Minute of the Meeting of South Ronaldsay and Burray Community Council held in the Hope Community Centre and via Teams on Wednesday, 10 June 2026 at 19:00

Present:

Mr R Jackson (via Teams), Mr R Bland, Mr A Konstam, Mr I Laird, Ms K Sinclair, Mr D Ward and Ms F Lawtie.

In Attendance:

- Councillor J Moar.
- Mrs J McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.
- 7 representatives of SSEN/Freedom (via Teams).

Order of Business

1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mr R Smith and Councillors R Peace and G Skuse.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of meeting of South Ronaldsay and Burray Community Council held on 17 March 2026 was adopted, being proposed by Ms F Lawtie and seconded by Mr D Ward.

3. Presentation - Holm-Burray Subsea Cable Installation

Representatives of SSEN and Freedom attended the meeting remotely to provide an update on the Holm-Burray Subsea Cable Installation project. Members heard that desktop studies had been done and that lots of consultation and stakeholder engagement had been carried out and was still ongoing, along with route engineering. The team were hoping that a marine licence would soon be applied for from the Scottish Directorate, with an install planned for summer 2027.

It was also reported that all possible cable routes were being actively considered, and that they were aware of environmental designations in the area. Once all surveys and route engineering had been completed, the team would check for onshore consents, development rights and look at what measures they could put in place to restrict impact. They would be looking to submit an application for a Marine Licence at the end of this year.

The team made a commitment to continue communicating with all stakeholders. Following discussion and some questions to the team, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.

2. That the team would send the Interim Clerk the presentation slides so that these could be forwarded to members for further consideration/reference.

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

4. Matters Arising

A. Orkney Community Connect

Members had previously been sent correspondence, advising that conversations had been held with the local Trust with the view to them to operate the service, and that bus services to and from the Tomb of the Eagles was currently out with the scope of the Council's project, which was established to provide improved connectivity for residents in the South Ronaldsay area. The correspondence also advised that Transport had a meeting set up with Dial a Bus to discuss the route with a view to extend it to Burray. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence and to remove this item from the agenda.

B. Local Place Plan

The Interim Clerk advised that the Community Development Officer, South Ronaldsay and Burray Development Trust, had been in touch to report that the Trust had secured funding for the creation of a Local Place Plan for South Ronaldsay and Burray formalise the steering group in July before commencing community consultation in September. Members agreed that this was excellent news, and asked that a response be provided to the CDO, congratulating her on securing the funding and advising that the community council looked forward to contributing to the Local Place Plan, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the report.

2. That the Interim Clerk would respond to the CDO to pass on the wishes of the community council and to advise that they would be keen to be kept informed/involved and have representation on the steering group.

C. Bus Shelters in St Margaret's Hope

Members were advised by the Interim Clerk that there was no further update on this item, but that Transport had been advised that the community council still wished to pursue the possibility of having a shelter where the community wished to have one. They asked again about the land at the top of Church Road, and it was:

Resolved to ask again for information from the Council on who owned the land at the top of Church Road, which was the community council's preferred location for a shelter.

D. Smiddy Museum

Councillor J Moar joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

Members were advised that the Smiddy Museum was now open for visitors, after caretakers had been appointed in May. Ms S Dennison and Mr J Tomoszek would share the role, week about, with Mr M MacKenzie, and openings would be coordinated with cruise liner visits where possible. It was suggested that a volunteer model would need to be considered for next year.

A poster with a QR code had been made available for display in the museum, and donation tins had been sourced, which would be distributed to other premises within the village.

Ms F Lawtie advised that Rhona Jenkins and Sheena Graham-George would begin work on the upgrade during the summer, and the Interim Clerk confirmed that the £3,000 Culture Fund grant had been received to the community council's funds.

The Interim Clerk advised that the standing charge for hydro was high, and asked members if they wished for Democratic Services to look at whether other providers could offer a cheaper rate, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.

2. That caretaker timesheets would be submitted for payment from CCGS funds.

3. That the Interim Clerk would make enquiries regarding the electricity provider for the premises.

4. To note that £3,000 from the Culture Fund had been paid into the Smiddy Account and that a further £5,000 had been ringfenced from CDF for the refurbishment project.

E. Hanging Baskets

Mr D Ward confirmed that he had selected the 20 baskets in best condition from those in storage, and that these had been passed on to the contractor for planting up. He advised that some baskets needed new chains, and that the contractor had asked for a list of where the baskets needed to go.

The Interim Clerk advised that the brackets had been tested and that she would request the inspection report.

It was also suggested that the community council should apply for external funding towards the baskets as this was a significant cost to the community council each year, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.

2. That the Interim Clerk would request the inspection report for the bracket testing.

3. That the Interim Clerk would look into possible funding sources for the hanging baskets.

4. To note that the contractor had offered to extend the contract at the same price for a further two years, and that further consideration would be given to this.

F. Repair/Storage of Festive Decorations

Resolved to note that a donation had been provided for storage and that this item could be removed from the agenda.

G. Kirkyard and Pitch Grass Cutting

Following the last meeting, a response had been sent round members advising that the St Margaret’s Hope pitch would be added to the contract the Council has for grass pitches, and that it would receive the same maintenance as the other pitches which included the Bignold Park and Market Green pitches.

Kenny Foulis had been awarded the tenders for grass cutting at St Mary’s, St Lawrence, St Peter’s and Flaws kirkyards on a one-year basis.

It was reported that the gates at St Peter’s still hadn’t been repaired, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.

2. That the Interim Clerk would add to the business letter that the gates at St Peter's required attention.

H. Bins at Sands of Wright

Resolved to note that there was no update for this item and that a response would be asked for ahead of the next meeting.

I. Phone Box Refurbishment Work

Members discussed various ideas for what to do with the boxes, and potential locations for them. Housing a defibrillator was suggested again, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That a member would pass on details for an NHSO representative who may be able to advise on the installation of a defibrillator and also the recommended conditions for storage etc.

2. That contact would be made with the Surgery in St Margaret's Hope to see if they would be able to assist with the ongoing maintenance and/or regular checking of a defibrillator if the CC was to install one.

J. St Peter's Kirkyard Toilets

Resolved to note that no response had been provided and that this item should remain on the agenda.

K. Signs and Signposts

Members had previously been sent correspondence advising that new signposts would be installed for the turning into Herston, at Blanster Brae, and that the signposts opposite the war memorial at the junction of the Haybrake Road and the A961 would be removed. It was reported that neither of these jobs had been completed, and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would add to the business letter to ask when this work would be completed.

5. Correspondence

A. N Smith – Flood Defences

An email from Neil Smith had previously been forwarded to members, in relation to flood defences in St Margaret's Hope. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved that the email should be forwarded to the relevant section of Orkney Islands Council to ask if they could provide evidence that the flood defences were effective.

B. ONWP Update

Members had previously been sent an update from the Orkney Native Wildlife Project, providing a summary of the project and what the different phases were. It also detailed increases in nest success of curlews and hen harriers as well as vole activity, and it was:

Resolved to note the update from ONWP.

C. Annual Grants 2026/2027

Information from Democratic Services in relation to the Annual Grants being provided to Orkney community councils in financial year 2026/2027 had previously been sent round members, and it was:

Resolved to note the information and that the annual grant being provided to South Ronaldsay and Burray Community Council for this financial year was £4,639.87.

D. Burray Cemetery

Correspondence had been received and forwarded to members in relation to Burray Cemetery. Members agreed that there was an issue with weeds at this location and around other cemeteries, and it was:

Resolved to forward the correspondence to Orkney Islands Council so that it could be sent on to the relevant officer.

E. OLDP Update – May 2026

Correspondence from the Council's Development and Marine Planning team had previously been circulated to members, which provided an update on the review of the Orkney Local Development Plan, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the new submission deadline of 31 October 2026 for LPPs.

2. To note that this had partially been covered at Item 4B above and that work was ongoing by South Ronaldsay and Burray Development Trust.

F. Update – A961 Road Realignment

Members had been sent an update from the Service Manager, Engineering, in relation to the realignment of the A961, advising that a planning application had been submitted to request a variation of the time condition on the existing permission. Members queried why the road realignment would go ahead even though there was no permission granted at this stage for the Deep-Water Quay in Holm, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

6. Consultations

Resolved to note that no consultations had been received for consideration.

7. Financial Statements

A. General Finance

Following consideration of the Community Council General Fund statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £6,002.79.

B. Smiddy Account

Following consideration of the Community Council General Fund statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £2,800.59.

C. Community Council Grant Scheme

After consideration of the Community Council Grant Scheme statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the balance remaining for approval was £797.60 in the main capping limit and £796.00 in the additional category.

D. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the Community Development Fund statement as at 27 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note that £1,000.20 remained for allocation.

8. Requests for Financial Assistance

Resolved to note that no requests for financial assistance had been received.

9. Publications

The following publication had been made available to members and was noted:

- Hope Cohousing March 2026 Newsletter.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. CC Clerk

The Interim Clerk advised that the previous Clerk had resigned and that they were in the process of recruitment, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

B. Subject Access Request

Members had previously been forwarded information regarding a Subject Access Request which had been submitted by D Lindsay in relation to information held by the community council, and a subsequent correspondence providing reasoning for this SAR being submitted, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

C. Toilets at Fourth Barrier

A member advised that there had been frequent closures of the toilets at the fourth barrier, and queried why this was, especially at this time of year, and it was:

Resolved to ask, via the business letter to Democratic Services, why the toilets had been closed on recent occasions.

D. Amenity Site – St Margaret's Hope

Members advised that the sign showing the opening times at the civic amenity site needed to be updated as it was faded and was showing the old times, which was misleading. Members agreed that the old times were more suitable and asked if consideration could be given to reverting to these opening times.

They also advised that the gantry at the grass skip was at risk of collapsing, and voiced concern that what had been done was inadequate as the site filled up too quickly.

CCTV was discussed and it was suggested that the site could be monitored using the cameras, as it was a waste not to utilise them if they were there.

Members also suggested that the CC should request a general waste skip once a month.

Members also commented that OIC did not put out any communications regarding this site like it did for Hatston or Garson, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To ask if the signage around the site could be updated to reflect the current opening times, or alternatively if the Council would consider going back to the old opening times as displayed on the old signage.

2. To ask that the gantry be properly repaired or replaced as members felt it was unsafe.

3. To request a general waste skip at the site, at least once a month.

4. To ask if the CCTV at the site was live and suggest that if it was, it should be used and monitored so that unauthorised dumping could be caught.

5. To ask that more OIC communication be put in place regarding this site.

E. Grass Cutting – St Margarets Hope

Members mentioned grass cutting in the village and commented that not all areas that were usually cut had been cut so far this year, and that sometimes the grass was not being collected, and it was:

Resolved to ask if there had been a change in the terms of the grass cutting contract and a reduction in coverage.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

Resolved to note that the next two meetings of South Ronaldsay and Burray Community Council had been set for:

- 26 August 2026, Burray.
- 4 November 2026, St Margaret's Hope

12. Conclusion of Meeting

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