Clubley advised she was obtaining quotes for the place plan consultations, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

D. Viking Longship

Resolved to note that this item had been covered in item 4B, above.

E. Winter Service Plan

Members expressed their disappointment with the response from the Roads Support team and requested further explanation on why trackers could not be made available to the public, and on potential solutions to the snow drifts at Hobbister. A member advised that in other areas of Scotland, Christmas trees are recycled and deposited along roads to act as barriers for snow drifts. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved for the Interim Clerk to request, via business letter, for an updated response regarding the issues raised.

F. RSSWS – Residual Landholdings

The Chair advised he was still awaiting a response from the RSSWS, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and to keep this item on the agenda.

5. Correspondence

A. Briefing Note – Burial Grounds Grass Cutting

A copy of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council had previously been sent round members, advising of the update to the burial grounds grass cutting maintenance contract amounts for 2026. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. To advertise a 3-year tender for 8 cuts, requesting a price for any additional cuts.

3. That the Chair and one other member would be delegated authority to open and award the tender after the closing date.

B. Meet the Buyer Event

A copy of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council had previously been sent round members, advising of a 'Meet the Buyer' event at the Orkney Auction Mart on 9 March 2026 for anyone looking to sign up to be a contractor for snow clearing, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Orkney Marine Planning Stakeholder Update

A copy of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council had previously been sent round members, advising of an update to the framework for the Orkney Islands Regional Marine Plan, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. RBL – Best Kept War Memorial

Members had previously been sent information with regards to the Royal British Legion Best Kept War Memorial competition, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

6. Consultations

A. SEPA Flood Risk Management

Members had previously been sent information from SEPA on the consultation of significant water management issues, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Winter Service Policy 2026

Members had previously been sent the Winter Service Policy for consideration, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. VAO – Membership Survey

Members had previously been sent details of a membership survey from Voluntary Action Orkney, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Verge Maintenance Plan Updates

Following consideration of the verge maintenance plan update, it was:

Resolved:

1. To request an additional safety cut at the Smoogroo Road junction.
2. That Mr N Sclater provide details of additional safety cuts required on the Germiston Road via email to the interim clerk, to include in the response prior to the end of the consultation end period on 30 April 2026.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Fund statement as at 2 March 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £23,323.55.

B. Orkneyinga Saga Centre

Following consideration of the Orkneyinga Saga Centre Fund statement as at 2 March 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £48,298.35.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

After consideration of the Grant Scheme statement as at 2 March 2026, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the balance remaining for approval was £917.48 in the main capping limit.
2. To ensure the previously awarded grant to the Orphir Community Association for the Christmas tree and lighting be added to the CCGS sheet.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 2 March 2026, it was:

Resolved to note that £15,395.42 remained for allocation.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 2 March 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for allocation of £2,606.

8. Request for Financial Assistance - Orphir and Stenness Kirk – Road Material

Mr N Sclater declared an interest in this item and did not take part in discussion thereof.

Members considered a request for financial assistance from the Orphir and Stenness Kirk for road materials for the maintenance of the car park. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to agree, in principle, subject to approval from another member via email, to award £313.20 from the Community Council Grant Scheme, subject to approval.

9. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – January, February and March 2026.
- VAO – Training and Funding Update – February and March 2026.
- Scottish Rural Action – News and Updates - February and March 2026.
- Scottish Rural Action – March Events.
- Community Payback Unpaid Work Scheme.
- Police Scotland Recruitment Event – 26 March 2026.

10. AOCB

A. Scorradale

A member had raised a concern from a member of the public regarding a property on the Scorradale road where the midden was stretching onto the road, which was particularly bad during periods of rain, and which was running into drains. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved for the Interim Clerk to contact SEPA to report the issue.

B. Orkney Native Wildlife Project Update

The Interim Clerk advised that a representative of ONWP had been in touch, offering to provide an update to a future community council meeting, and it was:

Resolved to request a written update prior to the next meeting.

11. Date of Next Meetings

Resolved to note that the next meetings of Orphir Community Council had been set for 5 May and 30 June 2026, at Orphir School commencing at 19:30.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:15.