Item: 14

St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee: 27 October 2026.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended:

1.1.

That the Committee approves the attached minute as a true record.

1.2.

That the Committee considers the recommendations at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5.

2. Appendix

Draft Minute of the Meeting of the St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee held on 27 October 2026.

Minute

St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee

Tuesday, 27 October 2026, 14:00.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.

ORKNEY ISLANDS COUNCIL

Present

Councillors Mellissa-Louise Thomson, W Leslie Manson, Graham A Bevan, Alexander G Cowie, Raymond S Peace and Duncan A Tullock.

Lord Lieutenant Elaine Grieve and Barbara Hutchison, St Magnus Cathedral Representative.

Clerk

- Katy Russell-Duff, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Gareth Waterson, Director of Enterprise and Resources.
- Sweyn Johnston, Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth.
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Kate Doughty, Team Manager (Culture).
- Veer Bansal, Solicitor.

Observing

- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson.

1. Organ Use Policy

After consideration of a report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Team Manager (Culture), the Sub-committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** that the Use of the Cathedral Organ Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

2. Visitor Experience Proposals

After consideration of a report by the Director of Enterprise and Resources, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth, on the motion of Councillor Duncan A Tullock, seconded by Councillor W Leslie Manson, the Sub-committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council**:

2.1. That Option 3, namely that the Council should take on responsibility for all donation and retail offerings in St Magnus Cathedral, and committing to make an annual donation to other stakeholders to compensate for lost income, be approved.

2.2. That the Candle donation point, currently operated by the Congregation, should also be included in Option 3 referred to above, with an equivalent donation made to the Society of the Friends of St Magnus Cathedral in respect to income generated.

2.3. That an ancillary rationalisation to Option 3, in that the Congregation would no longer be asked to make payments to the Council by way of a contribution to the running costs of St Magnus Cathedral, but would instead make a contribution to the St Magnus Centre to compensate lost income from the sales table, with the Council making no payment to the St Magnus Centre, be approved.

2.4. That powers be delegated to the Director of Enterprise and Resources to finalise the details of, and implement the rationalisation of, donation and retail offerings in St Magnus Cathedral, outlined in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 above, to commence by 1 April 2027, with any costs in doing so to be met from existing service budgets.

2.5. That the Director of Enterprise and Resources should review the new arrangements after a period of two years, and report any recommended changes to this Sub-committee for consideration.

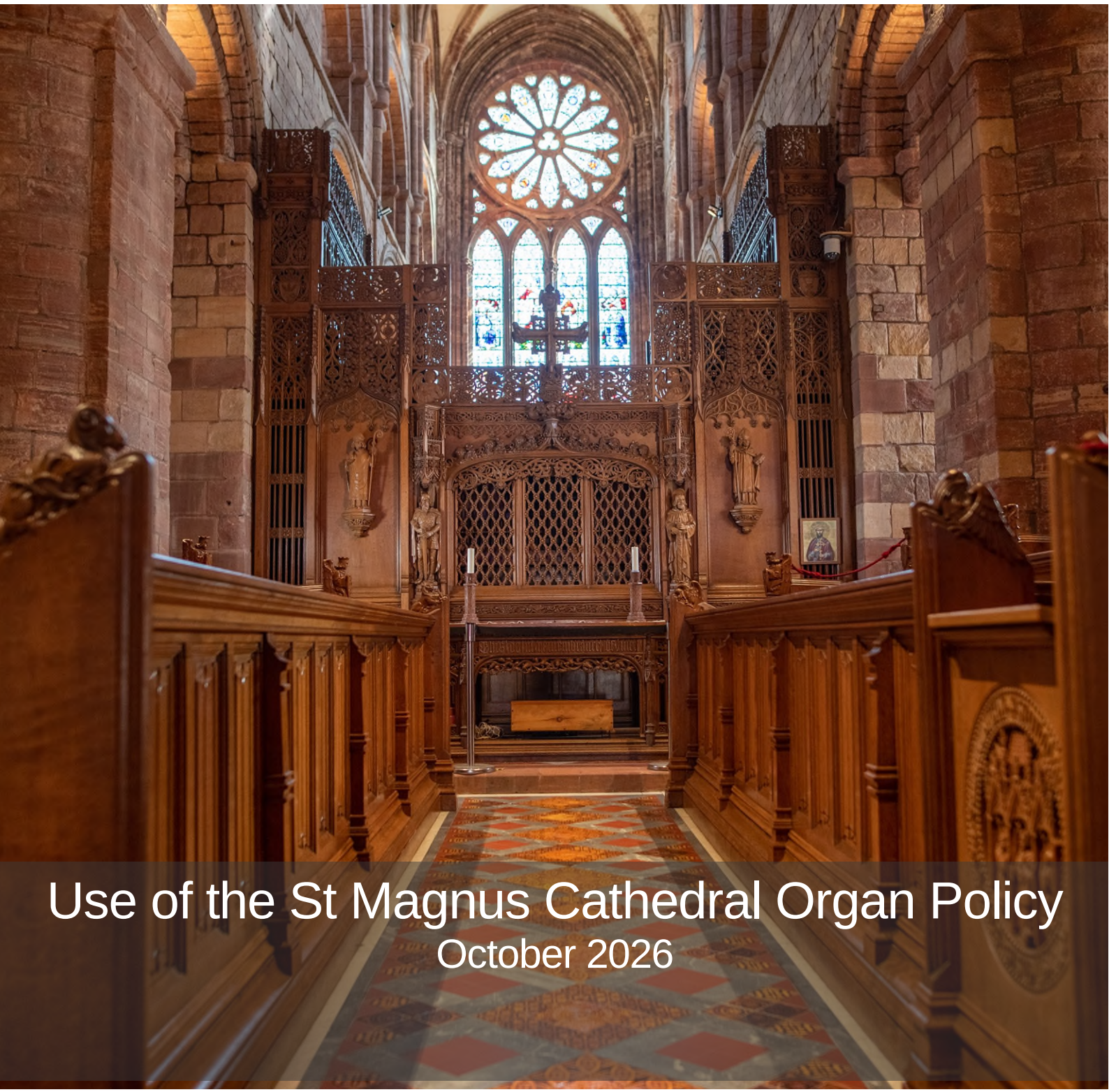
3. Conclusion of Meeting

At 14:33 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed:

Appendix 1

ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL



Use of the St Magnus Cathedral Organ Policy

October 2026

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Document Control Sheet

Review / approval history.

Date	Name	Position	Version approved
24 February 2000	St Magnus Sub-committee		V1
27 October 2026	St Magnus Sub-committee	Team Manager Culture	V2

Change record table

Date	Author	Version	Status	Reason
2026	Kate Doughty, Team Manager Culture	2	Draft	Updated to reflect changes since 2000
Next due for review in 2031				

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Scope of policy

While the primary function of the organ is to accompany Church services, use of the St Magnus Cathedral Organ will be supported for secular events and concerts, and by practicing organists and organ scholars.

Any refused requests will detail the reason for the refusal based on the below criteria.

This document sets out the Policy on Use of the St Magnus Cathedral Organ.

Responsibilities

Orkney Islands Council bears responsibility for the condition of the organ. This includes responsibility for the use and preservation of the organ. Excessive or inappropriate use can result in damage.

The Cathedral Organist is employed by the Kirk Session to accompany church services and has the honorary title of Kirkwall Town Organist to reflect their duty to Orkney Islands Council as adviser on the use of the organ.

All requests to play the organ will be initially received by the Cathedral Visitor Services Officer and considered by the Cathedral Organist. A decision based on the below criteria will then be made.

A refused request may be appealed by the applicant to the Director of Enterprise and Resources, who will review the information provided and either support or overrule the decision of the Cathedral Organist.

Visiting organists are required to pay a fee to Orkney Islands Council as per the Charges Register for use of the organ and use it within the operating hours of the Cathedral when staff are on the premises. The charge does not apply if the visiting organist plays the organ as part of an event or concert.

Local organists or organ scholars may be allowed regular practice slots free of charge.

Use of the St Magnus Cathedral Organ

Requests to play the organ should be supported where:

The applicant can demonstrate sufficient competence and experience in music at or equivalent to:

- Grade 5 standard according to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in Piano or Organ; or
- SQA National 5 standard or above in Music at the recommendation of a musical education professional.

The request does not unreasonably impede Cathedral operations or prior bookings.

Sufficient notice is given for the request to be considered, being 10 working days.

Use will not be to the detriment of the instrument, taking account of weather conditions affecting the organ and frequency of use by all parties.