

Minute of the Meeting of Harray and Sandwich Community Council held in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams on Wednesday, 13 May 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Mr D Hamilton, Mr G Brown, Mrs E Grant, Mr E Grieve, Mr K Groundwater, Mr C Kirkness, Mrs K Ritch and Mr S Tait.

In Attendance:

- Councillor O Tierney.
- Councillor J Stevenson (via Teams).
- Councillor R King.
- Mrs B Clubley, Orkney Dance and Fitness.
- 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 Councillor D Tullock.

2. Presentation – Orkney Dance and Fitness

Beverley Clubley, one of the board members from Orkney Dance and Fitness, provided members with an in-depth presentation on the background of their group.

She explained that they were a social enterprise business with a clear social purpose delivering inclusive movement and well-being across Orkney. They had seven board members with one paid CEO. The group offered a mix of classes including specialised classes for those impacted by Parkinsons and strokes, and feedback from those had been very positive. The group had recently purchased the United Free Church in the Dounby village and were in the early stages of moving this project forward with the hope by 2029 to have the area converted to a community well-being studio with a fitness studio, café area, kitchen and treatment area.

They were keen to engage with the local community as they move the project forward and also wished to learn about the background of the building. Members of the Community Council offered various channels that they could pursue to engage with individuals and the wider community.

The Community Council were unanimous in offering support for this project, bringing a new business to Dounby and transforming an empty building and, following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

The representative of Orkney Dance and Fitness left the meeting at this point.

3. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 was approved, being proposed by Mr K Groundwater and seconded by Mr S Tait.

4. Matters Arising

A. Dounby School Play Park Fund

Mr E Grieve advised members that all funding for the Play Park had been completed and they planned to hold the Official Opening to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Dounby School on 26 June 2026. There might still be a requirement for the purchase of additional equipment in the future, and it was:

Resolved to note the update and that the Community Council would welcome and consider a further request for financial assistance, if submitted.

B. Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust – Friends of Dounby

An update had been received and circulated from Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust advising members that they had refined the designs for the Dounby village following feedback

received from the Community during the November engagement, this along with the proposals for the next year were being handed over to Orkney Islands Council for consideration, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

C. Market Green Update

It was reported that there had been a great turnout from the community to assist with the Market Green Tidy up ahead of the Official Opening being held on Sunday, 10 May. Despite the weather, the opening was well attended by funders, officials and the community, and a thank you had been conveyed from Orkney Islands Council to the Community Council for organising and to all who had contributed towards the event.

It was advised that it would not be possible for the Community Council to hold a key for the toilet block. The Chairman had raised his concerns with the relevant department about a live socket, and they had agreed to investigate.

The possibility of a QR code to be scanned and payment made for the use of the waste disposal facilities should be feasible and will be investigated further.

The purchase and siting of a container at the Civic Amenity Site had received no objections and a further quote will be requested.

Orkney Islands Council were happy to leave the toilet facilities open over the festive period so long as the public accept that they wouldn't be cleaned during that period and suggested signage be put up for the short period.

Various members of the community had complained that the Waste Disposal facilities were not fit for purpose.

Members also raised the on-going issue with the dockans in the circular grass section at the front which was an eyesore and would only get worse in the summer months.

It had also been queried at the opening event if a sculpture could be designed for the middle of the stone circle. Members were in favour of this idea and agreed that the views of the community should be encouraged.

Additional benches were also discussed for the Market Green and it was decided to bring this matter to the Harray and Sandwich Steering Group.

A few outstanding issues were also raised; the plaque for the Tree, the notice board and the issue with the toilet roll dispenser, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To request via business letter:

- The Health and Safety aspect of the socket being live at all times should be investigated.

- A QR code for payment to use the Waste Disposal facilities.
- Signage be arranged for the festive period to explain that the toilets would not be cleaned as scheduled over this time.
- The Waste Disposal Facilities be investigated to address the issues.
- An urgent request to address the dockans in the circular section of grass.
- If funding would be available for a suitable sculpture for the middle of the circular stonework.
- If the plaque for the Tree can be returned.
- The notice board for the Market Green be chased up.
- The issue with the toilet roll dispenser be chased up.

2. To request an additional quote for the purchase of a container for storage.

D. Dounby Village – Roads Support and Smiley Faces

Officers from Roads Support had asked for information and clarity on what members would like explained from the tracking information so they could provide earlier than the September meeting. Members felt that the data/information was now out of date.

It was advised that some of the Smiley Faces had been found to be faulty so have had to be returned, and the new installation date would hopefully be by the end of May, and it was:

Resolved to request via Business letter that Roads Support attend the meeting on 2 September to give up-to-date information from the Smiley Faces.

E. Harray and Sandwick Place Plan

A meeting of the Harray and Sandwick Steering Group planned to be held on 13 May 2026 had been postponed to allow for the full completion of the 28-day consultation period and also to have the outcome of the application for CLLD funding. As no objections had been received, the Local Place Plan for Harray and Sandwick could be lodged on 14 May 2026 to the Orkney Islands Council. A date was agreed for the Steering Group to meet on Tuesday 19 May 2026, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

F. Manholes – Dounby Village

Scottish Water had been contacted regarding the manholes in the Dounby village. A local representative had been to inspect and had reported back to Head Office with pictures and had agreed to update accordingly, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

G. Swartland and Vetquoy Roads – 7.5 tonne restriction

Roads Support had advised that the suggestion to restrict the usage on both the Swartland and Vetquoy Roads to protect from further surface damage would be problematic to enforce. They had agreed to look at this suggestion as a long-term

project with consultation required and the timescale of around 5 years was given. In the meantime, they had agreed to ensure the roads are kept safe, and it was:

Resolved to note the update provided.

H. Grass Cutting – Church Cemeteries

Following on from the last meeting, confirmation had been received that a contract could be terminated with one months' notice by either party and also amendments could be made during the 3-year period of the contract. Harray and Sandwick Community Council had agreed that they would pay for the additional cuts in 2026 and when putting to tender in 2027 the cuts could be amended accordingly however, discussions with the contractor had suggested that less cuts would take longer and possibly not affect the quote, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the above.

I. Village Tidy Up

The annual village tidy up had been scheduled for 15 July 2026. Invites had been sent to Community Payback along with local Young Farmers Clubs, Dounby Athletic Club and the Dounby Guides. A request had been submitted to Orkney Islands Council for weed killer to be sprayed ahead of the village tidy up, and they had advised that it would be dependent on resources/capacity at that time. Members felt that this was unsatisfactory as the tidy up was led by volunteers who appreciated the lack of resources of the Council and the spray would make the tidy up much easier. Councillor R King agreed to look into this matter.

Members also discussed the ever-increasing expectations on the Community Council which they felt might be better addressed at the Annual Chair's conference.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To pursue the request that Orkney Islands Council spray the weeds ahead of the tidy-up in Dounby.
2. To ask for the date of the Annual Chair's Conference.

J. Strathborg Trees

Members were reminded that the annual tidy up at Strathborg had previously been set for 3 June 2026, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

K. Council Response Time

At the previous meeting, the Chair had raised the issue regarding the response time from Orkney Islands Council, and Councillor R King had agreed to raise this matter on behalf of the Community Council. The Chief Executive was currently looking at

processes for dealing with Community Council requests in a timely manner, and it was:

Resolved to note that Councillor R King would provide updates as available.

5. Correspondence

A. Scottish Government – EMEC Fall of Warness Tidal Test Site

Correspondence had previously been circulated from the European Marine Energy Centre Limited, advising members that the Scottish Government had approved an application to increase the duration of the site from 10 to 12 years, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

B. Orkney World Heritage Site Programme

Correspondence had been circulated from Orkney World Heritage Site programme team thanking members for attending the engagement session discussing paths, roads and movement in and around Stenness and the World Heritage Site, and it was:

Resolved to note that any feedback could be forwarded to the team.

C. Scottish and Southern Electricity Network – Storm Dave

A circular had been received from Scottish and Southern Electricity Network advising members that the company was prepared for Storm Dave which was scheduled to move across much of Scotland during Easter weekend, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Annual Grants

Correspondence had been circulated from Democratic Services advising members that the Community Council Annual Grants had been approved for the financial year 2026/2027 with an increase of 2% realising an allocation for Harray and Sandwick Community Council of £4,618.01. The Community Council Grant Scheme capping limits for 2026/2027 would be £3,992 for the main capping limit and £796 for the additional capping limit, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

E. Orkney Native Wildlife Project

Correspondence had previously been circulated from Orkney Native Wildlife Project offering an update on the last year of the project, and it was:

Resolved to invite them along to the meeting on 2 September 2026 at 20:00.

F. Thank You Letters

Resolved to note that letters of thanks had been received from Sandwich SWI, Milestone Community Church, Ms L Greenwell and Dounby Senior Citizens for financial assistance provided.

6. Consultation - Shaping the Future of Scotland's Forests

A consultation had been received from the Forest Policy Group requesting members supply feedback on how Scotland's Forestry can become more diverse, community focused and ecologically resilient, and it was:

Resolved to note the deadline of 5 June 2026 for comments.

7. 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 £12,739.20 as at 22 April 2026.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

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

Resolved to note that the main capping limit was fully allocated and the balance in additional capping limit was £780 as at 22 April 2026.

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 22 April 2026.

8. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Ms L Greenwell – Swimming Competition

Resolved to note that members had agreed by email to award £40, as per policy, from the General Fund. The event had been cancelled due to adverse weather, so the money had since been refunded, and it was:

Resolved to note that the £40 awarded had been refunded.

B. Harray SWI – Seniors Party

A request had been received from Harray SWI requesting financial assistance towards hosting the annual Senior Citizens party in June, and it was:

Resolved to award £450 from the Community Council Grant Scheme, subject to approval.

C. Orkney Folk Festival

A funding application had been received and circulated to members from Orkney Folk Festival towards the costs of hosting concerts during the festival in the Harray and Sandwick Community Centres, and it was:

Resolved to award £200 from the General Fund towards the events.

D. Dounby Senior Citizens – Summer Outing

Dounby Senior Citizens had submitted a funding application towards travel costs for their Summer Outing. This had previously been circulated to members, and it was:

Resolved to award £145 from the Community Council Grant Scheme, subject to approval.

9. Publications

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

- VAO – Newsletter – March and April 2026.
- VAO - Training and Funding Update – March and April 2026.
- ORSAS – Quarterly Newsletter – May 2026.
- Police Scotland Recruitment Event.
- Orkney Springboard – Local Assembly.
- SURF Awards Shared Learning Workshops.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Tree Lighting

The date of the Tree Lighting for 2026 was set as 4 December 2026. The selection boxes required to be ordered in the next couple of months and members agreed that this should be arranged once the school roll had been confirmed. It was agreed that the Christmas Tree should also be ordered ahead of the next meeting, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk would arrange both the ordering of selection boxes and Christmas Tree.

B. Road Conditions – Dounby

The Chair had previously requested that the issue with road conditions after the outside contractor CGU had been laying cables was unsatisfactory and should be raised with the Roads team. The Roads team had passed this onto the contractor to repair the road back to the required standard, and it was:

Resolved to note this information.

C. Litter in Dounby Village

Mr E Grieve advised that he had been approached by a member of the public regarding the issue of litter in the Dounby village. Members felt that the location of the bins in the village could be investigated as there were two in close proximity and the one could be moved nearer to Vias Moss to address the issue. It was also questioned if littering was something that the Community Council could work together with the local Dounby Community School to tackle, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To request a map of the bin locations in Dounby, if available.
2. To ask if the bin at the edge of the Smithfield carpark could be moved to closer to Vias Moss.
3. To contact the Dounby Community School to see if they would be willing to work on a collaborative project.

D. Community Councillors

Mr E Grieve suggested that information should be published on Facebook to raise awareness of Harray and Sandwick Community Council and who the members were, so that the public were aware of who they could raise concerns with, and it was:

Resolved to update the page with members' names and a picture of all Community Councillors for Harray and Sandwick.

11. 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 Wednesdays 2 September and 4 November 2026 in the Milestone Community Church and via Teams at 19:30.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:22.