

Minute of the Meeting of Holm Community Council held in the Graeme Room, Holm Community Centre, Holm, on Wednesday, 10 June 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Alan Scott, Martin Lee, Erland Drever, Christine Muir, Bill Robertson and Robbie Thomson.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Raymie Peace.
- Councillor Gillian Skuse.
- Cheryl Kelday, Community Council Liaison Assistant.
- SSEN (via Microsoft Teams):
 - Geraldine Higgins, Strategic Project Liaison Lead (North).
 - Amir Rahmani
- Freedom Group:
 - Claire Doherty, Senior Land Officer.
 - Chris Smart, Head of Engineering.
 - Kevin Beatie, Pre-Construction Manager.
 - Kyle Mackay, Project Manager.
 - Hannah Taylor, Stakeholder Engagement Manager.
 - Sayed Attalah.
 - Hrishikesh Sing.
- Susan Shearer, resident of Holm and member of Place Plan Steering Group (for Item 8a).
- Hazel Flett, Clerk.

Chair:

- Hazel Flett, Clerk (for Items 1 and 2).
- Alan Scott (for Items 3 to 16).

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor James Moar.

2. Appointment of Chair

The Clerk advised of the options available for the appointment of Chair, and it was:

Resolved that Alan Scott be reappointed Chair of Holm Community Council.

Alan Scott took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved that Martin Lee be reappointed Vice Chair of Holm Community Council.

4. Appointment of Planning Representative

Resolved that the Clerk be reappointed as the Planning Representative for Holm Community Council.

5. Appointment of Health and Social Care Representative

Resolved that the Vice Chair be appointed as the Health and Social Care representative, with the Chair appointed as a substitute.

6. SSEN Distribution – Upcoming Programme of Works

After hearing a presentation from Freedom, Delivery Contract Partners for Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Distribution, on the upcoming programme of works in the Holm and St Margaret's Hope areas to upgrade and improve the resilience of the electricity network, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the presentation.

The Freedom and SSEN representatives left the meeting at this point.

7. Adoption of Minute

The Minute of the Meeting held on 1 April 2026 was approved, being proposed by Christine Muir and seconded by Erland Drever.

8. Matters Arising

A. Local Place Plan

After hearing an update from Clerk and representations from Susan Shearer regarding the draft Holm Place Plan, it was:

Resolved:

1. That the special meeting scheduled for 1 July 2026 should be cancelled.

2. That the Steering Group should meet to consider the draft Holm Place Plan and thereafter submit a collective response to the consultants, via the Clerk.

Susan Shearer left the meeting at this point.

B. St Mary's Christmas Decorations

After hearing an update from the Clerk regarding the style of motifs included in the new Blachere brochure for 2026, Orkney Islands Council's preferred supplier of festival motifs, it was:

Resolved that Martin Lee should forward details of an alternative supplier to the Clerk, who should then arrange to purchase eight appropriate festive motifs, subject to approval from Orkney Islands Council that the alternative designs were within the approved windage requirements.

C. Maintenance of Kirkyard Gate

Although it had been agreed at the previous meeting to proceed with further works to the kirkyard gate, the Clerk had subsequently advised members of the possibility of Orkney Islands Council providing a replacement gate, and it was:

Resolved to note that confirmation had not yet been received from Orkney Islands Council that it would supply a replacement gate.

D. War Memorial

The Chair advised that, although he had contacted Ewan Mackenzie for an update on proposed works at the war memorial, no response had been received, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

E. Bag the Bruck

The Clerk advised that, at the previous meeting, it had been agreed to split £300 equally between all organisations who applied prior to undertaking any Bag the Bruck activities in April 2026. On 2 May 2026, the Clerk had received an email from Holm Sailing Club submitting a claim for grant funding, being the first contact with the Community Council. After discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. That Holm Sailing Club be advised that, on this occasion, they would receive a share of the grant funding for Bag the Bruck but reminded that, in future, they should contact the Community Council prior to undertaking any activity associated with Bag the Bruck.

2. That the Clerk should arrange for grant payments to be made to Holm Community Heritage at St Nicholas Kirk and Holm Sailing Club in regard to Bag the Bruck 2026.

F. Roads Matters

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council in response to concerns raised regarding a potential brig collapse near Hestwall and a bump at the bottom of the Kirkbreck brae, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that, although Orkney Islands Council was aware of both matters, as surface dressing works were due to be undertaken in the area imminently, both matters would be further investigated to determine whether works were required ahead of the surface dressing, failing which further works might be scheduled at a later date, potentially next year or the following year, depending on the level of work required.

G. Flower Tubs in the Village

The Chair advised that, although he had contacted Ewan Mackenzie regarding the provision of flowers for the tubs in the village, no response had been received, and it was:

Resolved that the Clerk should personally visit Ewan Mackenzie and seek a response for both the war memorial works and the flower tubs.

9. Correspondence

A. Annual Grants

Following consideration of correspondence from the Community Council Liaison Officer advising of the annual grants to community councils for 2026/2027, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that the annual grant to Holm Community Council for financial year 2026/2027 was £4,155.04.
2. To note that the main capping limit for the Community Council Grant Scheme for financial year 2026/2027 was £3,992, with an additional capping limit of £796 in respect of costs associated with halls or community centres not in Council ownership.

B. Shaping the Future of Scotland's Forests

Following consideration of correspondence from the Forest Policy Group regarding a survey on shaping the future of Scotland's forests, which closed on 5 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the content of the correspondence.

C. Mocean Energy Ltd – Wave Energy Converter, East of Deerness

Following consideration of correspondence from the Marine Directorate, The Scottish Government, seeking comments on an application from Mocean Energy Ltd to undertake construction, operation and decommissioning of a wave energy converter east of Deerness, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

D. Orkney Local Development Plan Update

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council providing an update on the review of the Orkney Local Development Plan, including the Development Plan Scheme Newsletter 2026-2027 and Local Place Plans, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

E. A961 Road Realignment – Update

Following consideration of correspondence from Orkney Islands Council advising that a planning application for the A961 road realignment, in respect of the duration of the consent, had been submitted and validated, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note that the purpose of the application was to request a variation of the time condition, which lapsed on 5 June 2026.

10. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

After consideration of the General Finance statement as at 26 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance as at 26 May 2026 of £8,293.30.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2025/26 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 26 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that, as at 26 May 2026, projects to the value of £8,287.12 had been approved, of which £6,889.52 had been claimed.
2. To note the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit of £nil.
3. To note the balance remaining for approval within the additional capping limit of £294.02.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2026/2027 Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 26 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that, as at 26 May 2026, projects to the value of £9,418.60 had been approved, of which £nil had been claimed.
2. To note the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit of £nil.
3. To note the balance remaining for approval within the additional capping limit of £nil.
4. To note that the costs associated with grass cutting at St Nicholas Kirk required updating which would reduce the value of projects approved and therefore increase the balance remaining for approval within the main capping limit.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 26 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the balance remaining for approval of £1,000.
2. That the remaining balance of £1,000 be used to assist with the cost of kitchen equipment at Holm Community Centre, subject to the costs being eligible for assistance.
3. That the Clerk should write to SSEN/Freedom Group to determine whether any financial assistance was available towards the cost of equipment for Holm Community Centre and for festive lighting in the village.

E. Seed Corn Fund

Following consideration of the Seed Corn Fund statement as at 26 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval of £nil.

11. Applications for Financial Assistance

A. Orkney Folk Festival 2026

Following consideration of an application from Orkney Folk Festival requesting financial assistance towards the 2026 festival, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £220 be given.

B. KGS Football Trip

Following consideration of an application from Y Rendall requesting financial assistance towards her son participating in a KGS football trip to Aberdeen between 25 and 28 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

C. Gymnastics and Football

Following consideration of an application from S Brown requesting financial assistance towards her daughters participating in gymnastics competitions in Glasgow in April and May 2026, and her son participating in a football trip to Thurso in May 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved:

1. That, although the gymnastics competitions had taken place prior to the application being made, a donation of £40 be given in respect of each gymnast, subject to confirmation of participation, with the applicant being reminded that applications should be submitted prior to events taking place.

2. That a donation of £40 be given in respect of the football trip, subject to confirmation of participation.

D. Rugby

Erland Drever declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion thereof.

Following consideration of an application from E Drever requesting financial assistance towards his son participating in rugby training out with Orkney on six occasions during July and August 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £20 per trip be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

E. Rugby

Erland Drever declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion thereof.

Following consideration of an application from E Drever requesting financial assistance towards his sons participating in a rugby trip to Shetland on 12 and 13 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £30 be given in respect of each player, subject to confirmation of participation.

F. Gymnastics

Erland Drever declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion thereof.

Following consideration of an application from E Drever requesting financial assistance towards his daughter participating in a gymnastics competition in Aberdeen on 12 and 13 June 2026, copies of which had been circulated, it was:

Resolved that a donation of £40 be given, subject to confirmation of participation.

G. Policy

Given the number of applications submitted after events had taken place, it was:

Resolved that the policy on financial assistance be updated to state that applications must be submitted prior to any event taking place.

12. Meeting Attended by Members – The Italian Chapel Creative Award Prizegiving

Although Martin Lee had offered to attend The Italian Chapel creative writing award prizegiving held in the Barrier View Café on 31 May 2026, he had been unable to attend, and it was:

Resolved to note the position.

13. Publications

The following publications had been sent to the Clerk and were forwarded to members via email:

- VAO Orkney – Training and Funding Updates – April and May 2026.
- VAO Newsletters – May 2026 and Volunteers Week (1-7 June) Special.
- ORSAS Quarterly Newsletter – May 2026.
- Scottish Water – Engage – Spring/Summer 2026 Stakeholder Newsletter.
- Accounts Commission – Best Value Thematic Report – Transformation.
- Scottish Community Councils – Free Webinar – Overview of Community Wealth Building and Community-Led Approach to Care at Home in Rural Scotland, 10 June 2026

14. Any Other Competent Business

A. Island Conversations – New National Islands Plan

The Clerk had received correspondence from the Scottish Islands Federation advising of the next round of Island Conversations, organised by the Scottish Government's Islands Team, in relation to the new National Islands Plan, and it was:

Resolved to note that a number of online sessions were planned for June 2026.

B. Accessible Travel Framework

The Clerk had received correspondence from the Scottish Islands Federation advising of a series of online events taking place in June, July and September 2026, to be delivered by Transport Scotland working with Disability Equality Scotland, to help shape the Accessible Travel Framework successor, and it was:

Resolved to note the contents of the correspondence.

C. Date of Meetings

Following a request from Councillor Gillian Skuse regarding future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that, as far as possible, the three Community Councils covering the East Mainland, Burray and South Ronaldsay area should not be scheduled for the same night.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Following consideration of future meeting dates, it was:

Resolved that the next meeting of Holm Community Council should be held on 9 September 2026 in the Holm Community Centre, commencing at 19:00.

16. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:50.