

Minute of the Meeting of North Ronaldsay Community Council held in North Ronaldsay Community Centre and via Teams on Monday, 11 May 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Mr P Donnelly, Mr I Deyell, Ms A Duncan, Mr C Dun and Mr I Scott.

In Attendance:

- Councillor H Woodbridge (via Teams).
- Mr K MacPherson, Head of Property and Asset Management.
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer (via Teams).
- Ms H Galland, Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mrs H Scott and Councillor M Thomson.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of North Ronaldsay Community Council held on Monday, 16 March 2026 was adopted, being proposed by Mr I Scott and seconded by Mr I Deyell.

3. Matters Arising

A. Place Plan Update

Discussion of this item was postponed due to inability of one of the Place Plan Coordinators (NRT CDM) to attend. Members were consulted on an appropriate date to rearrange a meeting, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would offer the CDM 26 June as an alternative or ask the Plan Coordinators to offer a selection of other appropriate dates to provide an update.

B. Gate at West Hill

It had been suggested that NRCC set up CCGS funding to purchase a new gate. Members had agreed, albeit with reservations, to purchase a new gate to replace the broken one, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That a CCGS application be set up to cover the cost and installation of a new gate.
2. That the Clerk should get two quotes from local merchants for a large heavy-duty gate plus gate furniture, once the gateway had been measured.

C. Roads and Scalpings - Allocation Criteria

The Clerk reported that 32 bags of scalpings had been procured from unspent CCGS funds at end of financial year 2025. Members agreed that the criteria for allocation should be the same as previous years, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should advertise the scalpings to the community, including the criteria, with a deadline of the end of May.
2. That any unallocated aggregate could go to holiday lets.
3. That 2 bags should be retained in case NHS Orkney wished to use them for the lane to the surgery car park.

4. That the Clerk should contact NHS Orkney to follow up the offer by NRCC to get the lane potholes addressed.

5. To make it clear that residents would be responsible for moving their allocation of scalpings from the pier to their property.

D. Extra Ferry Services in Summer

Members had been provided with details of the additional ferry services being put on to North Ronaldsay for the summer season. It advised that the Nordic Sea was currently out of operation and the Nigg Bay was possibly to be sold, leaving only the Northern Explorer as an option. Members enquired if pier staff had been made aware of the proposals, in addition to island residents, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would ask Orkney Ferries if the indicative timetable they provided is the one to be put out to the public to advertise it.

E. Issues around Airfield

A response had been provided from OIC Transport, advising that work to improve the airfield was being progressed. There was an ongoing issue regarding the 20-minute check in cut off at Kirkwall Airport which was being strictly adhered to and had caused important key workers and tradespeople as well as residents and tourists to miss their flight. This also caused knock on expenses for them in terms of a night's accommodation in town in addition to a rebooked flight. Members commented that this was their lifeline service and that what they felt was a heavy-handed approach, which may be unavoidable, needed to be explained at least. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that while the Chief Executive was listening to the complaints made about the booking issues with the Loganair website they need to discuss the above.
2. That a letter be composed to the Loganair Chief Pilot and others to enquire where these rules come from and try to get the perspective of islanders heard.
3. That the letter should thank the Service and staff and point out that, in general, the service was very good and gratefully received.
4. That the Transport Representative should draft a letter to go round members for editing before being sent.
5. To note that one suggestion to add in the letter is that check in staff should announce that the check in is closing so that anyone unaware of the check in process for outer north isles flights is given the opportunity to make their flight.
6. To note that it was also clarified that some issues raised were already being addressed through the Transport Forum and it was necessary to focus only on issues not otherwise covered to avoid a doubling up of work.

F. Resilience Meeting

A meeting had been held between members of NRCC and the OIC Safety and Resilience team prior to the last meeting to discuss the new ferries for North Ronaldsay and Papa Westray.

It was noted that SSEN were accelerating getting the work done to replace the cable between Sanday and North Ronaldsay, but that resilience was a broader issue than that for the island. Islanders were concerned about the impending removal of landlines by BT with no reliable alternative being offered rendering emergency services uncontactable in the event of a sustained power cut. The Head of Property and Asset Management had said that BT had been invited to OLECG meetings, but it was hard to get to talk with appropriate persons in such a large entity. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that it had been confirmed that the voice of the islanders was being put forward by OIC and that they were fighting for solutions to be offered.
2. To note that the Head of Property and Asset Management would chase up when the Resilience Planning Meeting would happen for North Ronaldsay, and that members had insisted that this is held before the next winter.

G. SSEN Resilience Fund

The CDM of North Ronaldsay Trust had advised that he had identified a fund that could assist with such things as generators for residents and other equipment to enhance resilience and sought the approval of the NRCC to put in an application, and it was:

Resolved to note that the members had approved this request by email.

H. Fibre Installation in Power Cable

The North Ronaldsay Trust CDM had drafted a letter to BT and SSEN requesting consideration be given to installing fibre for internet connectivity at same time as the new power cable was laid between Sanday and North Ronaldsay, and had been seeking support from NRCC to sign it, and it was:

Resolved that members approved the letter which would be sent jointly on their behalf from the CDM.

I. Election of CC Member

The Clerk reminded members that on 19 July it would be 6 months since the last member was voted in and since a member had resigned in the meantime another election could soon be held if members wished, and it was:

Resolved that NRCC would maintain the Status Quo until a full election is held in 2027.

4. Correspondence

A. OIC Charter Request

An emergency launch had been requested after a day of fog on 29 April, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that members' request was approved by email and that Transport had approved the use of the launch.
2. To note that members felt it was out with their remit to collect fares from passengers.

B. Meeting on Shared Flights

Members had received a response from OIC to a request for a joint meeting with Eday CC regarding shared flights and issues of seat availability, advising that they would not be minded setting up a meeting at this time, and that these issues could be discussed at the Transport Consultative Forum meeting, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that members found it unacceptable that this issue was not enabled to be discussed in the above manner given how much it negatively affects North Ronaldsay residents.
2. To ask that this be put on the next Transport Forum agenda, in addition to the issue surrounding block booking of seats.

C. OLECG Updates

Members had been sent on updates from OLECG during the period of having no broadband, on 9 and 16 April, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the ongoing updates and that the Clerk and Chair had thanked them.

D. OIC - Rabbits in Kirkyards

After members requested any information on contracting of the work to address the rabbit damage in the Old Kirkyard, correspondence from OIC had been received and passed on. It was acknowledged that the old kirk wall was a listed structure which made the issue slightly more difficult, and it was suggested that the rules needed to be confirmed. A member stated there were many grants available for church projects and that they would look into it further and that OIC own the graveyard so they would need to give permission for any works, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that no one on the island had applied to do the work.

2. To note that the contractors who came earlier in the year offered a quote that was too much for OIC to consider.

3. To acknowledge that the Council was responsible for the Kirkyard and that they should be asked to seek funding to address the rabbit damage.

4. To note that Manpower Services had been used to deal with the kirkyard in the past and that the Clerk would make some enquiries with them.

E. Summer Ferry Service

Correspondence had been received from OIC regarding ferries over the summer period, and it was:

Resolved to note this had already been discussed.

F. Eday Annual School Trip

Members had been forwarded correspondence from OIC Transport asking for their approval to allow a seat on the plane to be booked in advance for an Eday School pupil attending a school trip on Mainland Orkney, and it was:

Resolved to note that this had been approved by members via email.

G. New Check-In Times – Inter-Island Flights

Correspondence had been received clarifying the new check in time for inter isles flights departing from the isles was 15 minutes before departure and not arrival as had been stated on a provided poster, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents, which had previously been discussed.

5. Consultation - PAC Notice – Westray Tidal Array

A consultation letter had been received inviting members as well as residents in general to take part in the Pre-Application Consultation drop in event in Kirkwall on 11 June to discuss Orbital Marine Power's proposed Westray Tidal Array, and it was:

Resolved to note the event date of 11 June should anyone wish to attend.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the general fund statement as at 28 April 2026 copies of which were previously circulated, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the estimated balance was £18,303.00.

2. That the Clerk would contact Orkney Aggregates and ask where the credit of £900 owed to the CC at the end of financial year 2025/2026 was.

B. Turbine Fund

Members considered the turbine statement as at 28 April 2026 copies of which were previously circulated, and it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance was £23,856.80.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme as at 28 April 2026, copies of which were previously circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the main capping limit was over allocated and that £663 and £0.20 remained available in the additional and island capping limits.
2. To note that the new financial statements for 2026/2027 had not yet been received but that the following CCGS projects should be added:

- £200 to guest flights for NRCA use.
- £200 to grass cutting maintenance fund.
- £400 to the White Goods (Special Collections) Scheme.
- £250 for Memorial Hall grass cutting project.
- £240 for War Memorial grass cutting project.
- £200 to scrap metal scheme.
- Check that £364 x 2 had been allocated for the School Trip to Hoy.
- Check that the £3,000 for Sheep Dyke was transferred over.
- Set up CCGS for the new gate and hanging furniture for West Hill of £300.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund as at 28 April 2026, copies of which were previously circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the total available for allocation was £8,768.00.

7. Financial Requests

Resolved to note there were no requests for financial support at this time.

8. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport Representative

It was reported that Sanday had complained that the 24-hour limit that was imposed on booking seats on the shared flight was inappropriate and asked if North Ronaldsay experienced the same, and it was:

Resolved the members sympathised with Sanday but felt North Ronaldsay suffered more from the island taking seats off their lifeline service.

B. Planning Representative

Resolved to note that there was nothing to report.

C. North Ronaldsay Development Trust Representative

The Director, Education Leisure and Housing, had recently visited to look at the Trebb project and had been impressed by what such a small island was able to achieve. Members were advised that the project had been delayed because the sub-contractor's capacity, but there was hope for an endpoint arriving in the next few months. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Health and Care Representative

Members had been invited to become Service User Representatives on the Integration Joint Board. It was also advised that the Scottish Ambulance Service would be out to conduct training with the Nurse Practitioners, and the Fire Service would collaborate, and that there had been no meetings recently. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Yarn Company Representative

Resolved to note that there was nothing to report.

9. Publications

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

- VAO Newsletter – March and April 2026.
- VAO – Training and Funding Update – April 2026.
- Orkney Ferries - Statistics – April 2026.
- Letter from School Place – April 2026.
- SEPA Update – March 2026.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Gate at Bewan Pier

It had been raised that the livestock gate beside the cattle grid at Bewan Pier was impossible to open making access by people with mobility issues difficult when navigating to the lighthouse area, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that this gate was on an OIC adopted road.
2. That the Clerk would inform OIC of the issue and request that the gate and gate hanger be fixed or replaced.

B. Bin Bags

A member raised an issue that had been discussed via email regarding disposal of bin bags, and it was:

Resolved to note that members had stated previously, and maintain, that household waste is not an issue they have responsibility for, and their comments and advice had already been forwarded to OIC in relation to this.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of North Ronaldsay Community Council would be held on Monday, 29 June 2026 at 19:30.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 21:35.