

Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwich Community Council held in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams on Wednesday, 14 May 2025 at 19:30

Present:

Mr D Hamilton, Mr G Brown, Mrs E Grant and Mr C Kirkness.

In Attendance:

- Councillor R King.
- Councillor O Tierney.
- Mrs H Keveren, West Mainland Link Officer/Clerk.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mr E Grieve, Mr K Groundwater, Mrs K Ritch and Mr S Tait, and Councillors J Stevenson and D Tullock.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 12 March 2025 was approved, being proposed by Mr G Brown and seconded by Mrs E Grant. The minute of the special meeting held on 14 April 2025 was approved by Mr C Kirkness and seconded by Mrs E Grant.

3. Matters Arising

A. Dounby School Play Park Fund

An email update had been received from Mr E Grieve advising members that the CLLD application had been submitted for the Dounby Playground Regeneration project and as requested Harray and Sandwick Community Council had supplied a letter of support. The group had also enquired if the Community Council would consider taking on the Annual inspection and Maintenance along with the Public Liability Insurance. After discussion members felt that those items should be covered by the group's ongoing annual costs and upon receipt of additional information would be prepared to provide a donation to the Annual costs, and it was:

Resolved to request a further update at the next meeting.

B. Dounby Speed Tracker Information

Members heard that a request had been submitted to the Council requesting the tracker information be supplied in an easier to read format. No update had been received at the time of the meeting, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

C. Benches

Members were advised that the benches had been delivered to Birsay Farmers and the brackets had been made. The Chair and Vice Chair agreed to co-ordinate the installation and arrange for the necessary ground works for the two benches at Skail and one at Strathborg, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above information and payment for the brackets would be arranged from CCGS.

D. Sustrans – Friends of Dounby

The Clerk had requested an update from Sustrans ahead of the meeting on the findings from the recent online survey which members had been encouraged to complete. A comprehensive update had been received and forwarded to members, and they were advised that Sustrans had submitted their findings to the Council for review. Some of the key findings and impacts are summarised below:

- Pavements – cracked, uneven, missing, narrow, missing/unsuitable dropped kerbs, obstructions, slippery areas, and vegetation issues. Often results in unnecessary road crossings, creates unease and issues of safety and prevents use.
- Crossing points – lack of formalised crossing and missing/unsuitable dropped kerbs. Creates safety concerns, particularly amongst the young and older generations and prevents independent travel.
- Vehicle speeds – high volume, speeding an issue.
- Street lighting – inappropriate placement and timings issues. Safety concern, particularly noted around school children in winter.
- Benches/shelter – limited in number and poorly maintained and/or located. Lack of placemaking not supporting the attractiveness of Dounby.
- Parking – undefined and informal leading to obstructions and preventing walking/wheeling.

Most survey respondents stated that improvements to the infrastructure would influence how they travel, and it was:

Resolved to await further updates from Sustrans.

E. Market Green Update

An update had previously been circulated to members advising them that the Market Green project was progressing, albeit slowly. The amenities had been erected, plumbing commenced but, as yet, no electrical work had begun, and the timescale had now been extended into June for completion. Members were advised that an official opening would be arranged and members of the Community Council would be invited along. Discussion followed about some suggestions for the project, and it was:

Resolved to request via business letter that the existing post box be replaced with a pillar box and that a water fountain be included.

F. St Peters Carpark

Members were advised that the Contractor had completed the work at St Peters Carpark on 1 April 2025, and it was:

Resolved to note the above information.

G. Request for additional Bus Shelters

Discussion resumed regarding the request for additional bus shelters within the parish. Stagecoach had been contacted for information on the usage on the West Mainland routes however as they are Tenders they are unable to supply figures. The only information available from the Council was monthly usage which was not helpful in indicating areas for Shelters. The information had already been forwarded to the resident who had raised the original query and she had thanked the Community Council for looking into the matter on her behalf. Councillor R King reminded members that all bus services in Orkney with the exception of the X1 route are

heavily subsidised by the Council. and it was;

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

H. Drainage Sandwich Cemetery

Members were informed that a request had been made by business letter to the Council to review the issue with flooding which had been experienced during the heavy spells of rain in the new Cemetery in Sandwich. This matter had been reported to the Burial Grounds Officer who would monitor and act where necessary. Members were advised that if there were further issues, pictures should be taken which could be forwarded to highlight the problem, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

I. Dyke behind Smithfield Hotel

Members resumed discussion regarding the dyke behind the Smithfield Hotel in Dounby. The question had been raised with the Council regarding the ownership and responsibility for the dyke, and Estates had suggested as the dyke construction matched that of the OIC assets in the area the ownership would be that of Education, Leisure and Housing. Discussion followed, and it was:

Resolved to request via business letter that the dyke be repaired.

J. Strathborg Trees

Members resumed discussion regarding the yearly maintenance required for the trees at Strathborg, a date was set for 20 May at 18:30, and it was:

Resolved to send an email to all members to advise them of the date.

K. Harray and Sandwich Place Plan

A special meeting had been held on 14 April where members had discussed at length whether or not Harray and Sandwich should proceed with funding applications towards a place plan for the parishes. Members were unanimous in their final decision not to proceed as they felt the timescale was too rushed and would rather take time and consider in the future, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

L. Interpretation Board – Market Green

Members were advised that their request for an Interpretation Board at the completed Market Green had been acknowledged by the Council, and that the involvement of the Community Councils along with funders would be recognised. Council Officers were in the process of designing the boards which would be forwarded through to the Community Councils for their approval, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

M. Bag the Bruck

Members were advised that no further applications had been received for Bag the Bruck this year, therefore, as per the previous minutes, Milestone Community Church would be awarded the full amount. They had completed a beach clean at Skaill along with various ditches around the parishes during April, and it was:

Resolved to award Milestone Community Church £300 from Community Council Grant Scheme.

4. Correspondence

A. NHS Orkney – Improving the Cancer Journey

Members considered correspondence previously circulated asking members to spread the word about the new Improving Cancer Journey within NHS Orkney. The facility could be utilised by anyone affected by cancer, assisting with the support available and where it can be obtained for non-clinical concerns, and it was:

Resolved to note the above information.

B. SEPA – Surface Water Flood Maps

Correspondence had previously been circulated from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency advising members about the new surface water flood maps which for the first time included small watercourses. The new level of detail provides Scotland with the most detailed and accurate picture of where flooding, Scotland's biggest climate adaption challenge can occur from heavy rainfall, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

C. VAO – Small Grants Funding

The response from Voluntary Action Orkney had previously been circulated to members advising that the application Harray and Sandwick Community Council had submitted for assistance towards the benches had been unsuccessful. They had received more submissions than could be funded, and it was:

Resolved to note that the cost of the benches would be taken from the Community Council Grant Scheme.

D. Island Games – Sports Schedule

The draft schedule of sports at the Islands Games had previously been circulated to members for their information and also to allow them to raise any concerns which they may have, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

E. Changing Place – 10 Million Scottish Government Funding Update

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members advising of the 10 Million Scottish Government funding for Changing place facilities. Groups could

apply to install a Changing Places toilet in or adjacent to an existing building, or to develop a new standalone facility, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above and the response date had now passed.

F. Verge Maintenance Plan

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members advising of the Roads Services responses to comments which had been submitted from Community Councils on the Verge Maintenance Plan. The main objection had been the change to a single annual cut; however, this had been implemented as part of the 2025-2030 plan which had already been approved. Discussion followed and members felt strongly that it would be more beneficial for two cuts with the first happening in June, especially this year, to display Orkney at its best for the Island Games. It was also advised that Road Services would welcome reports of visibility concerns or injurious weeds at any point, and it was:

Resolved to request via business letter that two cuts, especially this year, would be advantageous.

G. My Place Awards - Celebrating placemaking efforts in Scotland

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members from the Scottish Civic Trust asking for applications for the My Place Awards, the Chairman had questioned if the Market Green project would qualify however as it was yet to be completed it would not qualify on this occasion, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

H. Update on lithium-ion Battery Safety Campaign

Correspondence had previously been circulated from Ron Bailey thanking members for their backing with the Lithium-ion Battery Safety Campaign, advising that the support across industries and councils had contributed to the quick progress of the campaign, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

I. Orkney 2025 – Council Service Changes

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members advising of the changes to the waste and recycling collections during the week of the Orkney 2025 Island Games. Careful consideration had been given on how to make the best use of resources and cause the least impact on the community, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

J. Thank you Letters

Members were advised that letters of thanks had been received from Orkney Folk Festival, Mrs A Sinclair (U15's Netball) for financial assistance provided, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the letters.

K. Island Games Road Closures

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members advising that all residents who would be affected by the road closures connected to the Island Games would be receiving a letter and maps indicating the closures, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the circular.

5. Consultations

A. Visitor Levy Survey and Public Engagement Sessions

Following consideration of correspondence circulated advising members of both online and in-person engagement sessions looking at the feasibility of a visitor levy on overnight stays in certain accommodation in Orkney, it was:

Resolved to note that all events had now passed.

B. Northern Isles Freight Vessels Replacement Project

Correspondence had been circulated to members advising them of public engagement sessions being held in relation to the replacement of the Northern Isles Freight Vessels, and it was:

Resolved to note that event had now passed.

C. Kathryn Johnson – Visitor Levy Legislation

Following consideration of correspondence which had been circulated to members asking for their support in signing a letter which was being submitted to Kate Forbes MSP addressing the serious concerns relating to the Visitor Levy, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above information.

D. Stenness Community Association – Proposed Stenness Place Plan

Correspondence had previously been circulated from Stenness Community Association advising members that the Stenness Place Plan was now available for consultation prior to submission to the planning authority. The Place Plan had been developed in collaboration with the local community to set out a vision for the future development of the area, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline for comments had now passed.

E. OIC Winter Service Plan 2025

Members considered the Winter Service Plan 2025 which had previously been circulated to members asking for consideration and comments on the annual document which had been compiled taking into account input from various bodies throughout the islands. Discussion followed and the following points were raised; policy links to school routes but quite often especially side roads are not treated ahead of the school times, specific routes for essential workers to attend home care

routes should be highlighted and treated to ensure vulnerable residents received their daily visits, and it was:

Resolved to raise via the business letter that times should be reviewed for treating school routes and that they should highlight and treat specific routes for essential workers to complete homecare visits.

F. Sustainable Aviation Test Environment

Correspondence had previously been circulated to members from the SATE team (Sustainable Aviation Test Environment) who were keen to work with communities across the country to understand what they would like to see from Scotland's sustainable aviation sector by completing an online survey, and it was:

Resolved to note that the deadline had now passed.

G. SEPA – Proposed Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme

Correspondence from SEPA had previously been circulated, advising members of a proposed Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme designed to quickly resolve issues that could cause harm to communities and nature. The Scheme would consider more than just compliance but also take into account the severity of any environmental harm caused, and it was:

Resolved to note that the consultation was open until 30 June 2025.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Fund statement, copies of which had previously been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £11,404.22 as at 24 April 2025.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Council Grant Scheme, it was:

Resolved to note there was no balance remaining for approval in the main capping limit and the balance in the additional capping limit was £765 as at 24 April 2025.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the financial statement for the Community Development Fund, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining available for allocation was £5,000 as at 24 April 2025.

7. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Mrs A Sinclair – U15's Netball trip to Dundee

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members via email from Mrs A Sinclair on behalf of her daughter who had been selected to attend an U15's netball trip off island, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed to award as per policy £48 from the General Fund.

B. Harray SWI – Senior Citizens Party

Following consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members via email from Harray SWI requesting assistance towards the annual Senior Citizens Party, it was:

Resolved to note that members had agreed to award £450 from the Community Council Grant Scheme upon evidence of receipts.

C. Dounby Senior Citizens – Summer Outing

Following consideration of correspondence received from Dounby Senior Citizens requesting assistance towards the summer outing for their members, and it was:

Resolved to award £100 from the Community Council Grant Scheme upon evidence of receipts.

8. Publications

Resolved to note that the following publications had been forwarded to members:

- VAO – Newsletter – March 2025.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – March 2025.
- ORSAS – Quarterly Newsletter.

9. Any Other Competent Business

A. Flags for Special Occasions

The Chairman asked for a list of dates and which flag should be flown in the village to enable him to be prepared for special events, a discussion followed, and it was:

Resolved to request via business letter to enquire if this was something Democratic already had or could compile.

B. School Transport

Mrs E Grant raised concerns around pupils living under the distance to qualify for school transport. She had noted that in the local area multiple parents transported their children as the A986 outside Dounby was not safe for them to walk along. A lengthy discussion followed with Councillor R King advising members that she was

already looking at this issue throughout Orkney and requested any parent with concerns to get in contact with her, and it was:

Resolved to contact the Dounby Community School to relay this information to parents with concerns to contact Councillor R King.

10. Dates of Future Meetings

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

Resolved that the next meetings of Harray and Sandwick Community Council would be held on 27 August and 12 November 2025 in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams at 19:30.

11. Conclusion of Meeting

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