

# Minute of the Meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held in the North Walls Centre and via Teams on Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 19:30

## Present:

Mr A Clark, Mrs G Robertson, Mrs P Avis, Mr A Trafford, Miss L Crowson, Mrs I Mathieson (via Teams) and Mr A Sinclair.

## In Attendance:

- Mrs A Byers, Arch Henderson (Teams).
- Councillor G Bevan (via Teams).
- Councillor L Hall.
- Councillor J Park (via Teams).
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.
- Ms S Smith, Incoming Island Link Officer, Graemsay, Hoy and Walls.

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## **1. Apologies**

Resolved to note that no apologies for absence had been received.

## **2. Adoption of Minute**

The minute of meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council held on 19 September 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mrs G Robertson and seconded by Mrs P Avis.

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

Members were provided with an update from a representative of Arch Henderson, who were working on phase 2 of both the Ferry Replacement Programme and Orkney Harbours Masterplan. Work was ongoing around the design of the new vessels for Graemsay, Hoy and Flotta, as well as a piece of work to review the condition of the piers and infrastructure on each island. The representative explained that they would be able to know outcomes early next year, but that there would be an opportunity for communities to feed into what the piers should look like (including marshalling areas), and what wider facilities would be useful. Members of the community council were advised that, although work had already started on this, their suggestions on Houton Ferry Terminal would also be invited, and that she may have something to share with the community early in the new year.

The representative also advised that a community meeting had been arranged for Graemsay residents on Friday, 28 November and that further meetings would be arranged for Hoy and Walls in the new year, perhaps hooking on to community events that were already planned. She noted the suggestion from members that perhaps three separate meetings would be needed in locations across Hoy and Walls.

A member advised that suggestions from the community council had previously been sent to OIC on possible improvements to the Lyness marshalling/parking areas and it was agreed that these should be shared with Arch Henderson in relation to the current consultations.

The Graemsay/Moaness route was also discussed and members suggested that an extension to the pier at Moaness would make the biggest difference. The consultant advised that they would need to look at reliability and how many days the ferry couldn't sail as this would also advise the conclusions.

Members were again reminded that further community meetings would be taking place but that they could contact her meantime with any comments/suggestions, and it was:

Resolved:

A. To note the information provided.

B. That the Interim Clerk would finalise arrangements for the community meeting in Graemsay on 28 November, including a Teams link, and assist Arch Henderson with setting up meetings in Hoy and Walls early in 2026.

C. That the Interim Clerk would forward the Arch Henderson representative details of previous suggestions from the community council on improvements for the Lyness terminal.

The Arch Henderson representative left the meeting at this point.

## **4. Matters Arising**

### **A. Bus Shelters**

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that funding would be available for one shelter, therefore the community council should advise on which location would be their preferred option for siting one. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that more residents would get use of a shelter in the vicinity of the end of French Road, Lyness, and that this should therefore be put forward as the suggested location for one.

### **B. Adoption of Payphones**

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that contracts had been signed, and adoption fee sent, and that formal contracts were awaited. Members discussed possible uses for the booths, and it was:

Resolved to keep this item on the agenda for further discussion.

### **C. Core Paths**

An update had been previously provided to members, advising that the contractor had made safe the boardwalk at Kirk Hope, and that the remainder of the work was with operations to complete (drainage and timber repairs on more remote structures). A visit to Graemsay was planned to check and measure up the Kirk Shore steps. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that it would be asked, via the business letter to Democratic Services, for a further update on any core paths work in Graemsay and Hoy.

### **D. North Walls Swimming Pool**

Councillor L Hall provided an update on this item, advising that Stromness and South Isles Councillors had met with the Head of Active Communities to highlight the needs of the community for the pool to be reopened, and to discuss options for getting this prioritised. Immediate work would be needed to enable the pool to open, but further maintenance issues would also have to be addressed, looking into the longer term.

Councillor L Hall further suggested that this matter would have to be taken on board by the community and if work was agreed by OIC, community members would have to make sure that they could ensure the facility was able to be staffed. Discussion followed, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update and that it was progress in the right direction.
2. To monitor the situation and await further updates.

## **E. Grit for Graemsay Roads**

A response from Roads Support had previously been circulated to members, advising that the Operative on the island fills the grit bins when grit/salt arrives and then tops them up as required. As there was no other way to deliver grit/salt to the island, it had to be taken over to Graemsay in tonne bags and not smaller ones as requested.

The Graemsay representative queried who on the island was employed to fill the bins, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the update.
2. That it should be queried, via the business letter to Democratic Services, who is employed in Graemsay to fill the grit/salt bins.

## **F. Ditch Cleaning in Graemsay**

The Community Council Liaison Officer provided an update she had received that day from Roads Support, advising that they had reviewed the photographs provided and did not think there was an issue. They were of the understanding that someone had driven over the spoil, possibly attempting to flatten it, which would have the effect of blocking the culverts, and that they would continue to monitor the situation.

Councillor L Hall also advised that he had told Roads Support that it was unacceptable to leave the banking so high, and it had caused issues with pedestrians unable to step up off the road and out of the way of oncoming vehicles, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and continue to monitor the situation.

## **G. Aggregate for Graemsay**

The Community Council Liaison Officer reported that she had spoken to the previous Island Link Officer regarding the aggregate scheme and had been advised that Graemsay should get aggregate every three years and had last received it in 2023. Discussion followed, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That Hoy should receive aggregate again this year, with Graemsay to receive an allocation in 2026.
2. That an advert should go out locally asking for notes of interest, with a deadline prior to the next community council meeting.

3. That the Clerk would contact the haulier for a price for aggregate and haulage so that allocations could be worked out based on number of applications prior to the next meeting.

4. That £1,250 would be set aside for this project in CCGS, subject to approval by Democratic Services.

5. To note the suggestion of Councillor L Hall that the new top lander vessel could be utilised in future years to get aggregate to Graemsay and remove scrap cars in the same trip, reducing the cost to the community council to operate these schemes.

## **H. Scrap Cars**

In the discussion above, it was queried whether assistance could be provided to Graemsay residents for removing scrap cars from the island, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That a Scrap Car Scheme for Graemsay should be provided by the community council, subject to CCGS approval on the project cost of £500.

2. That the Community Council would pay to transport the scrap cars off the island, and that any credit from the scrap would return to the community council's funds.

3. That the Clerk would prepare an advert which could be sent to Graemsay residents, advising of the scheme.

## **5. Correspondence**

### **A. Scapa Deep Water Quay Update**

Members had previously been sent an update from the Technical Adviser Team, Arch Henderson LLP, with up-to-date information on the SDWQ project. Additional documents had been submitted to OIC Planning and the Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team on 26 September and therefore a further planning consultation period was underway, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

### **B. Briefing Note – Burial Grounds Grass Cutting**

Correspondence sent by Democratic Services on behalf of the Service Manager, Roads and Grounds, had been previously circulated to members, advising that they planned to review the existing contracts that community councils had in place for kirkyard maintenance with a view to bringing costs in line with their budget. This would include looking at alternatives or reductions in the current service provision.

A lengthy discussion took place on this item, with members questioning the suggestion that 6 cuts a season was enough. They felt that 8 cuts was the absolute minimum that would keep things tidy but even at 8 cuts, the community council currently pays the contractors to do additional cuts (so 10 cuts in total) to keep it looking as it should. They felt that the council should be paying for 10 cuts in active burial grounds in Hoy, however in Graemsay 8 would be ample.

Members also pointed out that there were people who had been doing additional cuts in previous years off their own back (unpaid) just to keep things tidy and out of respect to those laid to rest there.

They added that the Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery (War Graves and Memorial) and the Longhope Lifeboat memorial at Kirk Hope/Osmondwall are of great historical/local importance and interest, with many visitors each year, and it is important that these areas continued to be looked after and treated with respect. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the above comments would be passed on to the relevant officers in relation to this consultation and that it would be advised that Graemsay, Hoy and Walls would prefer to continue to receive 8 cuts per season in their kirkyards as a minimum and would not be willing to contribute to costs.

### **C. Thank You Letters**

The Interim Clerk advised that notes of thanks had been received from Friends of Hoy Kirk, YM Empower, North Walls Centre SCIO and the Longhope Lifeboat Museum Trust, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

### **D. Historic Marine Protected Area Scapa Flow Notifications**

Information from Historic Environment Scotland had previously been circulated to members, giving formal notice that Scottish Ministers had made a designation order for the Marine Protected Area at Scapa Flow, which came into force on 1 November 2025. Information on where to access the site documentation had also been provided, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

### **E. Briefing Note – Ferry Replacement Programme – Update**

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 and that this information had been discussed at Item 3 above.

## **6. Consultations**

### **A. Orkney Coastal Change Adaptation Workshop/Survey**

Members had previously been sent information on the Orkney Coastal Change Adaptation survey, and an invitation to OCCAP workshops on 7 October and 11 November, along with details of a corresponding survey, and it was:

Resolved to note that the events had since passed but that the survey remained open if any individual wished to complete it.

## **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 the last date for any comments on the application was 20 November 2025.

## **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, and that the Chair had attended the community council workshops prior to the community events.

## **D. Northern Isles Ferry Services – Community Needs Assessments – User Surveys**

Information from the Ferries Policy Officer, Transport Scotland, on route specific user surveys in relation to the Northern Isles Ferry Services had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note that the surveys were open for completion until 9 January 2026.

# **7. Financial Statements**

## **A. General Finance**

Following consideration of the General Fund statement as at 3 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £23,211.66.

## **B. Community Council Grant Scheme**

After consideration of the Grant Scheme statement as at 3 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £1,193.44 in the main capping limit and £780 and £755 in the additional categories.

## **C. Community Development Fund**

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 3 November 2025, it was:

Resolved to note that £7,800.68 remained for allocation.

## **8. Financial Requests**

### **A. Graemsay Community Association – Insurance**

Mrs I Mathieson declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussion thereof.

A request from Graemsay Community Association had previously been circulated to members, for financial assistance towards the cost of their annual insurance for the community hall. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to award 80% of the amount requested, being £568.38, subject to CCGS approval.

### **B. Island of Hoy Development Trust – Insurance**

Mr A Sinclair and Councillor L Hall declared an interest in this item and left the room during discussion thereof.

Following consideration of a request from Island of Hoy Development Trust, copies of which had previously been circulated to members, for financial assistance towards the cost of annual buildings insurance for the YM Longhope, it was:

Resolved to award 80% of the amount requested, being £1,258.40, subject to CCGS approval.

### **C. Gable End Theatre – Insurance**

Councillor L Hall declared an interest in this item and left the meeting during discussion thereof.

An additional financial request had been received on the night of the meeting from the Gable End Theatre Co Ltd and was read out by the Interim Clerk. The group was requesting assistance of £645 with the cost of insurance for the buildings and turbine, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To award a donation of 80% of the amount requested, being £516, towards the Gable End Theatre's insurance costs.
2. That the grant should come from the general fund as the capping limits had now been reached for this financial year's CCGS allocation.

## **9. Reports from Representatives**

### **A. Transport Representative**

The Transport Representative advised that they had been discussing the winter timetables with Flotta Community Council and that they intended to meet up again prior to the forum meeting in January to discuss any requests for amendments, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

## **B. Planning Representative**

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

## **C. Health and Care Representative**

The Health and Care Representative advised that she had attended the last Joint Isles Health and Care meeting and that the focus of the meeting had been unpaid carers and how to identify and help them. She had suggested working in partnership with the Wellbeing Officers who may have an awareness of individuals within their community carrying out a care role. The representative also advised that a Carer's Conference was due to take place at the end of the month, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

Councillor L Hall left the meeting at this point.

## **10. Publications**

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

- VAO - Newsletter – October and November 2025.
- VAO – Training and Funding – October 2025.
- Scottish Islands Federation – September and October 2025 Bulletin.
- PSTN Switch Off Information.
- ORSAS Newsletter – November 2025.
- Improvement Service – Free Training Sessions.

## **11. Any Other Competent Business**

Resolved to note that no other competent business was raised for discussion.

## **12. Date of Next Meetings**

Resolved to note that the next meeting of Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council had been set as 27 January 2026 at 19:30.

## **13. Conclusion of Meeting**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:20.