

Minute of the Meeting of Westray Community Council held in the Westray School Community Classroom and via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 18 August 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Mr Daniel Harcus, Mr Adam Baird, Mrs Janice Kirkness, Mr Louis Pottinger, Mrs Ann Rendall and Mrs Rosalind Rendall (via Teams).

In Attendance:

- Councillor Melissa Thomson (via Teams).
 - Mrs Susan Shearer, Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning (via Teams).
 - Mrs Jackie Montgomery, Empowering Communities Liaison Officer.
 - Ms Cheryl Kelday, Community Council Liaison Assistant.
 - Mrs Hayley Robinson, Incoming Clerk.
 - Mrs Anne Byers, Arch Henderson.
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- 1 member of public (via Teams).

Order of Business

1. Apologies	2
2. Presentation – Harbours Masterplan Phase 2	2
3. Adoption of Minutes	2
4. Matters Arising	2
5. Correspondence	3
6. Consultation Documents	4
7. Financial Statements	4
8. Financial Requests	5
9. Reports from Representatives	5
10. Publications	6
11. Any Other Competent Business	6
12. Dates of Next Meeting	7
13. Conclusion of Meeting	7

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated by Mrs Elizabeth Drever and Councillor Heather Woodbridge.

2. Presentation – Harbours Masterplan Phase 2

The Arch Henderson Representative delivered a presentation which detailed the timescales for phase two of the Harbours Masterplan and informed members of an upcoming consultation phase with service users.

Members asked about the scope of the plan and whether inter-isle travellers by boat would be included in the consultation, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To note that this would be a wide-ranging review to include slipways, buildings and related infrastructure and that on-site meetings with interested parties alongside community council members would be required.

B. That involved members would feed back to the community council in due course.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of Westray Community Council held on 26 May 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mr Adam Baird and seconded by Mrs Anne Rendall.

4. Matters Arising

A. Westray Heritage Centre – Funding

The Chair advised that he had been in contact with WHT regarding different funding avenues, and it was:

Resolved to note that WHT would discuss these options at their next meeting.

B. Village Footpath

During an update from the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, on the planning for the village footpath, it was advised that there would be a phased approach. The first phase would traverse the school playing field and would be led by OIC, with construction estimated to take place in financial year 2026/2027. The fence along the area of the path was also discussed and the possibility of it being part of the project. The second phase would then run along the grass verge on the other side of the road, possibly using grasscrete, and would be managed by the Community Council, and the third phase would run from the burn to the junction at Chalmersquoy.

Following the update, members asked if the use of grasscrete would involve a planning application, how the timescale and design would impact upon upcoming works to the playpark and whether the provision of a drop-down barrier across the burn could be included in phase 3 to mitigate against flooding, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, would report back to members regarding the route of the path with regards to the playpark fence, after consulting with the engineering team at OIC and the Sports and Leisure Manager.
2. That the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, would report back to members regarding any planning requirements necessitated by the use of grasscrete.
3. That the Service Manager, Development and Marine Planning, would consult with the engineering team on the possibility of a flood barrier.

C. Chapel of Rest – Outside Lights

The Chair advised that the light outside the chapel of rest had been repaired, and it was:

Resolved to note the update provided.

5. Correspondence

A. Ferry Replacement Programme

Following the update regarding the Ferry Replacement Program, it was:

Resolved to note that there will be a meeting at the end of the month.

B. The Orkney Fund – Place Plan EoI Forms

Correspondence from the Orkney Fund regarding Place Plan forms was reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note that WDT were completing the Place Plan.

C. Annual Grants 2025/26

Following consideration of the annual grant allocations, it was:

Resolved to note that the annual grant award to Westray Community Council for this financial year was £4,795.72.

D. Briefing Note – SATE Project

Following a review of the SATE project update, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. 10 Million Changing places funding

Following consideration of the email regarding available funding for disabled toilets, it was:

Resolved to ask OIC to apply for funding for Westray.

F. Our Orkney, Our Future

Details of the ongoing project to gather views on tourism were reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

G. Survey on Coastal Change

An email from a student undertaking research on community involvement in coastal change was reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

6. Consultation Documents

A. Orkney Islands Payphone Removal Proposals

The information regarding the removal of two payphones in Westray was reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Draft Timetables – Summer 2026

The draft internal air and ferry timetables were reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

7. Financial Statements

A. 2024/2025 Annual Accounts

Following consideration of the annual accounts for the period 2024/2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance.

B. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 1 August 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £46,308.53

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the CCGS statement as at 1 August 2025, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the main capping limit had £2,368.24 remaining, and that £540 and £755 remained available in the island and additional capping limits, respectively.

2. That grants 202207 and 202404 should be cancelled as they had not been claimed.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the CDF statement as at 1 August 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that £500 remained available for allocation to projects.

8. Financial Requests

A. B and C Marcus – Athletics Travel

Following discussion of a request to the council to assist with travel costs for athletics training, it was:

Resolved to award £189 each upon presentation of flight receipts, subject to CCGS approval.

B. Westray Connections

Resolved to note that, following confirmation of additional information regarding the marquee from the organisers, it had been agreed by email to award £1,000 (£500 from the Community Development Fund and £500 from the Community Council Grant scheme, subject to approval.

9. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Transport Representative advised that he would be attending the upcoming Transport Forum to represent the interests of Westray residents with regards to discussions about the Summer 2026 ferry and air timetables, and it was:

Resolved that an update would be provided by the Transport Representative at the next meeting.

B. Planning

The Planning Representative advised that planning for the community hall and the movement of cages by Cooke Aquaculture had been submitted, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Health and Care

The Health and Care Representative provided an update from the last meeting, which detailed various difficulties in Health and Social Care in Orkney, including a significant budget overspend last year, long waiting times for children to see an educational psychologist, and the retirement of an advanced nurse practitioner in Papay, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

D. WDT

The WDT Representative advised that turbine repairs had been delayed and that planning had been submitted for the community hall, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the report.

10. Publications

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

- VAO Newsletter – June 2025.
- VAO Training and Funding – June and July 2025.
- Volunteering Special Newsletter from VAO.
- Letter from School Place – June and July 2025.
- Free Family Fund Day – 15 June 2025.
- Community Wealth Building Action Plan Online Meeting – 24 June 2025.
- Assistance to communicate RTS switch-off information within communities.
- Childminder Training.

11. Any Other Competent Business

A. Pierowall Kirkyard

The provision of lairs in Westray was discussed, and it was:

Resolved that the Chair would write to Democratic Services regarding the need to purchase adjacent land to extend the kirkyard in Pierowall.

B. Winter Services Plan

The Empowering Communities Liaison Officer shared the response from OIC regarding recategorising certain roads in Westray, and it was:

Resolved that the Empowering Communities Liaison Officer would enquire what the criteria are for each priority level.

C. Orkney Transport News

Members were advised that a request had been made from a member of the local press for comment on potential strike action by transport providers. The information was reviewed, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Note of Thanks - Road Repairs

A member noted the swift response to recent road repair requests in Westray, and it was:

Resolved to pass on a note of thanks to the Council's Roads Support team.

E. Kerbside Recycling

A member raised the possibility of reinstating kerbside recycling collections for Westray, and It was:

Resolved to invite the Head of Infrastructure Services to a future community council meeting to explain why this service was not currently provided.

12. Dates of Next Meeting

Following consideration of dates for the next meetings, it was:

Resolved that the next meetings of Westray Community Council would be held on Mondays 29 September and 17 November 2025 at 19:30 in Westray JH School Community Classroom and via Teams.

13. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Meeting closed at 21:39.