

Minute of the Meeting of Shapinsay Community Council held in the Clubrooms, Shapinsay Community Centre and via Teams on Thursday, 20 November 2025 at 18:45

Present:

Mrs L Bews, Miss P Dunnet, Mr C Leslie, Mrs J Noble, Mrs E Phillips and Mr G Rendall.

In Attendance:

- Councillor M Thomson (via Teams).
 - Ms D C Hunter, Service Manager, Safety and Resilience (via Teams).
 - Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer.
 - Mrs M Makin, Clerk.
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- Two members of the public.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note the apologies for absence had been received from Mrs E Chaney and Councillors H Woodbridge and S Clackson.

2. Discussion with Service Manager, Safety and Resilience

The Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, OIC, was in attendance to provide an update on progress with resilience plans for each island and explained that these continued to be developed. Most plans would be similar but there would be a uniqueness to each one. Her team were building a risk profile for each area and then would provide a draft plan to each community for discussion. She advised that they would also need to look at what resources each island had, volunteer networks etc. and that community involvement would be required. She assured members that this work was being prioritised and was moving forward. Eday was at the top of the list to be completed due to the situation with no fire service at present, but other areas would be worked on following this.

The Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, further advised that there would need to be volunteers to take ownership of this plan, once finalised, who would then maintain and manage it. It was agreed that resilience would be required with this so that it did not sit with just one person. Members heard that excellent engagement had already taken place with Shapinsay Development Trust, and amendments had been made to the draft plan to reflect the feedback from that session. Joint discussion would be the next step and would happen in the new year (early 2026). The Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, advised that she did not have a budget, but that there were plenty of grants available for resilience resources and that having a plan would strengthen the ability to apply and be eligible for funding.

In relation to resilience during periods of poor winter weather, members asked if there had been anyone contracted to clear roads etc. in Shapinsay in the event of snow. The Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, advised that she was unsure but that she would check with relevant officers within OIC and report back. She also asked if there was any learning from the power cut that had been experienced the previous evening, but on receiving no feedback advised that the island communities seemed to be very well equipped to deal with power outages.

Following the update and discussion, it was:

Resolved:

- A. To note the information provided.
- B. That a meeting would be arranged in the new year between the relevant community organisations in Shapinsay to discuss the draft island resilience plan, once ready to review.
- C. That the Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, would feed back any information received regarding winter service contracts in Shapinsay.

The Chair thanked the Service Manager, Safety and Resilience, for attending the meeting, and she left the meeting at this point.

3. Adoption of Minute

The minute of the meeting of Shapinsay Community Council held on 11 September 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mr C Leslie and seconded by Mr G Rendall.

4. Matters Arising

A. Funding for Pathways – School Path

The Chair advised that she had attended a meeting that day to discuss the amended plan for the parking outside the school and path along the back of the parking spaces. It had been reported that the funding for the work must be utilised by the end of this financial year and therefore there was some urgency in agreeing a way forward. Members reviewed the suggested plan, and it was agreed that they were not content with it, but that if it had to go ahead as per this plan, the kerbs around the bus parking area should not be raised so that a vehicle could still use the existing gate. There would then be no need for widening the other gate. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Chair would pursue this matter with the school and relevant officers, advising that the community council did not want to cause any delays but wanted to ensure that what was put in place was both practical and cost effective.

B. Shapinsay Hydrogen Plant Removal

The Chair advised that the plant had been degassed and the equipment had been removed, and that the housing area now belonged to the school. Discussions were now underway as to what to do with the space, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

C. Bike Shelter at School

There was no further update on the shelter. Members advised that the school's bikeability bikes were currently being stored inside the door nearest the surgery, the "picnic" (Sports day) equipment and parent council marquees in the largest section, along with the school lawnmowers, therefore storage would be required for them along with other equipment, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Yacht at Shapinsay Slipway

Members advised that the yacht had still not been moved, and it was:

Resolved to note that the yacht was still in situ at the pier and that members would continue to monitor the situation.

E. Burroughston Broch

The Interim Clerk advised that the tender would be amended to include a cut at Burroughston Broch but that this would be advertised in the new year, and it was:

Resolved to keep this item on the agenda.

F. Floodgates - Kirkwall Pier

Resolved to note that a response had not been provided.

G. Shapinsay Waiting Room – Kirkwall Pier

No update had been provided on this item, however Councillor M Thomson advised that she would be meeting with the Deputy Harbour Master next week so could mention it to him, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update.
2. To keep this item on the agenda.

H. Flooding at Shapinsay School

Members advised that this was still a big problem, with the surface of the car park now in a poor state of repair due to flooding and that damage was now being done to the play park equipment. They pointed out that the cost of repairing the damage would end up being more than sorting out the problem, which they believed to be a blocked/collapsed culvert. Members stated that they were worried that the school building would start to be affected by damp. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to ask, via the business letter, that this issue be addressed as a matter of urgency and express disappointment that the culvert was not cleared initially when the community council first raised this issue.

I. Land below Helliar View

The Chair advised that she had spoken to a local contractor about cutting, ploughing, breaking in and re-seeding the area, and that enquiries were ongoing with regards to the best course of action for seeding. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would contact a resident of Helliar View to request that they remove their garden waste from the field.
2. That the Clerk would also contact Scottish Water to remove the roof of their storage hut, which blew into the field several winters ago.
3. That once this was completed the Chair would advise the local contractor to begin initial works.

J. Drainage at OHAL Properties

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that this matter had been passed to Orkney Housing Association and that a Building Officer would be visiting the area soon and would carry out a full review of the area, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

K. Parking at Shapinsay Slip, Kirkwall Pier

Members noted that new lighting columns were being installed behind the spaces shortly so perhaps that would highlight that this area should be reserved for Shapinsay residents' parking, however they were of the opinion that the new signage was not making a lot of difference, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and discussion.

L. Kirkyard Wall

Members had previously been provided with an update from the Burial Grounds Officer, advising that they did not have the budget to address the weeds and that the area did not fall under Roads Support's remit either and therefore they would not be treating them either. Members felt that this was a shame and asked if the community council could do it themselves. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the response.
2. To ask if the Roads Operative could be asked to clear the weeds as part of their duties.

5. Correspondence

A. Scapa Deep Water Quay Update

Members had previously been sent an update on the Scapa Deep Water Quay project, advising that further details had been requested by OIC Planning and had subsequently been provided, and that the information could be viewed on the OIC's planning website, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

B. Briefing Note – Ferry Replacement Programme

Correspondence from the Service Manager, Transportation, had previously been circulated to members, advising of progress with phase 2 of both the FRP and also the Orkney Harbours Masterplan. Members noted that community consultation would happen in 2026 around new vessel design and any changes to infrastructure, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

6. Consultation Documents

A. Coastal Change Adaptation Plan Workshops

Members had previously been sent information on, and an invitation to, CCAP workshops on 7 October and 11 November, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had since passed.

B. EMEC – Section 36 Variation – Fall of Warness

Correspondence relating to an application for a Section 36 Variation for the Fall of Warness site had previously been emailed to members, and it was:

Resolved to note that this was the last date for any comments on the application.

C. Have Your Say on Tourism – Community Workshops

An invitation to attend community workshops on 5, 6 and 11 November in relation to the Our Orkney, Our Story project, to inform the Council's Visitor Management Plan, had previously been circulated to members, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had since taken place.

D. Briefing Note – Grass Cutting in Burial Grounds

Members considered a briefing note and request for feedback from the Service Manager, Roads and Grounds, copies of which had been previously circulated, in relation to savings which needed to be made on grass cutting in cemeteries. Members stated that they were very disappointed to see this paper in front of them for consideration and were disgusted that it was even up for consultation. Members agreed that they would like the number of cuts per season to remain at 8 for their burial ground, as 6 was too little. They also pointed out that the paper also doesn't state if it would be a guaranteed 6 cuts as the wording "up to a maximum of 6" suggests it could be less. If 8 cuts were allowed, the CC would be willing to pay for two, but this would be subject to what the tender came in at, and knowing what they are committing to financially. It was mentioned that it would be interesting to see if OIC would be able to find someone that would be willing to cut the grass for the budget available, as the community council had tried in the past. It was further suggested that the figures were not realistic for the work involved, and the prices didn't take into account that in some of the community council areas, contractors were provided with the equipment which is owned by the CC to carry out grass cutting, rather than contractors having to use their own. Following discussion it was:

Resolved that the Community Council Liaison Officer would submit Shapinsay Community Council's response to the briefing note, including the comments as above, and advising that members would like the number of cuts per season to remain at 8 for their burial ground, and that if this was allowed, the CC would be willing to pay for two, subject to what the tender came in at.

E. North Isles Ferry Services – User Survey

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that late correspondence had been circulated to members in relation to a series of surveys on the routes between Orkney and mainland Scotland, and it was:

Resolved to note that the surveys were open until 9 January 2026 should members wish to complete them as individuals.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the Shapinsay Community Council General Fund statement as at 6 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £13,128.97.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

After consideration of the Shapinsay Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 6 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,603.76 in the main capping limit and £719.40 and £755 in the additional and island categories.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Shapinsay Community Development Fund statement as at 6 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that £8,627.53 remained for allocation.

D. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Shapinsay Community Development Fund statement as at 6 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for allocation of £3,400.

8. Financial Requests

A. Travel Grant – E Chaney

Following consideration of a request for financial assistance from J and E Chaney, copies of which had previously been circulated, towards two trips their daughter was taking part in, to Dundee and Aberdeen, as part of the Youth Climbing Series, it was:

Resolved to award £50 per trip, totalling £100, from the general fund.

B. Screen Machine

Members considered a request from the Screen Machine, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance towards the cost of taking the mobile cinema to Shapinsay in December 2025. £875 had been requested and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To award £450, subject to CCGS approval, if Shapinsay Development Trust would be willing to make up the remaining £425.

2. That the Clerk would approach Shapinsay Development Trust to ask if they would be willing to provide funding towards the Screen Machine visit.

C. Gift for Nurse

Resolved to note that the purchase of a thank you gift for a nurse had been agreed by email and that the gift had been funded via the general fund, totalling £50.

9. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Transport Representative was not present at the meeting but had advised that she had submitted a request for Sunday sailings and that the North Isles excursions would be advertised, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

B. Planning

Resolved to note that there was nothing to report in relation to planning.

C. Shapinsay Development Trust

A written update had been provided to the Chair, who advised that work was continuing on the Climate Action Plan, which included the resilience plan, and the Whole Island Wellbeing plan, with the wellbeing tree being published. The Here to Help Scheme was being worked on in conjunction with Age Scotland, and there was to be a community open day for the Wellbeing Project in the new year, with community council members encouraged to engage. The Trust was also looking at a community place plan and would look to work with the community council on this. The boat would be sold and there was feasibility work being done on the Balfour Cottage project. Following the update, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update.

2. That Mrs J Noble would attend the Wellbeing Project Open Day and that further consideration would be given to a representative of the CC attending place plan working groups once more information was available.

D. Health and Care

It was advised that unpaid carers were the focus of the last meeting and that a conference would be happening next week for carers. Work was still ongoing to recruit a new ANP, and it was highlighted again the importance of CC involvement with this process. Members discussed occasions when they had no medical cover because the incoming staff had been delayed and the outgoing staff had already left and it was agreed that this should be raised at the next meeting. It was also agreed that SOPs should be brought up, as residents had been encouraged to phone NHS24 or 999 rather than the Balfour switchboard and the Nurse to contact SAS

rather than the First Responders directly, however this was causing delays with getting an ambulance out. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update.
2. That the Health and Care Representative would bring up CC engagement in the recruitment process, lapses in medical cover and SOPs at the upcoming meeting on 2 December.

10. Publications

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

- VAO Newsletter – October and November 2025.
- VAO Training and Funding Update – September and October 2025.
- Letter from School Place – September, October and November 2025.
- Islands Creative Entrepreneurship – Invitation.
- PSTN Switch-Off Information.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Christmas Tree Lighting

It was noted that the Salvation Army band had agreed to attend to play music at the event, and that a SWAP application would be done to help with the cost of travel and meals for the band. Mr C Leslie would arrange for the tree to go up and would put lights on it. The School and Choir would sing at the event and Shapinsay Community Association would be providing refreshments. The festive decorations were still to be switched on, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That Mr C Leslie would arrange for the tree to go up and be decorated and also speak to a local contractor about the festive decorations on the lamp posts.

B. Grass Cutting Tenders

Resolved that this would be discussed at the next meeting as there was uncertainty over budgets and what the tenders might look like for the next year.

C. Fireworks Display

An email had been received from Mrs E Chaney regarding the fireworks, asking for consideration to be given to moving the display from the vicinity of the gasworks. It was noted that there was no issue now that the hydrogen plant had been de-gassed and equipment taken away, so the display could be moved to the playing fields in future years, and it was:

Resolved to note the information ahead of next year's event and to consider location of fireworks display at a future meeting.

D. Toilets at Gatehouse

Mr C Leslie advised that a repair had been done to the panel below the window in the waiting room and toilets in the village, however there was water damage due to a leak in the roof, and it was:

Resolved to note that this matter had been reported and that the Community Council Liaison Officer would follow it up.

E. Overgrown Bushes in Village

It was reported that there was overgrowing vegetation in the village and that some of it was overhanging the road, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would arrange for a letter to go to the household in question and that if no action was taken, this could be reported to Roads Support.

12. Dates of Next Meetings

Following consideration of dates for future meetings, it was:

Resolved that the next meetings of Shapinsay Community Council would take place on Thursdays 5 February and 23 April 2026 in Shapinsay Community Centre.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:36.