

Minute of the Meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council held in the Friends Room, St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall, and via Teams, on Monday, 11 May 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Steven Brodie, Cathleen Hourie, Robert Leslie, Chris Matthews, John Mowat, Tom Rendall, Rosemary Rhodes, Elspeth Seatter and Lynne Spence.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Leslie Manson.
- Councillor John Ross Scott.
- Councillor Ivan Taylor.
- SSEN and Freedom (all via Microsoft Teams):
 - Geraldine Higginsm Strategic Project Liaison Lead (North), SSEN.
 - Claire Doherty
 - Hannah Taylor
 - Christopher Smart
 - Kaitlynnne McLeod
- 1 member of the local press.
- Hazel Flett, Clerk.

Chair:

- Hazel Flett, Clerk (for Items 1 and 2).
- Lynne Spence (for Items 3 to 18).

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Kristopher Leask and Gwenda Shearer.

2. Appointment of Chair

The Clerk advised of the options available for the appointment of Chair, and it was:

Resolved that Lynne Spence be reappointed Chair of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council.

Lynne Spence took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. SSEN Distribution – Upcoming Programme of Works

After hearing a presentation from Freedom, Delivery Contract Partners for Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Distribution, on the upcoming programme of works in the Hatston and Quanterness areas to upgrade and improve the resilience of the electricity network, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the presentation.

The SSEN and Freedom representatives left the meeting at this point.

4. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved that Chris Matthews be reappointed Vice Chair of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council.

5. Appointment of Planning Representative

Resolved that the Clerk be reappointed as the Planning Representative for Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council.

6. Appointment of Finance Sub-committee

Resolved that the following members be appointed to the Finance Sub-committee:

- Chair – Lynne Spence.
- Vice Chair – Chris Matthews.
- Cathleen Hourie.
- Tom Rendall.

7. Appointment of Health and Social Care Representative

Resolved that the Chair be reappointed as the Health and Social Care representative, with Elspeth Seatter appointed as a substitute.

8. Adoption of Minute

The Minute of the Meeting held on 23 March 2026 was approved, being proposed by Chris Matthews and seconded by Rosemary Rhodes.

9. Matters Arising

A. Community Council Lanyard

The Chair provided lanyards to be used when any member was on official Community Council business, and it was:

Resolved to note that this item was now complete.

B. Street Lighting in Meadowbank

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council regarding ownership and responsibility for various lighting assets and wall mounted lights throughout Meadowbank, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that Councillor John Ross Scott should find out responsibility for lights which illuminated public spaces, regardless of property ownership, and report back in due course.

C. Requests for Financial Assistance

Following consideration of notes of thanks received from various individuals and groups regarding financial assistance received from the Community Council, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Consultation – SEPA – Flood Risk Management Plan

Chris Matthews had drafted a response to a consultation by SEPA on local flooding concerns in areas identified as having the highest flooding risk, to help inform the Flood Risk Management Plans covering the period 2028 to 2034, which the Clerk had submitted by the deadline of 22 April 2026 and which had also been shared with the other members, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

E. Consultation – Orkney Islands Council – Winter Service Policy

Comments submitted to the Chair in relation to the review of the Winter Service Policy by Orkney Islands Council were collated, with the Clerk submitting a response by the deadline of 9 April 2026 and which had also been shared with all members, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

F. Consultation – Orkney Islands Council – Verge Maintenance Plan 2026 Update

Comments submitted to the Chair in relation to the review of the Verge Maintenance Plan for 2026 by Orkney Islands Council were collated, with the Clerk submitting a response by the deadline of 30 March 2026 and which had also been shared with all members, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

G. Litter at Kirkwall Marina

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council, copies of which had been circulated, confirming ownership of the area of the marina and, as the road was unadopted, the Waste service would not be able to service or place bins in that area, hence why the bin was moved from the bottom of the steps to the top at Cromwell Road. In addition, there was no suitable or safe turning point on the marina roadway for a collection vehicle. The Harbours department might be able to provide their own bins and empty them into their existing waste provision for Kirkwall Harbour. Environmental Health could provide signage to help with dog fouling, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council requesting the Harbours department to provide bins in the vicinity of Kirkwall marina and empty them.
2. That the Clerk should write to Kirkwall BID seeking support for bins to be placed at Kirkwall marina.
3. That the Clerk should ask for the signage to help with dog fouling.

H. Bus Shelter at Old Finstown Road/Liberator Housing Development

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council, copies of which had been circulated, advising that, although the area had been looked at last year, the Transportation service felt that the current stop might not be an ideal location for a shelter, however this would be added to the list of requests, noting that the Council was currently awaiting confirmation of funding for the current financial year, and it was:

Resolved to await further information from Orkney Islands Council.

Councillor Ivan Taylor left the meeting at this point.

10. Standing Items

A. Ferry Replacement Programme and Harbours Masterplan Phase 2

Resolved to note that no date had yet been confirmed for the presentation on the ferry replacement programme and the Harbours Masterplan Phase 2.

B. Carness Sea Wall

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time.

C. Former Street Names

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time.

D. Local Place Plan

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time.

E. Benches

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council, copies of which had been circulated, providing a list of benches accurate as of final checks in 2025, and

confirming that there was no official maintenance programme, although the Sport and Leisure service was happy to discuss a more regular programme of maintenance utilising funding previously mentioned by the Community Council, it was:

Resolved that the Chair should meet with representatives from Orkney Islands Council to discuss a co-ordinated programme of bench maintenance.

F. Sand at Scapa

After hearing representations from various members indicating that sand had been removed from the road at Scapa and dumped on the beach, with some of the marram grass rolled over the wall, it was:

Resolved that Chris Matthews should draft a letter for submission to Orkney Islands Council reiterating the Community Council's ongoing concerns regarding the narrowing of the road at Scapa due to the build-up of sand and the consequent road safety issues and seeking removal of all sand back to the wall.

G. Winter Fest

The Chair advised that she had attended a recent meeting of Kirkwall BID, where it was confirmed that the BID had received financial assistance towards a Winter Festival, and it was:

Resolved to note that the Kirkwall BID was open to partnering a winter event or festival.

H. Policy on Financial Assistance

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time.

I. Green Plaque for Carnegie Library

After discussion of the proposed wording for the plaque, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the wording on the plaque should be as follows:

"This was the site of the Kirkwall Library opened in 1909 by Andrew Carnegie who also gave a generation donation to the funds. He was awarded the Freedom of the Burgh of Kirkwall at the ceremony."

2. That the Clerk should write to the owner of the building to see if they were willing to have a plaque installed.

3. That, if the owner was willing to have a plaque installed, the Clerk should check whether Listed Building Consent was required and seek a quote for the manufacture of the plaque.

J. Former Balfour Hospital – Garden Memorial Building

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time.

K. Laing Street, Kirkwall

Councillor John Ross Scott confirmed there was nothing further to report on the condition of the road surface on Laing Street, but that discussions were ongoing regarding removing or reducing the number of bins on the pavement, and it was:

Resolved to note that Councillor John Ross Scott would keep the Community Council updated.

L. Missing Door on Phone Box at Pierhead

Following consideration of correspondence from BT, copies of which had been circulated, advising that, on the style of kiosk, once the doors were removed, they were not replaced, and the old graffiti inside was acid etched and could not be removed, together with further correspondence advising that the BT were now planning to remove the kiosk completely, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to BT seeking usage figures for the phone box.

M. Festive Lighting in Kirkwall

After hearing from the Chair regarding potential festival lighting in Kirkwall out with the BID area, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should check with Orkney Islands Council on the possibility of motif lighting along Ayre Road and Pickaquoy Road.

N. Urban Weeds

Councillor John Ross Scott updated members on meetings with the Convener and the Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development, Orkney Islands Council, regarding community weeding and confirmed that the Council would provide bags, which would be collected from designated points, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Greener Orkney to see if they would be willing to start some type of community weeding exercise in Kirkwall, on a date to be confirmed in June.

O. Street lighting in Papdale East

Resolved to note that there was no further update at this time, as the walkabout was scheduled to take place during the darker evenings in autumn/early winter.

11. Correspondence

A. Orkney Gymnastics Club – Letter of Support

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Gymnastics Club requesting a letter of support from the Community Council for the development of a dedicated gymnastics facility, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should provide a letter of support to Orkney Gymnastics Club.

B. Annual Grants

Following consideration of correspondence from the Community Council Liaison Officer advising of the annual grants to community councils for 2026/2027, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the annual grant to Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council for financial year 2026/2027 was £7,220.37.
2. To note that the capping limit for the Community Council Grant Scheme for financial year 2026/2027 was £3,992.

Councillor Leslie Manson left the meeting at this point.

C. Westray Tidal Array

Following consideration of correspondence from Orbital Marine Power advising of upcoming public consultation for the proposed Westray Tidal Array in the Westray Firth, to be held in the St Magnus Centre on 11 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

12. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 30 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the estimated balance as at 30 April 2026 of £15,191.74.
2. That the Clerk should arrange a development session for all members of the Community Council on finance, data sharing, the role of the Planning representative and what was expected of the Community Council should they wish to make a representation in respect of a planning application.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2025/2026 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 30 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that projects to the value of £4,427.49 had been approved, of which £3,611.27 had been claimed.
2. To note the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit of £1,197.51.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 30 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval of £1,163.46.

13. Financial Requests

A. Gymnastics

Following consideration of an application from L Allan requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in a gymnastics competition held in Hamilton, Glasgow, on 11 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

B. Highland Dancing

Following consideration of an application from D Wood requesting financial assistance towards her daughters participating in a highland dancing competition held in Wick on 11 April 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each dancer, subject to confirmation of participation.

C. Orkney Folk Festival 2026

Following consideration of an application from Orkney Folk Festival requesting financial assistance towards the 2026 festival, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £500 be given.

D. Athletics

Following consideration of an application from A Bruce requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in an athletics competition held in Aberdeen on 9 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

E. Highland Dancing and Gymnastics

Following consideration of an application from T Russell requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in various highland dancing and gymnastic competitions between May and August 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each event attended, subject to confirmation of participation.

F. Athletics

Following consideration of an application from S Webb requesting financial assistance towards her daughter participating in athletics competitions held in Shetland and Aberdeen on 19 April and 14/15 May 2026 respectively, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each event attended, subject to confirmation of participation.

14. Consultation – Shaping the Future of Scotland’s Forests

Following consideration of correspondence from the Forest Policy Group regarding a survey on shaping the future of Scotland’s forests, which was due to close on 5 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence and that members should be encouraged to submit an individual response.

15. Publications

The following publications had been sent to the Clerk, had been forwarded to members via email, and were noted:

- Scottish Rural Action – March 2026 Newsletter and Upcoming Events.
- Highlands and Islands Airports Newsletter.
- VAO Newsletters – March and May 2026.
- SEPA Updates -SEPA at 30 and 29 April 2026.
- VAO Training and Funding Updates – April 2026.
- SSEN – Whole System Newsletters – April and May 2026.
- Walking Scotland eNews – April and May 2026.
- Scotland’s Towns Partnership – April 2026 Newsletter.
- ORSAS – Quarterly Newsletter.

16. Any Other Competent Business

A. Kirkwall BID

The Chair advised that she had met the BID Manager who had suggested closer liaison with the Community Council, and it was:

Resolved that the Chair should attend meetings of Kirkwall BID, as and when appropriate items were on the agenda.

B. Road Naming

The Clerk had received correspondence from Orkney Islands Council requesting names for a road within a housing development in St Ola, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council confirming support for the suggestion of Dale Park.

C. Vacancy on Community Council

The Clerk advised that Moyra Gordon had resigned from the Community Council, that there were now two vacancies and asked whether a public meeting should be convened to fill the vacancies, and it was:

Resolved that, as the next elections were due in 2026, a public meeting should not be held in the interim to fill the vacancies, but that members should encourage anyone resident within the Community Council area to consider standing and, if possible, attend a meeting.

D. Seatter Path

John Mowat reported that work had started on installing walkways along the wettest part of the Seatter path, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

E. Rainwater Goods and Gullies

Chris Matthews referred to the recent spell of heavy rain and subsequent areas of flooding due partly to broken rainwater goods and/or blocked gullies, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should write to Orkney Islands Council asking whether gullies were regularly inspected and cleaned and whether the Council had any responsibility for ensuring owners of private property maintained rainwater goods so that flooding did not occur on public property.

17. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Kirkwall and St Ola Community Council should be held on Monday, 29 June 2026, commencing at 19:30.

18. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:50.