Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in Stromness Town House on Tuesday, 12 May 2026 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, D Harrold, W Mackay, C Sinclair and M Sutherland.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- S Burg, Stromness Development Trust.
- 2 members of the Public.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

Order of Business

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies had been intimated on behalf of K Bevan and E Sinclair.

2. Election of Office Bearers

A. Appointment of Chair

Resolved that P McLaughlin was duly appointed as Chair of Stromness Community Council.

B. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved that K Bevan was duly appointed as Vice Chair of Stromness Community Council.

C. Appointment of Planning Representative

Resolved that C Sinclair was duly appointed as Planning Representative of Stromness Community Council.

D. Appointment of Health and Care Representative

Resolved that W Mackay was duly appointed as Health and Care Representative of Stromness Community Council.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Stromness Community Council held on 24 March 2026 were approved, being proposed by D Harrold and seconded by P McLaughlin.

4. Matters Arising

A. Car Parking in Stromness

Following consideration of correspondence received from Police Scotland, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that Police Scotland would continue to carry out patrols in relation to parking infringements when in the area and duties allowed and would subsequently engage with drivers.

2. To note that, due to the current nature of policing and in line with local policing objectives, Police Scotland could not commit to being present at set dates and times.

3. To note that, whilst not looking to criminalise members of the public who overstay within the allotted times, Police Scotland would endeavour to deal with the matter.

4. To note that Police Scotland encouraged Stromness Community Council to report the issue of parking to the local authority.

5. To note that Police Scotland further suggested that contact be made to Orkney Islands Council to request that the local authority look at other measures that could be imposed.

6. That the Clerk reply to Police Scotland stating that Stromness Community Council were disappointed with the response and state that as parking was not decriminalised in Orkney, on-street parking offences did fall under the remit of Police Scotland not the local authority.

B. Steps and lighting from North End Road to Co-op

Councillor G Bevan informed members that this matter was ongoing, and he would report back to a future meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Proposed Motorhome Signs

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that no response to the further request for a timeline of when the sign would be ready and installed had been received.

2. That the Clerk would contact the relevant section again for an update.

D. Litter Bin Removal from Ferry Road, Stromness

Following consideration of correspondence from the Waste and Recycling Officer, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the bin was moved from a different part of Ferry Road as part of the Walk Wheel Trust who the Waste and Recycling Officer had assumed were in correspondence with Stromness Community Council regarding the improvements and alterations taking place in the area.

E. Copland’s Path, Stromness

Following an update from D Harrold, regarding the path between the Pumping Station House and Copland's Pier which had been overgrown, Stromness Community Council had had the budget to clear half of the path and D Harrold queried what should be done next.

W Mackay queried where the path maintenance budget had gone. He further commented that paths should not be built and then left.

D Harrold commented that it was absurd to expect a private developer who had to build the path for a new development as part of planning conditions, for the Council not to adopt it and maintain it.

Regarding what should be done about the remaining part of the path, Councillor L Hall suggested that the Community Council get in touch with the Criminal Justice section who may be able to assist, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should contact the relevant section regarding path maintenance, as well as who was responsible for that path.

2. That the Clerk should contact Criminal Justice to ascertain whether that service would be able to assist with clearing the remaining path.

F. Hanging Baskets

Following an update from the Chair; and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that 18 hanging baskets had been ordered from D and H Glue.

2. To note that it had initially been hoped that the baskets would be delivered in time for the Folk Festival, however, following discussions with Glues regarding plant growth and hardening off, a delivery date would be arranged.

3. To note that the drop off venue for the plants had not yet been agreed but that the Community Centre was a potential site.

5. Correspondence

A. ORIC – Confirmation of Committee Decision

Following consideration of correspondence from J Macvie, OIC Planning Section, copies of which had been circulated, regarding confirmation of the Committee decision regarding planning permission for the Robert Rendall Building, Orkney Research and Innovation Campus, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Annual Grants

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Community Council Liaison Officer, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the Community Council Annual Grants, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the Community Council Annual Grants which had been approved and allocated for the financial year 2026/2027.

2. That the Clerk should contact the relevant section and ask for a breakdown of how the amount per community council was allocated.

6. Consultations

Resolved to note that no consultations had been received.

7. Publications

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

8. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS Updates

Regarding various roads in the area used by SSEN haulage, W Mackay commented that those roads needed to be kept on top of. He added that he was very grateful for the help of SSEN regarding Downies Lane.

D Harrold raised the condition of the Loons Road, where there was evidence of patching, however the real issue was at the bottom of the Waterworks Road as the sides of the roads had now really deteriorated and were falling away.

Councillor G Bevan informed members that SSEN and Council officials had assessed the roads before the project had started and would assess after the works were complete when all roads would be repaired, not just patched. He suggested that a representative of SSEN be invited to a future meeting to discuss Stromness Community Council's concerns, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should invite a representative of SSEN to the August meeting of Stromness Community Council.

B. Stromness Development Trust

S Burg, Stromness Development Trust, informed members that she had started in her position on 20 April 2026 where one of her roles was to deal with Stromness Community Centre, including the Postman Pat Playpark, on a day-to-day basis. She confirmed that the next Stromness Development Trust meeting would be held in June.

Following queries from members, she confirmed that her position was full-time and she was currently the only member of staff at the Community Centre.

Regarding bookings and the key for Stromness Town Hall, she confirmed that this was done via Customer Services at Warehouse Buildings, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group

Councillor G Bevan confirmed that he had attended the focus group held on Monday, 30 March which had involved key players such as the Council, Orkney Health and Care, developers and builders. It had been a good meeting with issues such as why were the majority of new builds in Kirkwall? The answer given was the builds follow the waiting list. Other issues raised were the type of houses needed, such as sheltered, student accommodation and single professional. Further issues raised was access to building sites, the ability to build affordable housing and empty homes. He confirmed that all the points raised at the meeting had been covered in the Working Group report, which had been circulated to those present at the meeting.

Councillor L Hall commented that an issue with the waiting list was individuals wanting to move to the area because of jobs or studying in Kirkwall, therefore they put down Kirkwall as their first choice. He continued that it was up to the other communities to make themselves attractive to those wanting to relocate to Orkney and suggested that using social media may be a means to do that.

Councillor G Bevan commented that there had never been a better time, particularly with the capped bus fares, to promote Stromness.

Councillor L Hall continued that in the isles, Development Trusts had access to grants to help restore derelict buildings and perhaps this was something that Stromness could look in to, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

9. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 29 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £12,329.54.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 29 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £1,756.72 of which £1,050.72 was to be solely used for the upkeep and maintenance of the stage area.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2025/2026 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 29 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the Community Council Grant Scheme 2025/2026 had been fully allocated.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 29 April 2026, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £6,524.04.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund Statement as at 29 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for approval was £1,160.24.

10. Requests for Financial Assistance

A. M Kirkpatrick – Scottish National Age Groups, Aberdeen

Following consideration of correspondence received from M Kirkpatrick, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the Scottish National Age Group Championships in Aberdeen on 4-8 April 2926, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given.

B. T Gray – Thurso Mini Meet – 2 May 2026

Following consideration of correspondence received from T Gray, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the Thurso Mini Meet on 2 May 2026, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given.

C. Orkney Folk Festival 2026

Following consideration of correspondence received from Orkney Folk Festival Committee, requesting financial assistance towards internal transport costs for the Orkney Folk Festival 2026, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £800 be given towards the internal transport costs for the Orkney Folk Festival 2026, subject to the Community Council Grant Scheme 2026/2027 being agreed.

D. Eventide Club – Summer Outing

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Eventide Club, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards their Summer Outing, it was:

Resolved that a grant of £250 be given towards the Eventide Summer Outing 2026, subject to the Community Council Grant Scheme 2026/2027 being agreed.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Paths

The Chair informed members that she had been approached by a member of the public regarding the general state of weeds on paths and pavements, who had wondered whether it would be worth considering organising neighbourhood groups to clear their own area and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Bench on Ferry Road

A member commented on the new benches on Ferry Road and how much commented on what a welcome addition they were. However, at one of the benches there was a campervan that appeared to be permanently parked there which blocked the view from the bench and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that D Harrold would provide the Clerk with photos of the campervan, who would then contact the relevant section about getting the campervan moved.

C. Blue Plaques

A member raised the poor state of some of the Blue Plaques around Stromness and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that W Mackay would make further enquiries as to who would be able to repaint the plaques and report back to the next meeting.

D. Blue Tourist Signs

A member raised the various blue signs around Stromness were in need of repainting, as well as some of the signs that needed to be updated, for example the one that was pointing to the Police Station and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would raise the issue of the Blue Signs needing updating and repainting with the relevant section.

E. Cycle Shed on North Pier

A member raised that he had been informed by a member of the public that the cycle shed which was situated on the North Pier leaked when it rained and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant section informing them of the leak and requesting that action be taken.

F. Long Term Parking of Campervans in Car Spaces

Resolved to note that this item had been discussed at Item 11B above.

G. GMB Garden

A member raised that help was needed with the GMB Gardens and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would contact The Orcadian and get them to issue a request for volunteers.

H. Early Closing of Civic Amenity Sites

A member raised the ongoing issue of early closing of the Civic Amenity Sites, which had recently been highlighted both in the local press and social media. He continued that he appreciated that funds were limited but if early closure continued, there was a real issue that it may result in fly tipping.

Councillor G Bevan commented that without knowing all the facts it was difficult to comment. He continued that the issue of both the Stromness and Kirkwall sites being closed at the same time did need to be addressed.

Councillor L Hall commented that in order for skips to be changed it needed drivers, which was an additional cost, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

I. Signage at Stromness Marina

A member queried whether the covid signage still needed to be up at Stromness Marina and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that W Mackay would raise the issue with a representative of Stromness Marina.

J. Vermin

A member raised an issue with vermin near Stromness Primary School and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved;

1. That W Mackay would contact the person he knew who was monitoring the situation as he had recently commented that there was no sign of vermin in that area.

2. That the Clerk would raise the issue with the relevant section.

K. Stone Frontage at Point of Ness

Following consideration of correspondence, together with photographs of the area, copies of which had been circulated, regarding the stone seafront, which was in a dangerous condition, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant section raising the concerns and requesting action is taken.

L. Update on Paths

Regarding the path from the Point of Ness to the Old Lifeboat Shed which was in need of maintenance, Councillor G Bevan wondered whether this path would come under the Core Paths Plan.

Regarding the Wardhill Link at Downies Lane, Councillor G Bevan confirmed that the potholes had been filled but queried what to do next. Perhaps a way forward was, a partnership with the residents to get top dress that stretch of road. He confirmed that he had not yet pursued that idea with the residents. There were pots of funding that may be available and again there may be something through the Core Paths that may be available.

Finally, regarding the path from the cemetery around the shore to Warebeth Beach, due to erosion the fence needed to be moved back but Councillor G Bevan was unsure who was responsible for that area but commented that the Core Path Officer may be able to assist, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk contact the Core Path Officer raising the above issues.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved that the next meeting of the Stromness Community Council would be held in the Stromness Town House on Tuesday, 16 June 2026 at 19:00.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:55.