

Minute of the Meeting of Stromness Community Council held in Stromness Town House on Tuesday, 16 June 2026 at 19:00

Present:

P McLaughlin, K Bevan, W Mackay, E Sinclair and M Sutherland.

In Attendance:

- Councillor G Bevan.
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Park.
- S Craigie, Clerk.
- PC A Campbell, Police Scotland.
- 2 members of the Public.
- 1 member of the Press.

Chair:

- P McLaughlin.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies had been intimated on behalf of D Harrold and C Sinclair.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Stromness Community Council held on 12 May 2026 were approved, being proposed by M Sutherland and seconded by W Mackay.

3. Matters Arising

A. Proposed Motorhome Signs

Following consideration of photos received from Democratic Services of the new signs which had been erected directing all caravans and campervans to turn right when coming off the MV Hamnavoe, copies of which had been circulated, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Copland's Path, Stromness

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

Resolved:

1. To note that the Community Payback Supervisor had indicated that as they currently did not have many clients and had a lot of work on at the moment, they would be unable to assist in clearing the remainder of Copland's Path, Stromness.

2. To note that the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services:

- Had undertaken an initial site visit and confirmed that the path was in good condition as of 5 June 2026.
- Further acknowledged his appreciation for Stromness Community Council's contribution to clearing the path.

3. To note that following a review undertaken by the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services on the background to the planning conditions and associated responsibilities, he was able to confirm that Copland's Dock in general and the path in particular was allocated a specific Coplands Dock OIC ledger code.

4. That, following a request from the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services for further information regarding the maintenance requirements of the path, the Clerk should arrange a meeting on site of Stromness Community Council representatives and Council officials.

C. Hanging Baskets

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

Resolved:

1. To note that the 18 hanging baskets had now been delivered by D and H Glue and distributed to the participating businesses.
2. To note that the baskets this year were 20" in diameter, which were much larger than the 12" baskets that had been ordered last year.
3. To note when ordering the baskets for next year, the 16" diameter hanging baskets should be ordered.

D. Annual Grants – Methodology

Following consideration of the rates and methodology of the Community Council Annual Grants, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Campervans on Ferry Road

Following consideration of the response from the Environmental Health Officer regarding the two abandoned campervans on Ferry Road, Stromness, copies of which had been circulated, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That the Environmental Health Officer had confirmed that as the larger of the two campervans was taxed until November 2026, this issued could only be revisited once the tax had expired.
2. That the Environmental Health Officer confirmed that the other VW van would be added to the current list of vehicles that the service was in the process of investigating.
3. That Councillor J Park confirmed that she had reported the abandoned pick up on Franklin Road to Environmental Health who had responded that they were aware of the vehicle and were in the process of investigating the matter.

F. Blue Plaques

W Mackay updated members that he had been in discussions with someone who may be able to repaint the blue plaques and following discussion with the individual, it had been agreed that this work would be revisited after the Summer when there were less tourists in Stromness. No cost had been agreed at this time.

Councillor J Park requested that she be kept in the loop as to when the blue plaques were being removed for repainting so she could let Stromness Museum know for the purposes of their Blue Plaque Trail, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E Sinclair joined the meeting at this point.

G. Blue Tourist Signs

Following consideration of correspondence received from the Road Design Officer, copies of which had been circulated, regarding Stromness Community Council's request for maintenance of the Blue Signs, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the Road Design Officer had requested a list of the signs and locations, which would then be reviewed and thereafter remove any redundant signage or arrange for faded signs to be replaced, if required.
2. That W Mackay would document the Blue Tourist Signs and send it to the Clerk who would then contact the Road Design Officer.
3. That at the same time, the Clerk should request that the sign pointing to Warebeth Beach be updated to include Stromness Cemetery.

H. Core Paths

The Chair confirmed that as yet there had been no response from the Core Path Officer regarding the Community Council's request for information regarding various core paths.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received, from the Community Council section, a link to the Core Path information on the Council website which she would forward to members, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

I. GMB Garden

The Chair confirmed that she had not as yet contacted The Orcadian regarding a request for a notice for volunteers to help with the GMB Gardens to be included in the paper. However, as the Press were in attendance at the meeting, she raised the request again for volunteers, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

4. Correspondence

A. Possible Planting of More Fruit Trees at Faravel

Following consideration of correspondence from Incredible Edible Stromness, copies of which had been circulated, requesting a letter of support from the Community Council for their plan to plant two more fruit trees at Faravel, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write a letter to the Head of Active Communities supporting Incredible Edibles proposal to plant further fruit trees at Faravel.

5. Consultations

Resolved to note that no consultations had been received.

6. Publications

Resolved to note that no publications had been received.

7. Reports from Community Council Representatives

A. MARS Updates

W Mackay confirmed that he had recently reported pothole issues at the Stromness Pool entrance, at the end of the Sandwick Junction and on the Howe Road. He continued that the issues were increasingly related to heavy haulage in the areas, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Stromness Development Trust

K Bevan updated members that the focus of the Trust was currently on the Stromness Local Place Plan, which would be covered in the following item, and Stromness Community Centre.

He confirmed that the Development Officer had been in post since April 2026 and was currently working through the day-to-day business of the Community Centre such as income and expenditure, as well as the refurbishment plans. He confirmed that he was pleased that the Centre had held another successful Folk Festival event and confirmed that there were a number of bookings for the coming 6 months.

Following a query from E Sinclair regarding a gardener, K Bevan confirmed that the Development Officer was currently working out the costs involved.

P McLaughlin queried whether the PA System had been purchased. K Bevan confirmed that, due to the changeover of personnel, the project to purchase the PA System had been paused currently but confirmed that the project would be picked up again at a later date, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group

As D Harrold was not present, the Chair read an update which he had provided, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note:

1. That the Stromness Local Place Plan Working Group had met on Wednesday, 27 May at the Community Centre.
2. That much of the meeting had focused on housing such as there were 50 long-term empty houses in Stromness and 49 short-term lets within the town boundary.
3. That it was hoped that as the Local Place Plan moved forward, the Working Group were looking to engage the Empty Homes Officer to see whether a more targeted approach could be adopted to bring more of the houses detailed above back into use.

8. Financial Statements

A. Community Council General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 4 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £12,269.54.

B. Donations Account

Following consideration of the Donations Account statement as at 4 June 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 Schemes

1. Community Council Grant Scheme 2025/26

Following consideration of the 2025/26 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 4 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

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

2. Community Council Grant Scheme 2026/27

Following consideration of the 2026/27 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 4 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance remaining for the Community Council Grant Scheme 2026/27 was £3,122.00.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund Statement as at 4 June 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 4 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

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

9. Requests for Financial Assistance

A. C and L Bevan – Garioch Glitter Ball Gymnastics Competition – 14 June 2026

K Bevan declared an interest in this part of this item and although he did not leave the meeting, he took no part in the discussion thereof.

Following consideration of correspondence received from C and L Bevan, copies of which had been circulated, requesting financial assistance towards attending the Garioch Glitter Ball Gymnastics Competition on the 14 June 2026, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 each, totalling £60, be given.

10. Provisional Dates of Meetings

Resolved to note the following dates for Stromness Community Council were agreed:

Tuesday, 25 August 2026.

Tuesday, 29 September 2026.

Tuesday, 10 November 2026.

Tuesday, 19 January 2027.

Tuesday, 23 March 2027.

Tuesday, 11 May 2027.

Tuesday, 15 June 2027.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Stromness Cruise Report – April 2026

Following consideration of correspondence from the Pier Arts Centre and Stromness Museum, copies of which had been circulated, regarding a proposed cruise shuttle service between Hatston and Stromness, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would write a letter of support in favour of a cruise shuttle service from Hatston to Stromness.

B. Toilets at Pier Head

Following an update from a member, and after discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the issue of the leaking toilet at the Pier Head had been resolved.
2. To note that members were still concerned regarding the general state of repair of the Pier Head Men's Toilets.

C. Picnic Table at Gun Viewpoint

A member stated that the picnic table at the Gun Viewpoint was broken and queried whether Stromness Community Council could replace it, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That W Mackay would arrange for one of the plastic picnic benches that was in storage to be delivered there meantime.
2. That the replacement of the picnic bench would be revisited towards the end of the financial year, should there be sufficient funds.

D. Light at Top of Pierhead Fountain

The Chair raised D Harrold's query regarding whether the light at the top of the Pierhead Fountain had a mains supply and whether it could be brought back into use.

The Chair stated that she believed that the group that maintained the flowers in the fountain and had arranged for the fountain to be painted previously had also intimated that Tom Worthington was going to look at the light with the intention of refurbishing it.

W Mackay informed members that a few years ago, a Council official had looked into the possibility of getting the light back into use but had discovered that it was not cost effective to do so. W Mackay further commented that with the advance of solar panels this perhaps now could be done but it would need to be investigated, perhaps by members of EMEC or the university, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Parking Issues

As there was a representative of Police Scotland present at the meeting, K Bevan took the opportunity to raise the issue of parking in Stromness.

PC A Campbell confirmed that he was aware of parking issues in Stromness and confirmed that where time and number of officers allowed, Police Scotland would try to get through to Stromness.

He confirmed that previously the Fair Warn Scheme had been used and it was still used now and again. However, Police Scotland could also decide to write direct to the offenders.

Councillor J Park raised the recent concerns raised by Stromness Surgery where on several occasions cars were parked on the pavement as well as the road and thereby blocking access to the surgery, as well as access problems for ambulances.

Regarding the issue of cars parking all day in 30 minute spaces, PC Campbell confirmed that for that the police would have to observe the offence, which again was dependent on officer time and numbers to enable them to do so.

He further confirmed that although there were no yellow lines throughout the street, as far as he was aware the whole street was restricted parking and only parking in marked bays was permitted.

Councillor G Bevan also informed PC Campbell that Stromness Fire Service had also raised concerns regarding parking in Stromness which inhibited their ability to get through the street in the fire engine. This was particularly an issue in Alfred Street, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

F. Stromness Bonfire – Rotary Club

The Chair informed members that she had been approached by the Rotary Club querying whether they would be able to sell glowsticks etc again this year at Stromness Bonfire, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would go back to the Rotary Club to let them know that Stromness Community Council were happy for them to sell glowsticks etc but as donations for the bonfire collection had been slightly down last year would request that a small donation was made by the Rotary Club to the Bonfire funds.

G. Stromness Town Hall Sign

The Chair raised that although the issue had been previously raised, the Stromness Town Hall sign had still not been put back in place, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the relevant section again.

H. Antisocial Behaviour in Stromness

A member raised concern regarding antisocial behaviour in Stromness, highlighting recent issues in the Community Centre Playpark. He queried PC Campbell on whether he had any suggestions on what could be done to try to deter the incidents.

PC Campbell informed members that Police Scotland did need to be more present in Stromness, which included getting out of the cars and being seen to be walking around. He continued that Stromness used to hold weekly Police Surgeries where matters could be raised and suggested that perhaps they needed to be reinstated.

K Bevan noted that during events such as the Folk Festival or Stromness Shopping Week were well supported by Police Scotland but it was outwith these major events that there were concerns.

PC Campbell confirmed that he would feedback to his superiors that the general feeling was that Police Scotland needed to be seen and needed to engage with people.

A member further raised that Police Scotland had been seen a lot at the south end of Stromness recently but queried whether rather than using the Back Road if officers could detour through the street which would highlight the concerns with parking raised earlier as well as enabling the officers to be seen by the public.

PC Campbell confirmed that he would also feed this back to officers, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

I. Stage Request – Armed Forces Day

The Chair informed members that a request to use the stage area had recently been received from Orkney Islands Council – Armed Forces Day to be held on 27 June 2026. She confirmed that they would not be using the canopy, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

J. Overhanging Tree/Bush – Back Road

The Chair raised an issue with an overhanging tree/bush on Back Road which had been raised to her by members of the public. She confirmed that the issue had now been resolved, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

K. Weeds

A member raised an issue which had been raised to him by members of the public regarding the late cutting of verges and the issues this caused from spreading weeds such as dandelions.

A further member highlighted the issue of paths overgrown with weeds, giving examples of the area in front of the swimming pool or areas on the Back Road.

Councillor G Bevan raised again the self-help in communities' initiative that had been successful in areas of Kirkwall and wondered if this was something that could be explored for Stromness.

The Chair wondered if there was an organisation, other than the Community Council, that could take this initiative on, and it was:

Resolved that in the first instance, the Clerk should contact the relevant section to highlight the concerns raised by members of weeds throughout Stromness as well as querying what other areas were doing and what support, if any, was available.

L. Cycle Shed

A member queried what had been the outcome of the cycle shed concerns that had previously been raised, and following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should contact the relevant section to organise a meeting between the Building Inspector and W Mackay to go over the 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, 25 August 2026 at 19:00.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:12.