

Minute of the Meeting of Papa Westray Community Council held in St Ann's and via Teams on Thursday, 12 February 2026 at 19:00

Present:

Mr N Rendall, Mr I Cursiter (via Teams), Mr A Hourston, Mrs F McNab, Mrs L Sharp.

In Attendance:

- Councillor M Thomson (via Teams).
- Councillor H Woodbridge (via Teams).
- Ms J Foley, CDO, Papay Development Trust.
- Mrs J Montgomery, Empowering Communities Liaison Officer.
- Mr P Donnelly, Chair, North Ronaldsay Community Council (via Teams).
- Mr C Dun, North Ronaldsay Community Council (via Teams).
- Ms H Galland, Clerk, North Ronaldsay Community Council (via Teams).
- Mr M Jones, Clerk/ILO.

Order of Business

1. Apologies	2
2. Adoption of Minutes	2
3. Matters Arising	2
4. Correspondence	3
5. Consultation Documents.....	4
6. Financial Statements	5
7. Financial Requests	5
8. Reports from Representatives	6
9. Publications	7
10. Any Other Business	7
11. Date of Next Meeting	7
12. Conclusion of Meeting	7

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been intimated by Mrs I Hourston and Mr B Hourston.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of Papa Westray Community Council held on 6 November 2025 was adopted, being proposed by Mr N Rendall and seconded by Mr A Hourston.

3. Matters Arising

A. Teams link to NRCC

The meeting had commenced at the earlier time of 19:00 to enable a short Teams meeting with North Ronaldsay Community Council to discuss the Ferry Replacement Programme and Harbour Infrastructure (Orkney Harbours Masterplan). NRCC expressed a desire to be part of the bigger picture and to be included in the plans for the North Isles as a whole. They pointed out the shortcomings in their current infrastructure and the age and condition of the pier. Mr I Cursiter questioned the proposed designs for both the new vessel and the piers. Mr N Rendall pointed out that two community meetings on Papay had not produced a good solution other than the need for a more reliable service. Both community councils agreed that a face-to-face meeting with representatives of OIC Transport, Orkney Ferries, Arch Henderson and Marine Engineers, in Kirkwall, would be beneficial. Councillor H Woodbridge advised that engineers were beginning surveys imminently with the findings to be available in approximately two months, and that this would be the best time to have the meeting and to discuss further. Following the discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the points raised and thank members of both community councils for their input to the discussion.
2. That an in-person meeting in Kirkwall would be requested as discussed.

The members and Clerk of North Ronaldsay Community Council left the meeting at this point.

B. CC Tenders

A tender for the repairs to Maggie's seat, other benches, and the gates to St Boniface Kirk had been received and accepted, and it was agreed that it would be paid out of CC Grant Scheme, subject to approval.

It was agreed that now was a good time to ask for tenders for the grass cutting at both the burial grounds. There would be 12 cuts in total with 4 of these being paid from the CC Grant Scheme. The Chair requested that after each cut the operator informed the Clerk that it had been done. Additionally, the wider community would be asked at the beginning of the season to participate in a severe cut of the grass to try and remove as much of the moss as possible. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the Clerk would advise of the tender acceptance for the works to benches and gates so that a CCGS application could be approved.
2. To note that the Clerk would draw up another tender for the grass cutting and advertise as appropriate, with a deadline of prior to the next meeting.

C. Expression of Interest/Feasibility study - CARES

The Clerk explained that an application had been submitted to CARES for a grant to pay for the feasibility study for the proposed solar panel project for the water scheme. This had been sent on 24 November 2025 and acknowledged on 25 November, and it was:

Resolved to note the information and await further information.

D. Rabbit Cull Update

Members were advised that the rabbit cull was now complete and had resulted in approximately 3,800 kills. However, it was reported that there were still a number of rabbits to be seen, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

E. NHS Pilot Scheme

Members noted that the NHS Pilot Scheme had ceased on 22 December 2025. There was some dissatisfaction from PWCC with the current set up and the lack of updates coming from NHSO and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would arrange a Teams meeting between PWCC and NHSO at their earliest convenience.

F. Old Airfield Building

It was noted that the original idea was for PWCC to purchase the building, but this was proving to be problematic. The Empowering Communities Liaison Officer advised that she had made some enquiries, and an option might be for OIC to keep ownership of the building and PWCC to lease it back and pay the running costs. Members agreed that this sounded like a reasonable idea, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information and monitor the situation.
2. That Democratic Services would be asked to progress this matter on behalf of PWCC.

4. Correspondence

A. Chair's Letter to OIC - Old Airfield Building

A letter from the Chair had been circulated to members for information, and it was:

Resolved to note that the letter had been sent to OIC on 2 December 2025.

B. Letter to Orkney Ferries – Timetabling/Sailings in Bad Weather

A letter written by the Transport Representative in relation to the timetabling of the Charles Ann and also sailings during poor weather had been sent to Orkney Ferries on 29 November 2025. Members agreed that this would appear to have had a positive outcome as the Transport Representative had subsequently held a meeting with Orkney Ferries who had taken his points on board, and it was hoped that the next round of timetables would hopefully be better. Members advised that there were still some booking issues and the bus connections could be improved yet, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the Clerk would put out a circular highlighting the bus connection difficulties and some information on booking the bus by text.

C. Response to Third Aircraft Consultation

The meeting held on 20 November 2025 was minuted and a response sent via OIC Democratic Services on 22 November 2025. Councillor H Woodbridge informed members that it still wasn't clear which aircraft was being purchased, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

D. Acceptance of Invitation - Rural Water Agenda Working Group

A response had been sent via the Clerk on 15 December 2025, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

5. Consultation Documents

A. Draft Winter 2026/2027 Ferry Timetables

The draft timetables for the following winter had previously been circulated to members for discussion prior to the Transport Forum meetings in January, and it was:

Resolved to note the draft timetables and that the Transport Forum had since been held.

B. SIF - Digital Connectivity Resilience Enquiry

Information from the Scottish Islands Federation on the Digital Connectivity Resilience Enquiry had been circulated to members on 24 January 2026, and it was:

Resolved to note the information.

C. SEPA - Flood Risk Management Plan

Information from SEPA had been circulated to members on 28 January and 2 February with a deadline for comments of 22 April. Members advised that no responses had been sent as yet, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would put together a suitable response on behalf of PWCC.

6. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 27 January 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £21,649.49.

B. Papay Water Scheme Account

Following consideration of the Papay Water Scheme Account statement as 27 January 2026, it was:

Resolved to note that the estimated balance was £21,668.53

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the CCGS statement as at 27 January 2026, it was:

Resolved to note that the main capping limit had £354.89 remaining, and that £755 and £697.68 remained available in the island and additional capping limits, respectively.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the CDF statement as at 27 January 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the balance was £5,000.

7. Financial Requests

A. Papa Westray Primary School – Christmas Trip

A request for financial assistance towards a Christmas trip into town had been received in December and circulated by email, and it was:

Resolved to note that it had been agreed, via email, to fund the total cost of £118, and that CCGS should be applied for on the cost.

B. PCA - Concerts

Attention was given to a request from Papay Community Association for financial assistance towards putting on two upcoming concerts. As this request had arrived very late in the day, it was:

Resolved to give this request further consideration, with members given a date of 19 February to respond to the Clerk.

8. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Transport Representative briefly outlined his thoughts on Loganair no-shows, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Planning

Resolved to note that no new applications had been made relating to Papa Westray.

C. Water Scheme Admin

Resolved to note that there was nothing new to report.

D. Papay Development Trust

The PDT Representative advised the following:

- Funding had now been received for Fairview, and Holmview and Daybreak were still awaiting their funding.
- The boat scheme was being well used and was still available until the end of March. Funding had been applied for to cover another year.
- Funding had been applied for to complete a Place Plan.
- Funding had been applied for to continue work on the market garden.
- The heating was off at Rose Cottage and the Kelp Store.
- There would be activities such as filming and diving in the Marine Protected Area over the coming summer.
- There was a proposed Viking exhibition for the Kelp Store.
- The Warmer Homes project had temporarily stalled but there had been 13 notes of interest.
- Funding would be required to keep the Community Development Manager post ongoing.

Following the update it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Health and Care

The Health and Care Representatives had nothing to report other than the NHS pilot cessation already mentioned above, and it was:

Resolved to note the situation.

9. Publications

The following publications were made available to members and were noted:

- Liam McArthur MSP, Holyrood Highlights - December 2025 and January 2026.
- This Week in Parliament, Alistair Carmichael MP - December 2025 and January 2026.
- VAO Training and Funding Updates - December 2025 and January 2026.
- VAO Newsletter – December 2025 and January 2026.
- Letters from School Place – December 2025, January and February 2026.
- Orkney Ferries Statistics – December 2025 and January 2026.
- NHSO – Near Me Appointments.

10. Any Other Business

A. Used Batteries

A question was asked as to who was responsible for emptying the used battery collection point in the pier waiting room, and it was:

Resolved to note that Mr A Hourston had been emptying the used battery collection unit.

B. Jim Wallace

Mrs F McNab wanted to express her sadness at the passing of Jim Wallace, and it was:

Resolved to note the passing of former Orkney and Shetland MP/MSP Jim Wallace.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of a date for the next meeting, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Papa Westray Community Council would be held on Thursday, 14 May 2026 at 19:30 in St Ann's Kirk and via Teams.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:50.