

Minute of the Meeting of Flotta Community Council held in Flotta Community Centre on Tuesday, 3 February 2026 at 16:15

Present:

Mrs K Bradley, Mr N Cheeseman, Mrs P Gee, Mr J Gerboc, Mrs A Newby-Tucker, Ms T Newby-Tucker and Mrs I Smith.

In Attendance:

- Councillor L Hall.
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.

- Five members of the public.

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1. Apologies and Welcome

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors G Bevan and J Park, and to welcome Mr J Gerboc and Ms T Newby-Tucker as newly elected members of Flotta Community Council.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of Flotta Community Council held on 4 November 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mrs A Newby-Tucker and seconded by Mrs I Smith.

3. Matters Arising

A. Triangular Area of Land at Burnside

Mr N Cheeseman provided a background to this item, providing information on how the community council had come to own the land and that it was sold based on the land being used for a community project. He explained that the project was now effectively on hold but suggested that a sub-committee could be elected to consider future options.

Mr N Cheeseman also suggested that the community council should seek a quote meantime for the area to be cleared and levelled to ascertain what is underneath. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the Interim Clerk would contact local contractors to ask for quotes for the clearing of the triangular area of land.

B. 13 and 14 Burnside

Mrs A Newby-Tucker advised that the sub-committee wanted to continue work to bring the properties up to standard. She had circulated a list of items of furniture and homeware she wished to purchase for the properties, and an estimated cost. Most of the furniture items would be sourced from Restart in order to keep costs to a minimum.

It was also reported that there were a number of repairs required in the properties, including to storage heaters and external doors and that these issues would need to be addressed.

It was also stated that the properties had sometimes been left in an untidy state by guests and that notices should be put up within the properties advising of how the properties should be left. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That a budget of £2,500 should be set for the purchase of replacement furniture and other homeware items for 13 and 14 Burnside and that a CCGS application would be completed.

2. That the sub-committee would put together a list of all the issues and repairs required within the houses so that a tender could be put together and a contractor sought to carry out the works.

3. That the sub-committee should inform the Interim Clerk of the wording for notices so that these could be made up for display in the properties.

C. Play Park – Equipment and Grass

There was still no consensus on what equipment should be considered for the play park, but it was suggested that something for the older age groups should be identified.

It was also agreed that a quote for an initial cut of the grass should be sourced, and that a tender for cutting for the rest of the season should be advertised. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the catalogue for play park equipment should be circulated to members again for consideration.

2. That the Interim Clerk would contact local contractors to ask for a quote for cutting the grass at the play park ahead of the summer season.

3. That the Interim Clerk would advertise the tender for grass cutting in the play park for the 2026 summer season, with a closing date of prior to the next CC meeting.

D. Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Paths

Mrs P Gee advised that the agreement with landowners had expired and asked for information on who would be responsible for the paths as walkers would be going across private property. She also advised that some of the way markers and stiles were starting to rot, and that there were sections of the walk that were now unsafe due to coastal erosion and should be closed off.

It was also noted that a contractor was still required to come and do a good cut of the path, and that the Interim Clerk continued to liaise with a contractor, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Interim Clerk would ask, via the Business Letter to Democratic Services, who was now responsible for the paths put in by the Scapa Flow Landscape Partnership Scheme.

2. That the Interim Clerk, via the Business Letter, would report the issues on the path.

3. That the Interim Clerk would continue to engage with the contractor with the aim to getting a grass cut completed along the whole path.

E. Seating at Stanger Head

Members resumed consideration of the placement of a bench at Stanger Head. It was suggested that a concrete base would be needed to secure the bench to, and that it should be placed a good distance from the edge of the shore. It was agreed that permission of the landowner should be sought before taking this matter any further.

It was also reported that the landowner had suggested that notices should go up reading “keep dogs on lead” and that a lot of the path had been dug up, so perhaps these required to be filled in from a safety point of view. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the discussion and resume consideration at the next meeting.
2. That Mr N Cheeseman would pass on details for the landowner to the Interim Clerk so that they could be contacted in relation to the placing of a bench and signs at Stanger Head.

F. Christmas Lights

It was suggested that battery powered lights would be better than solar powered ones, and that if the CC went ahead with this project, then perhaps a smaller tree for Burnside would be ordered this year.

It was also reported that new lights were required for the community tree, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Interim Clerk would source quotes for new lights for the community tree.
2. To resume consideration of this item at the next meeting.

G. Flotta Kirkyard Gates

Resolved to note that no further update was available but to keep this item on the agenda.

H. Cutting of Offlets

Members had previously been forwarded a response from the Head of Infrastructure Services, advising that their comments had been passed on to the relevant team, and that any further issues should ideally be reported through the Customer Services platform at the Council, rather than waiting until a meeting to raise.

Members again discussed problem areas with offlets and ditches, suggesting that some offlets are cut draining into a ditch that doesn't exist. Following consideration, it was:

Resolved to report the problem areas and to monitor the situation.

4. Correspondence

A. Briefing Note – Ferry Replacement Update

Members had previously been forwarded a briefing note from the Service Manager, Transportation, advising of progress of the Ferry Replacement Programme, and that Phase 2 was now underway to consider vessel design and pier infrastructure improvements in tandem in addition to any aspirations outlined as part of the Masterplan process, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Historic Marine Protected Area Scapa Flow Notifications

Correspondence from Historic Environment Scotland had previously been circulated to members, advising that Scottish Ministers had made a designations order for the Scapa Flow Historic Marine Protected Areas, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and that the orders had come into force on 1 November 2025.

C. IJB Service User Representative

Correspondence had been received from the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, asking for anyone to come forward that was interested in joining the Board as a Service User Representative, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

5. Consultations

A. HES - Properties and Collections Strategy

Correspondence from Historic Environment Scotland had been emailed to members, advising of a consultation on their Properties and Collections Strategy, and it was:

Resolved to note the consultation.

B. Northern Isles Ferry Services User Surveys

Correspondence from Transport Scotland, detailing user surveys in relation to the Northern Isles Ferry Services, that would inform the future services provided to Orkney and Shetland, and it was:

Resolved to note the consultation and that the deadline had since passed.

C. SEPA - Safeguarding Scotland's Water Environment

Members had previously been sent correspondence in relation to SEPA's public consultation on Significant Water Management Issues, and it was:

Resolved to note that the consultation was open until 3 March 2026 should members wish to contribute as individuals.

D. Ayre Offshore Windfarm

Correspondence from the Community Engagement Manager, Thistle Wind Partners, had previously been circulated to members, advising that an offshore consent application had recently been submitted for the Ayre Offshore Wind Farm, and that the Marine Directorate's consultation would run until 8 February 2026. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

E. Capital Dredging and Sea Deposit - Sutherland Pier, Flotta

Correspondence from the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate had previously been sent to members, advising that a marine licence had been requested to undertake work at Sutherland Pier, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided and that members had no objections.

F. Scottish Islands Digital Resilience Survey

Members had previously been sent copies of correspondence from the Scottish Islands Federation regarding a call for evidence on Scottish Islands Digital Resilience. Members discussed the arrangements currently in place, and what would happen once fibre had been put in, and it was:

Resolved to note the survey, which would close on 13 February 2026.

G. SEPA – Flood Risk Management Plan

Correspondence from SEPA had previously been circulated, advising of SEPA's consultation in relation to Flood Risk Management Plans covering 2028 to 2034, and it was:

Resolved to note the consultation, which was open until 22 April 2026.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

After consideration of the General Finance statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £59,236.96.

B. Wind Power Fund

After consideration of the Wind Power Fund statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £21,215.77.

C. Burnside Account

After consideration of the Burnside Account statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the balance was £6,237.36.

D. Community Council Grant Scheme

After consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the OIC Main Capping Limit had £1,291.48 remaining for allocation.
2. To note the Additional Capping Limit had £414 remaining for allocation.
3. To note the OIC Island Capping Limit had £755 remaining for allocation.

E. Community Development Fund

After consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the sum of £10,980.51 remained available for allocation.

F. Seed Corn Fund

After consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 20 January 2026, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the sum of £3,161.00 remained available for allocation.

7. Financial Requests – Bus Hire

Members had previously agreed to cover the cost of bus hire for residents to attend the pantomime in December 2025, and it was:

Resolved to note that the cost of the bus hire, £610, had been paid via CCGS.

8. Publications

The following publications had all been previously forwarded to members via email, and were noted:

- VAO Newsletter – November and December 2025 and January 2026.
- VAO Training and Funding Update – November and December 2025 and January 2026.
- Scottish Water – Newsletter – Autumn/Winter 2025.
- Scottish Islands Federation - Newsletter – October and November 2025.
- Orkney Ferries Statistics – November and December 2025 and January 2026.
- Free Training Sessions - Rural and Islands community councils

- Island Digital Connectivity Resilience - SIF Member Meeting - 24.11.2025.
- Online Engagement Session - Islands Business Resilience Fund - 25.11.25.
- NHSO - Near Me Appointments.
- SSEN Stakeholder Workshops – ED3 Business Plan.
- SCDA Orkney District – Community Drama Festival Programme.

9. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Transport Representative advised that he had attended the Transport Consultative Forum meeting on 21 January, where attendees had been provided with an update on ferry funding. In relation to timetables, he advised that he had carried out community consultation but had not received any comments. He had also met, along with the Chair, with the Transport Representative and Chair of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council prior to the forum to gather thoughts. Councillor L Hall added that there had been a lot of discussion around the Graemsay timetable and suggested for the Hoy Head route that if you have a timetable that is broadly suiting everyone then it's best to stay with it. There was a discussion around accessibility, and it was advised that the next time the ferry goes on refit, there would be an upgrade planned to bring the vessel up to standard. Following the update, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Planning

Members had previously been forwarded information on planning application reference 25/315/PP for works at Houton, including temporary accommodation. Members noted that a separate application would follow for the improvements to the pier/marshalling area etc., and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

C. Health and Care

Mrs I Smith advised that she wished to step down as Health and Care Representative. A brief background to what this role entailed was provided, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That Mr J Gerboc would take on the role of Health and Care Representative and that his details would be passed on so that he could receive the relevant information from Democratic Services.

2. To note that the next Joint Isles Health and Care meeting was scheduled for 31 March 2026.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Grass Cutting Tenders

The Interim Clerk advised that the tenders for grass cutting at the kirkyard, putting green and play park had all expired and required to be advertised again. There was no reduction in cuts proposed for the Flotta kirkyard, following the recent consultation exercise by OIC, so the tender did not have to be amended, and it was:

Resolved that the tenders for the grass cutting in the kirkyard, putting green and play park be advertised with a closing date falling before the next CC meeting.

B. Winter Service Plan

Members advised that the snow clearing and road gritting had been unsatisfactory on Flotta during the recent spell of bad weather, advising that they had previously asked for the routes to be reviewed as some areas used to get done that now didn't. The terminal had cleared the roads and carried out gritting which had been a big help.

Councillor L Hall provided information on how the routes were decided, and also that local contractors could put themselves forward for carrying out paid winter services. He explained the pressures on the Winter Service budget and that there were many roads across all of Orkney that people wanted to see on the service plan, but there was not the resource to do it all.

Members agreed that they should put in a request for the routes in Flotta to be reviewed, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the discussion and the information provided.
2. That the Chair would send the Interim Clerk the routes that the community council would like to see done as Priority 1 so that the information could be sent on to the Roads Support team.

C. Caretaker Role – Burnside Houses

Mrs I Smith advised that she did not wish to continue in the role of caretaker for the Burnside Houses, and that the community council would need to find someone else interested in taking on this role, explaining that it was a lot of work.

Members discussed all the duties that were required, and it was agreed that the role should also involve managing bookings and advertising the availability of the properties, as well as taking meter readings and overseeing general maintenance of the houses and garden areas. Arrangements for paying a caretaker were discussed, as well as the roles being split between more than one person.

Equipment was also discussed, as members considered whether a new lawnmower would be required for the houses, and it was:

Resolved that the Burnside Sub Committee would put together a job description, outlining all the roles and responsibilities of a caretaker, so that this could be considered at the next meeting.

Councillor L Hall left during discussion of this item.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

Following consideration of dates for future meetings, and taking into consideration that this meeting had been postponed, it was:

Resolved that the next meetings of Flotta Community Council would take place on Tuesdays, 24 March and 19 May 2026 at 16:15.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 18:20.