

Minute of the Meeting of Westray Community Council held in the Community Classroom, Westray School and via Teams on Monday, 8 June 2026 at 19:30

Present:

Mr Daniel Marcus, Mr Adam Baird, Mrs Janice Kirkness, Mr Louis Pottinger, Mrs Elizabeth Drever and Mrs Rosalind Rendall.

In Attendance:

- Councillor Stephen Clackson.
- Councillor Mellissa Thomson (via Teams).
- Mrs Jenny McGrath, Community Council Liaison Officer/Interim Clerk.
- One member of the public.

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1. Apologies

Resolved to note that apologies for absence had been received from Mrs A Rendall.

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minute of the meeting of Westray Community Council held on 20 April 2026 was adopted, being proposed by Mr Adam Baird and seconded by Mrs Rosalind Rendall.

3. Matters Arising

A. Village Path

Members had previously been advised that the path was still on the Council's project list to be considered. The Engineering Team at the Council currently had limited staff resource due to not being able to recruit staff with the present large scale infrastructure projects that were happening in Orkney. As soon as more information was available, an update would be provided.

The Chair advised that he had received a draft drawing from one of the consultants working on the Local Place Plan for Westray, which was an alternative to the one which had been previously drawn up. Members did not support this option, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the Interim Clerk would ask for another update ahead of the next meeting.
3. That the Chair would provide feedback to the LPP consultant regarding the alternative plan that had been provided and advise that the community council would prefer not to pursue this option.

A member of the public joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

B. School Car Park Line Painting

The Community Council Liaison Officer advised that the matter had been put to the Education department, and that it had been suggested that the request for line painting should also be submitted to the Council by the school, and it was:

Resolved that Mrs Rosalind Rendall would ask Westray Parent Council to submit a letter to Education requesting that the lines be re-painted in the car park at Westray Community School.

C. Place Plan Funding from 2025/2026 Financial Year

The Community Council Liaison Officer confirmed that the place plan funding provided to Westray Development Trust had been journalled to come out of the 2025/2026 allocation of CCGS, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. Chapel of Rest

The Chair advised that he had spoken to the funeral director who was going to report back after he had attended a trade fair, and that they had recommended a larger unit so would provide costings, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. To note that funding had not been discussed for this project, but that it was thought that this may become a joint project to be progressed between the community council and Westray Development Trust.

4. Correspondence

A. 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 Westray Community Council for this financial year was £4,877.39.

B. Equality Delivery Group Meeting

An invite had previously been circulated to members to a workshop that aimed to shape what the next 12 months of work for the Equality Delivery Group would look like, and to make sure that the focus of the work was aligned with the needs of people in the isles, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence and that the event had taken place on 5 June.

C. Shaping the Future of Scotland's Forests

Members had previously been forwarded information on a survey being carried out by the Forest Policy Group, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

D. SURF Awards Shared Learning Workshops

Information on the annual SURF awards and Shared Learning Workshops had previously been circulated to members, and it was:

Resolved to note the correspondence.

5. Financial Statements

A. General Fund

Following consideration of the General Finance statement as at 18 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the estimated balance of £43,572.12.

B. Community Council Grant Scheme

Following consideration of the 2025/2026 CCGS statement as at 18 May 2026 it was:

Resolved:

1. To note that balances had remained in all three capping limits at the end of the 2025/2026 financial year.
2. To note that £3,992, £526 and £770 remained in the main, additional and island capping limits for the new financial year, 2026/2027.

C. Community Development Fund

Following consideration of the CDF statement as at 18 May 2026, it was:

Resolved to note the fund balance of £0.

6. Financial Requests

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

7. Consultation Documents

A. Westray Tidal Array Pre-Application Consultation

Members had previously been sent information from Orbital Marine Power advising of an upcoming public consultation for the proposed Westray Tidal Array in the Westray Firth. The formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) notice had been circulated. The project involved a proposed tidal energy array of around 70 Orbital devices (approximately 170 MW total capacity), along with associated cables and infrastructure. Before any applications were submitted, they planned to hold a public drop-in event on 11 June to provide more information and hear views. A lengthy discussion followed, with members voicing their concerns regarding lines of navigation and ferry routings. It was suggested that depending on the tides and weather, if this project was to go ahead then it would take out a lot of options of routes for ferries servicing not only Westray but other outer north isles.

It was suggested that there may need to be a collective approach on this subject, with other isles joining Westray in voicing their concerns. Councillor M Thomson also advised that if there was an application submitted then the community council could ask to be a statutory consultee.

The Chair advised that he would attend the public drop-in event in Kirkwall on 11 June, and that he and the Vice Chair would draft a letter to be circulated to all CC members prior to being submitted ahead of the 13 July deadline for comments to Orbital Marine Power, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the Chair would attend the public drop-in event on 11 June.

3. That the Chair and Vice Chair would draft a response, to be circulated for agreement by all members prior to being submitted to OMP.
4. That Councillor M Thomson would speak to Orkney Ferries to see if they had been contacted by OMP.

B. Draft Summer Ferry Timetable

The draft ferry timetables for 2027 had been circulated to all members, and it was advised that these would be put on public display so that any comments could be collated by the Transport Representative ahead of the Transport Forum meeting on 19 August 2026, and it was:

Resolved to note the information and that any comments should be submitted by 4 August 2026.

8. Reports from Representatives

A. Transport

The Chair advised that he had attended a meeting regarding the proposed timetable for when a third aircraft was in operation, and that this did not affect Westray so much as they did not rely on the air service as much as some of the other outer north isles, namely North Ronaldsay. He reported that a plane had been identified and that they were hoping that the third aircraft would be in place by the end of this year. He had asked for two return flights at weekends and advised that a timetable would be sent out for review in due course. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. To note that the Transport Forum meeting would be held on 19 August where this would be discussed further.

B. Planning

The Planning Representative advised that an application had been lodged to vary the condition to allow the Bargain Box to remain in situ for another two years, and that there were another couple of private developments in for planning, and it was:

Resolved to note the information provided.

C. Health and Care

Resolved to note that the Health and Care Representative had not been able to attend the recent Joint Isles Health and Care meeting so there was no update.

D. WDT

The Development Trust representative advised that the old hall had been demolished and that funding for the new building was coming together, and it was:

Resolved to note the update.

9. Publications

The following publications had been made available for members to view and were noted:

- Orkney Ferry Statistics – April 2026.
- VAO Training and Funding – April and May 2026.
- Letter from School Place – April and May 2026.
- VAO Newsletter – May and June 2026.
- Free Webinar for Community Councils.

10. Any Other Competent Business

A. Kirkyard Maintenance

Due to the sensitive nature of this item it was held in committee and the member of the public left the meeting during discussion.

The Chair advised that he and the Vice Chair had both spoken to the grass cutting contractor, and that he would continue to provide services to the end of this contract. The contracts would then need to be reviewed ahead of the 2027 cutting season, and it was:

Resolved:

1. To note the information provided.
2. That the grass cutting tender documents would need to be reviewed and considered at the end of this year, ahead of being readvertised early in 2027.

The member of the public rejoined the meeting at this point.

B. Missing Road Signs

A member reported that two signs were missing at the end of the Furrigarth Road and past the old kirk (sign to Westside), and it was:

Resolved that the Interim Clerk would report the missing signs via the business letter.

C. Surgery Car Parking

It was reported that car parking had again become an issue outside the Westray Surgery. It was noted that the community council had arranged signage and tried to do something to address this, but unless a new premises was found then there was no way to increase the number of spaces available for patients attending the surgery. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the report and to monitor the situation.

D. Road Crossings and Surfacing

A member advised that the cable track outside the property known as Orcadee was starting to sink again, as were other crossings.

Members also asked if any surfacing work was planned for Westray, with members of the opinion that some roads badly needed resurfacing, and it was:

Resolved:

1. That the information on bad crossings would be passed to the Interim Clerk so that these could be reported to Roads Support via the business letter.
2. To note that no surfacing works were planned for Westray in 2026 but that members felt that it was overdue.
3. To note that any roads issues should be reported via MyOrkney/OIC Customer Services where possible so that they could be dealt with timeously.
4. To note discussion on MARS representatives and that this role had been removed but that it had been a useful position.

E. Kirkyard Extension

Councillor M Thomson advised that the Council was working with the adjacent landowner regarding purchase and that hydrological surveys would need to be done to confirm that the land was suitable for burials. Initial feasibility work was ongoing, and further updates would be provided in due course. Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to note the update and await further information.

F. Linkspan

Councillor M Thomson advised that parts should be replaced on isles linkspans, including the one at Rapness, by March next year and that there would be no restrictions on tonnage, and it was:

Resolved to note the update provided.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved to note that the next meeting of Westray Community Council had been scheduled for Monday, 24 August 2026 at 19:30 in Westray JH School Community Classroom and via Teams.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Meeting closed at 20:45.