

Minute of the Meeting of Orphir Community Council held in the Orphir Community School on Tuesday, 28 October 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Mr M Clouston, Mr J Mackay, Mr A Marwick, Mr S Pyke and Mr N Sclater.

In Attendance:

- Councillor S Cowie.
- Councillor K Leask.
- Mrs A Byers, Arch Henderson Consultants.
- Mr D Sawkins, Deputy Harbour Master (Strategy and Support).
- Mr K Kazakov, Assistant Harbour Master.
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mrs B Clublely and Councillors L Manson and I Taylor.

2. Presentation – Ferry Replacement Programme and Orkney Harbours Masterplan Phase 2

Representatives of Arch Henderson Consultants and Orkney Harbours attendance at the meeting to provide an update on work to both the Orkney Harbours Masterplan and Ferry Replacement Programme phase 2 work. Officers advised that some upgrades may be required at Houton to current infrastructure to match new vessels, and that in the new year they may have details on what the vessel could look like. Infrastructure Baseline Condition Surveys will be carried out to ascertain the condition of the piers, and they would also be looking at other pier infrastructure and uses for the area around the pier, recognising that it wasn't just a ferry port but an area that other people use for work and leisure. The representatives advised that they would hopefully be in a position to share plans in February 2026 for the community council to comment on and asked them to pass on any information on private boat owners interested in a marina provision or any other aspect of the OHMP work.

Discussion followed, including that residents in Hoy and Flotta would have to be consulted on any plans the same as Orphir Community Council had been, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To note the information provided.

B. That community council members would pass on the details of anyone they knew that would have an interest in this work so that engagement could be made.

The Arch Henderson and Orkney Harbours representatives left the meeting at this point.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of meeting of Orphir Community Council held on 26 August 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mr J Mackay and seconded by Mr N Sclater.

4. Matters Arising

A. Bus Shelter, Smoogro Road End

The Chair advised that he had spoken to the Men's Shed about construction of the shelter and that the wood had been ordered. They had been sent the plans so that they had those to refer to for the construction.

The Interim Clerk also advised that the invoice for the groundworks had been received, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update.
2. To note that members had agreed via email to pay the invoice for the groundworks, with £3,360 being paid from the general fund and £3,360 from the CDF allocation.

B. Orkneyinga Saga Centre Refurbishment

The Chair advised that the contractor was looking to get the joinery work done by December and that an electrician would need to come in now that the internal wall was down. Painting and floor coverings would need to be arranged once the joinery and electrical work was done.

The Chair also advised that he had met with Colleen Batey again regarding the interpretation material and that she was going to get in touch with UHI Orkney in relation to assistance that might be provided with design elements and putting content online. He was due to meet with Ms Batey again on 25 November.

The Chair also advised that it might be worthwhile to consider installing some CCTV in the centre once the refurbishment had been completed, and that he would ask for a quote from a local contractor to have two cameras installed.

It was agreed that a sign should be displayed on the door of the centre to advise that it was closed for refurbishment, and that keys should be cut so that the contractor could be given a spare for access. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update from the Chair and accept the quote from the joiner for the initial work, at a cost of £16,000 plus VAT.
2. That new keys would be cut, to be funded from the Saga Centre Account.
3. That quotes would be sought for further works required.
4. That the Interim Clerk would arrange for a sign to be displayed advising that the centre was now closed until further notice for refurbishment.

C. OIC Winter Treatment Contracts

No further update was available, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That members should log any issues as they arise.
2. That this item should be removed from the agenda.

D. Local Place Plan for Orphir

It was advised that a Local Place Plan for Orphir would be led by Orphir Community Association with input from Orphir Community Council, and that there was a lot of cross over with some members sitting on both organisations. Main areas to be taken into consideration were the play park and pitch, the community area at the school and Clowally viewpoint. It was hoped that a steering group would be formed to carry out community consultation and put together ideas so that applications for funding could be worked up and a consultant appointed. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the report from the Chair and await further information.

E. Viking Longship

The Chair advised that he had spoken to a local craftsperson and was awaiting a response regarding the production of a new wooden longship to stand outside the Orkneyinga Saga Centre, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and await further update.

5. Correspondence

A. Responses to Comments on Winter Service Plan 2025/2026

Members were advised in response to their comments on the Winter Service Plan 2025/2026 that one gritter covers the Orphir area, and it may be possible for other gritters to be taken in to assist in addition to the Council digger and external assistance as required. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information.

B. Scapa Deep Water Quay Update

Members discussed correspondence, copies of which had previously been circulated, with regards to a further planning consultation period which was underway, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

C. Briefing Note – Burial Grounds Grass Cutting

The Interim Clerk advised that a briefing note had been circulated to members after the agenda had been sent, to ask for each community council's opinions on possible cuts to the grass cutting budget in active and inactive burial grounds. Following consideration of the correspondence, it was:

Resolved to respond advising that the community council would like to see 12 cuts carried out in the Orphir kirkyard and that they would be willing to fund 3 of those cuts (25%).

6. Consultations

A. Transport Scotland Drop-In Sessions

The Interim Clerk had previously circulated information to members in relation to Transport Scotland Community Drop-in Sessions about the next Northern Isles Ferry Services contract, and it was:

Resolved to note that the sessions had since taken place in September.

B. Orkney Coastal Change Adaptation Plan Workshop

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council and Mott McDonald, copies of which had previously been circulated, inviting members to a workshop to discuss the development of the Orkney Coastal Change Adaptation Plan on 9 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that the event had since passed.

C. Share Your Views on Tourism – Stakeholder Interviews

Members had previously been sent an invitation to take part in a one-hour stakeholder interview as part of the Our Orkney, Our Story project, which would support the development of OIC's new visitor management plan. The Chair advised that he had attended the workshop, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. EMEC – Fall of Warness – Section 36 Variation

Members had previously been sent information from EMEC, advising that an application had been made to the Scottish Ministers for a variation to the existing section 36 consent for the construction and operation of the above site, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence and that no response was to be submitted.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Fund statement as at 14 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £23,482.33.

B. Orkneyinga Saga Centre

Following consideration of the Orkneyinga Saga Centre Fund statement as at 14 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £48,892.36.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

After consideration of the Grant Scheme statement as at 14 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £917.96 in the main capping limit.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 14 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that £15,395.42 remained for allocation.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 14 October 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for allocation of £2,606.00.

8. Requests for Financial Assistance

A. F and B Seatter – Highland Dancing

Following consideration of a request from C Seatter, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting assistance with the cost of two children attending Highland Dancing competitions in Wick on 20 September 2025, it was:

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

B. Orphir Community School – P6 Outdoor Education

Following consideration of a request from Orphir Primary School, copies of which had previously been circulated, for financial assistance on behalf of three pupils to attend the P6 Outdoor Education 3-day activities, it was:

Resolved to award £50 per pupil, totalling £150, from the general fund.

C. M Dundas – Highland Open Fencing Competition

Following consideration of a request from S Garson, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting assistance for M Dundas to attend the Scottish Fencing Highland Open Competition in Elgin in September 2025, it was:

Resolved to award £50 from the general fund towards attendance at the competition.

D. A Leslie – BBC Alba Trad Awards

Following consideration of a request from D Leslie, copies of which had previously been circulated, requesting assistance for A Leslie to attend the BBC Alba Trad Awards with Hadhirgaan on 6 December 2025, it was:

Resolved to award £50 from the general fund towards the trip.

E. Orphir Community Association – Festive Lights and Tree

The Interim Clerk advised that a late request had been received from OCA for financial assistance of £1,250 towards the cost of the community Christmas tree, and the repair/erection of the festive decorations in the village. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to award 50% of the funding requested, being £625, subject to CCGS approval.

F. Harray Young Farmers – Speechmaking

Members were advised that a late request had been received from Harray Young Farmers, for financial assistance towards two Orphir residents attending the North Area junior speech making eliminations in Halkirk. Following discussion, it was:

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

9. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – August and October 2025.
- VAO – Training and Funding Update – September and October 2025.
- ORSAS Newsletter – September 2025.
- Scottish Rural Action – Newsletter – August 2025.

10. AOCB

Resolved to note that no other competent business was raised.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

Following consideration of dates for future meetings, it was:

Resolved that the next two meetings of Orphir Community Council would be held on 20 January and 17 March 2026.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:12.