

Minute of the Meeting of Firth and Stenness Community Council held in Stenness Community Centre on Thursday, 11 June 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Mr R Crichton, Mrs A Stevenson, Ms W Dunnet and Mr M Harcus.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R King.
- Councillor O Tierney.
- Mr G Barr, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.
- Ms C Kelday, Community Council Liaison Assistant/Interim Clerk.

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1. Resignation and Apologies

The Interim Clerk advised that, since the last meeting, Mrs R Lyon had resigned from the Firth and Stenness Community Council with immediate effect, and it was:

Resolves to note the resignation, and that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D Tullock and J Stevenson.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of meeting of Firth and Stenness Community Council held on 26 March 2026 was adopted, being proposed by Mr M H Marcus and seconded by Mr R Crichton.

3. Matters Arising

A. Festive Lighting

Mr H Marcus advised that he was still waiting for a response from E Fraser Ltd regarding the lights requiring repairs. The Interim Clerk advised that the festive lighting brochure for motifs and braids had been issued to members via email, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That Mr H Marcus would ask E Fraser Ltd if the tree lights required to be replaced and if so, could they supply a new set of lights.
2. That Mr M H Marcus would enquire with E Fraser Ltd how many motifs and braids were damaged.
3. The Interim Clerk would seek advice on whether there was a guarantee for the motifs which were requiring repair.
4. That members would discuss the requirements for the new braids and motifs, which would be decided at the next meeting.

B. Quarry Group

Mr M H Marcus advised there had not been much progress on this item. A few members of the community had shown an interest in being part of the quarry group. Mrs W Dunnet suggested individuals that could be contacted as well. The Head of Service (Planning and Regulatory Services) advised members that the lack of a quarry group did not impact on the quarry operation however he would check on the requirement of such a group, and it was:

Resolved:

1. The Head of Service (Planning and Regulatory Services) would check the planning conditions for the quarry application and report back to the Community Council.
2. To note that once a response had been received members would decide on how to take this action forward.

C. Firth Place Plan

Members advised that a draft Place Plan had been received by the steering group ahead of the next meeting due to be held on 30 June 2026, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Winter Service Policy Query

Members had previously been sent a response regarding their query on road clearing by the public. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to request via the business letter requesting information regarding responsibility on contractors or members of the public clearing a public space such as a community school car park.

E. Verge Maintenance Plan

The Interim Clerk advised that the additional safety cuts for the Holland Road crossroads had been added to the list, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Road Signs

Members had previously been sent a response regarding their query on road signs at Tormiston Mill being fixed, and there were no outstanding signage issue reported in Firth and Stenness areas. A member raised there was blank road signs on the Old Finstown Road at Bridge End which required reporting. In addition, a concern regarding overgrown hedges at a farm on the Redland Road obstructing road signs, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To request via the business letter, to report the blank signs on the Old Finstown Road.
2. That Councillor Tierney would speak with the owner of the property on the Redland Road to cut back the hedges.

G. Rennibister Community Benefit

The Interim Clerk advised that no response had been received regarding the annual community benefit payment. Councillor R King queried with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services the conditions of the planning application, and it was:

Resolved that the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services would look at the current planning application for the Rennibister Turbine, along with the date the application was due for renewal.

H. Finstown Car Park Bays

Members had previously been sent a response regarding their query on the two fenced parking bays, which advised that this was a temporary measure relating to bin collections whilst road works were being undertaken nearby, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

4. Correspondence

A. Orkney Native Wildlife Project Update

Following consideration of the ONWP update, copies of which had previously been circulated, members wished to thank the project for the information provided, and it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

B. Annual Grants 2026/2027

Members had previously been sent copies of correspondence from Democratic Services advising of the Annual Grant amounts for financial year 2026/2027, along with the capping limit figures for CCGS, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Annual Grant to be provided to Firth and Stenness Community Council for this financial year was £4,600.52.

C. Invite – Heritage Network Event

Following discussion of the correspondence from Heritage Network on the event due to be held on 28 June 2026 in St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall, it was:

Resolved that members agreed to cover the cost of one ticket to the event at £30 from the General Fund if a Community Council member would like to attend.

D. OLDP Update

Members had previously been sent information from OIC's Development and Marine Planning Team on progress with Orkney Local Development Plans across Orkney. The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services provided further updates on the newsletter, and advised members that Local Place Plans had not missed the deadlines as there had been a delay, and were still able to be submitted, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Thank You Notes

Resolved to note that a thank you letter had been received from Stenness Outdoor Community Space for financial assistance provided towards their project.

5. Consultation - Harray and Sandwick Place Plan

Members had previously been sent the Harray and Sandwick Place Plan as a consultee, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

6. Finance Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Fund statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the estimated balance of £8,420.42, which included funds of £6,942.47 from the Rennibister Community Wind Fund and £447.50 from the Firth Park Donations Fund.
2. That members would like the Interim Clerk to send Baikie's a 'thank you' letter for their support in hosting the collecting tin for donations to Firth Park.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme 2026-2027

After consideration of the Grant Scheme statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved:

1. to note the balance remaining for approval was £3,572 in the main capping limit and £796 in the additional category.
2. To note that Stenness Primary School were the only applicants for the Bag the Bruck and received £300.

C. Community Development Fund

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

Resolved to note that £5,565.63 remained for allocation.

7. Financial Requests

A. Orkney Folk Festival 2026

Following consideration of a request from the Orkney Folk Festival, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance for the festival in May 2026, it was:

Resolved to award £300 from the General Fund.

B. Firth Primary School - P7 Hoy Residential Trip

Following consideration of a request from the Firth Primary School, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance on behalf of seven P7 pupils to attend the Hoy Residential trip in June 2026, it was:

Resolved to award £30 per child, totalling £210, from the General Fund towards the trip.

C. R Lyon – Dancing

Following consideration of a request from R Lyon, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance on behalf of E Lyon to attend the Thurso Festival of Dancing on 13 July 2026, it was:

Resolved to award £30 from the General Fund towards the trip.

D. Stenness Community Association

Following consideration of a request from Stenness Community Association, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance towards the over 60s meal in June 2026, it was:

Resolved to award £250, subject to approval from the Community Council Grant Scheme.

8. Publications

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

- VAO - Training and Funding Update – April and May 2026.
- VAO - Newsletter – April, May and June 2026.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – May 2026.
- SCA Newsletter – May 2026.
- Free Webinar – Overview of Community Wealth Building.
- SRA News and Updates – May 2026.

9. AOCB

A. SOCS Funding

The Interim Clerk advised that the Stenness Outdoor Community Space had not previously used their full allocation of the grant awarded, and had since put in a request for using the remainder of the grant for another item in the community space, and it was:

Resolved to note that the additional £99.60 would be awarded from the CDF fund.

B. Firth Park

A member provided an update on Firth Park, including that the Cycling Group would be using the Firth Park as the finishing point for their 'Three Braes' challenge on Saturday. In addition, paint was required for maintenance of areas within the park, and members would like to review the terms of the grass cutting tender ahead of the retender in 2027. It was:

Resolved:

1. To note the Cycling Group would be in attendance at Firth Park on Saturday, 13 June 2026.

2. To supply two tins of paint from the Firth Park Donations within the General Fund.
3. To provide members with the Firth Park Grass Cutting Tender document at their next meeting.

C. 20mph Signs

A member raised concerns over the position of some of the 20mph signs within Finstown. Members appreciated the consultation process that had been done, however once seeing the signs in situ, realised that some adjustments could be beneficial if this was possible, and it was:

Resolved to request via the business letter:

1. That the 20mph sign opposite Baikie's should be sited nearer to Stromness due to pedestrians parking at the opposite side of the road and crossing to Baikie's.
2. That the 20mph sign on the Evie Road should extend to past the Firth Primary School on a permanent basis, and not just as the flashing lights are on, as the 'start and stop' of the 20mph is confusing in this area and would be more consistent in lines with other school areas.
3. That members appreciated the consultation which took place, however, would like to suggest if for future consultations, if a visual representation with a photo of the area and a simulation of where the new speed signs would be would help consultees visualise the area for more accurate feedback.
4. That members would like to request if the 'smiley faces' record data, and if so, it should be noted that the sign nearest Stromness on the west of Finstown picks up vehicle speed prior to the 30mph zone. In addition, the sign at the Firth School is only calibrated to 30mph and does not change depending on the time of day as the area is in a flashing 20mph school time only zone.

D. Flagpole

A member raised that last summer a member of the community assisted with fixing the flagpole in Finstown and suggested that the community council provide them with a 'thank you' gift, and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would arrange to purchase a voucher from Baikie's Stores from the General Fund.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved to note that the next meeting of Firth and Stenness Community Council had been set for Thursday, 20 August 2026 in the Firth Community Centre.

11. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:37.